Understanding the Shmittah and Yovel

At Sukkot 2013, my wife and I had the pleasure of meeting Joseph Dumond, a sincere brother who has a heart for YHWH and His word. During Sukkot, Joseph taught on many topics but the focus in this paper will be the Shmittah (7 year land Sabbath) and the Yovel (50th year Jubilee). Much of what will be written here has already been researched and taught by Joseph Dumond and can be found in two books that he has published: Prophecies of Abraham [*ISBN: 978-1-4490-4752-8 (sc)*] and Remembering the Sabbatical Years of 2016 [*ISBN: 978-1-4797-7037-3 (sc)*]. Joseph also has a website with many articles that can found here: [www.sightedmoon.com](http://www.sightedmoon.com)

Earlier in 2013, my wife and I wanted to understand more about the Shmittah (land Sabbath) and the Yovel (Jubilee) but there was very little teaching regarding these subjects. After returning from Israel at the end of May 2013 we started looking for answers, and at Sukkot YHWH provided us with our answers through Joseph Dumond’s teachings. Hopefully by the end of this paper you will agree with our conclusions. Please, do not believe what we have written here, study this out to: “…show yourself approved unto Elohim…” 2 Tim 2:15.

Specifically what will be discussed in this teaching is:

1. What are the Shmittah and Yovel?
2. How to ‘count’ the Shmittah and Yovel
3. When to begin the Shmittah and Yovel
4. What are YHWH’s instructions concerning the Shmittah and Yovel?
5. Should we still keep the Shmittah and Yovel even if we are not in the land of Israel?
6. When will the next Shmittah and Yovel occur according to Biblical chronology?
7. How should we keep the Shmittah today?
8. Importance of keeping the Shmittah and Yovel

**What are the Shmittah and Yovel?**

The word ‘shmittah’ is a Hebrew word [Strong’s #H8059] which means to ‘release’ or to ‘loosen’. It is commonly called the Sabbatical year and is the seventh year in which the land observes a Sabbath rest. The 1st occurrence of this word can be found in Deuteronomy 15:

Deu 15:1 At the end of *every* seven years you shalt make a release (shmittah).

Deuteronomy 15:1 scripture is in regards to the land Sabbath. Moses is reemphasizing what YHWH instructed the children of Israel from Mt. Sinai to observe the land Sabbath:

Lev 25:1-7 And YHWH spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for YHWH: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land. And the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

From the above scripture, every 7 years the land receives its rest. Why is this so? Because “…Elohim so loved the WORLD…” John 3:16. The WORLD- meaning His entire creation; not just you and me but also the fullness of the earth. Let me explain: every Sabbath we are instructed to cease from work and have a 24 hour period of rest. During this time the land is still ‘working’ by growing the crops for mankind. It does not receive any ‘rest’. If you would take 52 days out of the year (52 Sabbaths) and multiply that by 7 years you would have 364 days [52 x 7 = 364] or 1 year that the land would receive a land Sabbath (Shmittah) to make up for all the days it did not receive while we ‘ceased from work’.

The word ‘Yovel’ is a Hebrew word [H3104] which means ‘the blast of a horn’. This sound of the horn would usher in the 50th year commonly called the Jubilee. The horn was sounded in the 50th year at Atonement. Not the 49th year. It was the 50th year at Atonement.

Lev 25:9-13 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile (Yovel) unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile (Yovel) shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed. For it *is* the jubilee (Yovel); it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee (Yovel) ye shall return every man unto his possession.

In counting the years leading to the Yovel, one must count 7 Shmittah’s (land Sabbaths) and then the following year would be the 50th year. We will study this out more ‘in-depth’ in the next section.

How to count the Shmittah and Yovel

Now that we understand that the Shmittah is a land Sabbath that occurs every 7 years and that the Yovel is a Jubilee to be observed after 7 land Sabbaths and in the next year (that being the 50th year), the next part is figuring out how to count them. For some people this will make sense right away; for others like myself, this may take some time. I would encourage those who struggle with this to carefully examine the evidence and remove any biased opinions or theologies. As mentioned earlier, the land Sabbath occurs in the 7th year of a 7 year cycle. Charted out, it would look like this in years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |

Notice that the 7th year would be a Sabbath year land rest. In this table, I have put a (1) next to the 7. The next chart shows what the 50 year pattern looks like.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 (3) |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 (4) |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 (5) |
| 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 (6) |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 (7) |
| **50**/1  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The 50th year on the chart above is called the Yovel (Jubilee) year. Notice that the 50th year also looks like 50/1; that is because the 50th year is also the 1st year of the next Shmittah and Yovel cycle. So, how do we know that this is a correct statement? YHWH shows us ‘patterns’ and ‘cycles’ to teach us concepts relating to agriculture, time, prophecy, and even His appointed times. Every year YHWH is teaching His people how to count the years leading up to the Yovel through the counting of the days from the First Fruits offering up to Shavuot (also called ‘Feast of Harvest). It is the same pattern. So how do we count the Yovel? It is found within the counting of the days leading up to Shavuot.

Lev 23:10-11 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before YHWH, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

Lev 23:15-16 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto YHWH.

Each time the word ‘Sabbath’ is used in Lev 23:10-11 & 15-16, it is the Hebrew word ‘Shabbat’ (H7676) which means the 7th day Shabbat. The ‘morrow after the Sabbath’ is always the following day after the 7th day which is Sunday, the 1st day. The chart below shows the pattern of how we are to count the days starting with the 1st day after the weekly Sabbath that occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This day is on the 1st day of the week (Sunday) when the High Priest performs the ‘wave sheaf’ offering of the First-Fruits of the harvest before YHWH (Lev 23:11). Notice that the 50th day, which is the next day after the 7th Sabbath, is also on the 1st day of the week.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Shabbat |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 (3) |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 (4) |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 (5) |
| 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 (6) |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 (7) |
| **50**/1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Counting the days leading up to Shavuot has the same pattern as counting the years leading up to the Yovel (Jubilee). The following chart is in ‘years’. The numbers in parenthesis in the far right column are the number of Shmittahs (land Sabbaths) within that particular Yovel (Jubilee) cycle. Remember, there are to be seven Shmittahs and then the Yovel year which will also be the 1st year of the next Yovel.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 (3) |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 (4) |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 (5) |
| 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 (6) |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 (7) |
| **50**/1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |

Notice within the chart that the cycle continues to repeat itself while still keeping in line with the cycles of ‘7’. If you set aside the 50th year and make that separate from the normal seven year cycle, there will be an added year, making one [8] eight year cycle which does not fit. The counting will be off.

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (1), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (1),

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (2), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (2),

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (3), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (3),

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (4), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (4),

Correct

Incorrect

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (5), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (5),

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (6), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (6),

[7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (7), [7] 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (7),

[8] 50,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (1), [7] 50/1,2,3,4,5,6,7 (1),

Again, the counting of the days (called the ‘counting of the Omer’) from the 1st day after the regular Shabbat during the Feast of Unleavened Bread will always begin on Sunday, the 1st day of the week and will end on the 50th day after the seventh Shabbat which will again be on Sunday, the 1st day of the week. The days of the week stay the same and there is not a need for eight days; rather, the 50th day is the 1st day of the week and the week does not change the cycle of seven days. If Shavuot repeated itself, it would have the same pattern as the Yovel cycle. (The following chart is in ‘days’)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Shabbat |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 (7) |
| Shavuot **50**/1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |

The scriptures below show the similarities concerning Shavuot and the Yovel.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lev 23:10-11,15-17 | Lev 25:2-5,8-12 |
| Lev 23:10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: Lev 23:11 And he shall wave the sheaf before YHWH, to be accepted for you: on the \*morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. Lev 23:15 And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; **seven Sabbaths** shall be complete: Lev 23:16 Even unto the morrow after the **seventh Sabbath\*\*** shall ye number **fifty** days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto YHWH. Lev 23:17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baken with leaven; *they are* the **firstfruits unto YHWH**. (Feast of Shavuot)\**this would be the 1st day of the week- a Sunday.*\*\**this would be the 50th day- a Sunday*(emphasis mine) | Lev 25:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH. Lev 25:3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; Lev 25:4 But in the **seventh** year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for YHWH: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. Lev 25:8 And thou shalt number seven **Sabbaths of years** unto thee, **seven times seven years**; and the space of the **seven Sabbaths** of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Lev 25:9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile (Yovel) to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. Lev 25:10 And ye shall hallow the **fiftieth year**, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile (Yovel) unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. Lev 25:11 A jubile (Yovel) shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed. Lev 25:12 For it *is* the jubile (Yovel); it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.  |

Some may argue that this way of determining the Yovel doesn’t line up with scripture and this next verse is usually brought up:

Lev 25:2-4 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, a Sabbath for YHWH: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

According to what I have shown in the counting and Shmittahs of the Yovel cycle; after a Yovel, there will only be five years to plant and harvest before the next Shmittah and people will use this to say that this way of determining the Yovel is wrong because one needs 6 years to plant and harvest before the next Shmittah. If that is the case, then how does anyone reconcile these verses:

Exo 20:8-10 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of YHWH thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

Exo 23:12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

Lev 23:3 Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of YHWH in all your dwellings.

Deu 5:12-14 Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as YHWH thy Elohim hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of YHWH thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.

After reading these verses, how can anyone work 6 days if one of those days is a Feast day or appointed time such as ‘Day of Atonement’, ‘Feast of Tabernacles’, ‘Feast of Unleavened Bread’, or Shavuot? The fact of the matter is that normally there would be 6 days work within the week but there is an exception to the instruction and that is YHWH’s Feast days as described in Leviticus 23. Here is an example: If the ‘Day of Atonement’ falls on any day other than the weekly Shabbat (in this scenario, let’s say it is to be observed on a Wednesday), how can there be 6 days of work done? Remember that on the Day of Atonement, no work was to be done. Again, there are certain ‘exceptions’ to the instructions- this being one of them. According to this scenario, only five days of work could be done. Is this wrong and does it go against the instructions of YHWH?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Shabbat |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | Atonement | 4 | 5 | Rest |

With this thinking in mind, doesn’t it make sense that the Yovel year also starts the next Yovel cycle? (The following chart is in ‘years’)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 (7) |
| **50** / 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |

When to begin the Shmittah and Yovel

It is widely accepted in Judaism that the Hebrew year begins in the 7th month called ‘Tishri’ (Sept./Oct. of Gregorian calendar) on the 1st day. This day in Judaism is commonly called Rosh Hashanah which literally means ‘head (of) the year’ although the correct Biblical name for this Feast of YHWH is called Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting/blowing). Is this the right month to start the year? YHWH gives His people clear instructions on when to start the new year, that being in the 1st month of the year- the month ‘Abib’ (Mar./Apr).

Exo 12:1-2 And YHWH spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the

first month of the year to you.

Exo 13:4 This day came ye out in the month Abib.

From scripture, the Bible specifies that the 1st month of the year is the month of Abib. Later in scripture it is written that the children of Israel came into the land of Canaan at the beginning of the year, Abib- not Tishri- in accordance with Leviticus 25:2.

Lev 25:2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH.

The Book of Joshua tells that the Israelites ate of the ‘old corn’ of the land and indeed arrived in the promised land in the month of Abib.

Jos 5:10-12 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

As YHWH has instructed, each year begins in the month of Abib, the 1st month and the Shmittah year is no different…from Abib to Abib.

What are YHWH’s instructions concerning the Shmittah and Yovel?

YHWH instructs us what we are to do (and not do) in Leviticus chapter 25, Deuteronomy 15:-1-18, and Deuteronomy 31:10-13.

1. Six years sow your field and prune your vineyard and gather in the crops, but the seventh year is a Sabbath of rest for the land, a Sabbath for YHWH.
2. In the seventh year there is no sowing of your field nor pruning your vineyard. No reaping of what grows of itself of your harvest. The land is to rest. Eat what you have stored up in the sixth year.
3. What grows of itself you and your animals and the wild animals may eat.
4. Open up your fields and vineyards so that all may eat of any wild crops.
5. Free those who have become your servants/slaves.
6. You are to remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt.
7. The year of the Yovel is the year to proclaim liberty throughout the land.
8. In the year of the Yovel the land shall have its rest like the Shmittah year.
9. In the year of the Yovel every person/servant is allowed to return to their

possession and to their family.

10.) Details concerning valuation and redemption price of hired servants. 11.) Release of debt to anyone who owes you money.

12.) If you have a person (of the faith) who is in need and asks you for a loan, you shall surely lend to that person. (Deu 15:7-9)

13.) Read aloud the Torah at the Feast of Tabernacles for Israel to hear.

The Shmittah and Yovel is to be kept regardless if one lives in the land of Israel or outside of the land. This will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

Should we still keep the Shmittah and Yovel if we are not in Israel?

I have heard people say that if you are not in the land of Israel you do not have to keep the Shmittah or Yovel years and they will use the following scripture to prove their point.

**Lev 25:1-13** And YHWH spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH.

Because scripture says “…when ye come into the land…” then keep the Shmittah. However, if one would use this type of thinking, then how does one interpret the following scripture:

**Deu 18:9-11** When thou art come into the land which YHWH thy Elohim giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you *any one* that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, *or* that useth divination, *or* an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

Based on this verse and the thinking of instructions that only apply “when ye come into the land”, is it then acceptable to make your son or daughter pass through the fire or use divination because you are not in the land? Of course not! These same instructions apply to those whether they live in the land or don’t live in the land of Israel.

Even the Rabbis understood the Jubilee should be kept outside of Israel. In the Babylonian Talmud – Mas. Rosh HaShana 9b, it is written:

**‘But it is written ‘Jubilee’?(16) — This is to show that it must be kept even outside of Palestine.’**

There are other verses in the Torah that can be used concerning this topic and I would encourage you to diligently seek them out for further study.

When will the next Shmittah and Yovel occur according to Biblical chronology?

This will be very difficult to explain in such a short paper so it will be easier to paraphrase and be brief with the chronology. I would highly encourage you to check out [www.sightedmoon.com](http://www.sightedmoon.com) for Joseph Dumond’s teachings on Biblical chronology and also his book, Remembering the Sabbatical Years of 2016 for further insight. Joseph has shown in his research that 2016 is the next Shmittah year. As of 2013, we are in the 119th Yovel, the 4th year of the 3rd Shmittah cycle. The following chart will give a better visual of this:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1st Shmittah | 2nd Shmittah | 3rd Shmittah | 4th Shmittah | 5th Shmittah | 6th Shmittah | 7th Shmittah |
| 2002/7 | 2009/14 | 2016/21 | 2023/28 | 2030/35 | 2037/42 | 2044/49 |
| 2001/6 | 2008/13 | 2015/20 | 2022/27 | 2029/34 | 2036/41 | 2043/48 |
| 2000/5 | 2007/12 | 2014/19 | 2021/26 | 2028/33 | 2035/40 | 2042/47 |
| 1999/4 | 2006/11 | ***2013/18*** | 2020/25 | 2027/32 | 2034/39 | 2041/46 |
| 1998/3 | 2005/10 | 2012/17 | 2019/24 | 2026/31 | 2033/38 | 2040/45 |
| 1997/2 | 2004/9 | 2011/16 | 2018/23 | 2025/30 | 2032/37 | 2039/44 |
| 1996/1 | 2003/8 | 2010/15 | 2017/22 | 2024/29 | 2031/36 | 2038/43 |

1996 = 119th Jubilee 2002,2009,2016,2023,2030,2037,2044 = 7 Shmittah Years

This places the last Jubilee in the Year 2045. Do we know exactly what will happen until then? No. But we do know that prophecy from the book of Revelation still has to occur before Messiah comes. It is of the utmost importance that we keep the next Shmittah (2016) as best we can. Remember what happened to the ancient Israelites who did not keep the Shmittah? YHWH sent them into exile so that the land could make-up its Shmittah years that it did not receive from the Israelites.

2Ch 36:20-21 And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfil the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbath: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

This is exactly what YHWH said He would do if they would not obey:

Lev 26:33-35 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbath, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye *be* in your enemies’ land; *even* then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbath. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your Sabbath, when ye dwelt upon it.

So, how do we know YHWH’s timeline for man? It can be found in Genesis 6:3.

**Gen 6:3** And YHWH said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.**H8141**

The English word ‘years’ in Genesis 6:3 comes from the Hebrew word ‘ **שׁנה** ‘ pronounced ‘sha-neh’ (Strong’s Concordance #H8141). This word can mean ‘years’ but more importantly it has the meaning of ‘a revolution of time’. In the context of this verse, is there anyone you know in recent history that has lived to 120 years? No, though a Yovel fits well into this scripture in that YHWH’s spirit shall not always strive with man (flesh)…that his time shall be **120 Yovel’s**. This next equation is where many people will take 120 Yovel cycles multiplied by 50 year cycles which equates to 6000 years, but it has been shown here that a Yovel is 49 years and if one takes this number and multiplies it by 120 Yovel cycles, the total years would be 5880 (5881) years, a difference of 120 years!

So based on this equation of 5880 years, where are we at in YHWH’s timeline?

In the following chart we know that there was 2255 years from the creation of Adam to the death of Jacob:



The chart on the next page uses information from the Bible and some information from Sefer Yashar (The Book of Jasher). The rows with numbers in black and underlined show the years from the creation of Adam. For instance, below the ‘**1948**’we see that Abraham was born {1948 years from the creation of Adam). The row of numbers in black below the underlined row is the 430 year timeline until Israel left Egypt (Exodus 12:40). In order for the Exodus 12:40 scripture (430 years until Israel left Egypt) and the 400 years of affliction (found in Genesis 15:13) to line up correctly, YHWH made a covenant with Abraham when Abraham was 80 years old. This is the only age for Abraham that fits within the Biblical chronology. The covenant in Genesis 15:13 started the 430 year timeline. The 400 years of affliction started when Isaac was ‘weaned’ at the age of 10 (Genesis 21:8-10) as Ishmael was ‘mocking’ Isaac and Sarah had Abraham drive away Hagar and Ishmael from them. These dates and ages are mathematically the only way to rectify the 430 years from the Genesis 15 covenant and the 400 years of Abraham’s descendants being afflicted. I’ve included other dates from the Sefer Yashar that seem to fit within the allowable timetable of 430 years. The chart below also contains key dates highlighted in yellow. These dates identify a Yovel for that particular year. It was a Yovel year when Jacob overcame his fear of Esau and crossed over into Canaan. When Jacob died in the land of Egypt, that year was a Yovel year. Even more importantly, Israel came into the promised land on a Yovel year, 2500 years after the creation of Adam. This event lines up with what YHWH said to Moses on Mt. Sinai:

Lev 25:1-2 And YHWH spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto YHWH.



The following chart shows the years from the creation of Adam to the end date of 5881, which is the 120th Yovel completing YHWH’s timeline for mankind. Notice that the Yovel ‘years’ are numbered 1 to 120 and next to each Yovel is the corresponding year from the creation of Adam. Highlighted dates in Yellow represent the year that Jacob came into Canaan (2206), the year Jacob died in Egypt (2255) and the year Israel came into the promise land (2500). The other date (3137) is the year in which Israel had a Yovel during the campaign of Sennacharib. This date will be explained further in this teaching.



Known Historical Recorded Shmittah Years:

There are at least 12 known historically recorded Shmittah years that can be found in the Bible (plus two more recently discovered in the Dead Sea region at Zoar) or other historical sources confirmed through Archeology. Here is a simple chart:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 701 BC | Sennacharib King of Assyria attacks Judah 2 Kings 19:29 |
| 700 BC | Yovel year 2 Kings 19:29 |
| 456 BC | Nehemiah read the Torah (Deu 31:10-13) Nehemiah 8:18 |
| 162 BC | 1 Maccabees 16:14 & Josephus Antiquities  |
| 134 BC | 1 Maccabees & Josephus Antiquities |
| 43 BC | Julius Caesar & Josephus Antiquities |
| 36 BC | Josephus Antiquities 14.16.12 |
| 22 BC | Josephus Antiquities 15.9.1 |
| 42 CE | Josephus Antiquities 18 |
| 56 CE | Recorded debt in year 2 reign of Nero Caesar  |
| 70 CE | Sabbath Year |
| 133 CE | Rental contracts beginning of Bar Kochba revolt |
| 140 CE | Rental contracts near end of Bar Kochba revolt |
| 439 CE | \*Added. Zoar Tombstone inscription (5th yr of Shmittah) |
| 515 CE | \*Added. Zoar Tombstone inscription (4th yr of Shmittah) |

(Sabbatical Chart referenced from Remembering the Sabbatical Years of 2016, Joseph Dumond)

\*The Zoar Tombstone inscriptions can be found at the Israeli Museum in Jerusalem

Digging further into the above dates, we discover the following:

2Ki 19:29 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

This scripture is YHWH’s response to King Hezekiah in regards to Sennacherib besieging Jerusalem and what Israel should do. Later, YHWH says that He will defend the city and the Assyrian King will not enter it. Notice that YHWH gives Hezekiah a ‘sign’. That being to eat of the crops that grow of themselves this year (1st year) and the same for the 2nd year. In the 3rd year plant-sow-reap. This ‘sign’ recorded in 2 Kings 19:29 is none other than a 7th year Shmittah (land Sabbath) followed by a Yovel (Jubilee)! Can we figure out the historical date when this event happened? YES! The Sennacherib prism (or Taylor prism), found in 1830 amongst the ruins of Sennacherib’s palace at Nineveh (present day Iraq), gives account of the victory battles of the Assyrian King. Many scholars date Sennacherib’s campaign against the kingdom of Judah at 701 BC. This date lines up perfectly within the chronological timeline of history and the Biblical account. I would encourage you to read The Sabbath and Jubilee Cycle, Qadesh La Yahweh Press [www.yahweh.org/yahweh2.html](http://www.yahweh.org/yahweh2.html)

For deeper insight into the 701 BC Chronology.

Sennacherib’s Prism

Charting this out on a timeline, it would look like this:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | **[701 BC]** 49 (7) |
| **[700 BC]** **50** / 1 | **[699 BC]** 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 (1) |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 (2) |

701 BC – 49th year, the 7th Sabbatical

700 BC – 50th year, a Jubilee

699 BC – The year following the Jubilee

Inserting what we know as dates into scripture, we have the following:

2Ki 19:29 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year [**701 BC, Shmittah**] such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year [**700 BC, Yovel**] that which springeth of the same; and in the third year [**699 BC, year after Yovel**]sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

This scripture is a **HUGE** marker for us to help determine the Yovel and when the next one will be in our lifetime. Based on this scripture and Assryian records found through Archeology we see that -700 BC was a Yovel year. Adding 49 year cycles from that point brings us to the last Yovel, which was in 1996! \*Remember, when figuring this out, keep in mind that there is no 0 between the dates of -1 BC to 1 CE. Notice that if you count each of the numbers within all the rows and columns you come up with 57 Yovel’s (including the next Yovel in 2045).



We also know that from the creation of Adam until the Israelites left Egypt was 2458 years. We can also chart this out with Yovel years. The following chart shows the years increasing from the creation of Adam. In fulfilment of YHWH’s instructions to observe a land Sabbath when Israel enters into the promise land (Lev 25:1-2), we can make a strong conclusion that it was in the year 2500 from the creation of Adam, exactly on a Yovel! This follows the same pattern when Jacob entered the land with his family after his encounter with his brother Esau. If you count each of the numbers in the columns you will come up with 51 Jubilees.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *50* | *540* | *1030* | *1520* | 2010 | ***2500*** |
| 99 | 589 | 1079 | 1569 | 2059 |  |
| 148 | 638 | 1128 | 1618 | 2108 |  |
| 197 | 687 | 1177 | 1667 | 2157 |  |
| 246 | 736 | 1226 | 1716 | **2206** |  |
| 295 | 785 | 1275 | 1765 | **2255** |  |
| 344 | 834 | 1324 | 1814 | 2304 |  |
| 393 | 883 | 1373 | 1863 | 2353 |  |
| 442 | 932 | 1422 | 1912 | 2402 |  |
| 491 | 981 | 1471 | 1961 | 2451 |  |

One area that is hard to track is the timeline of the Judges and also the timeline of the Kings of the split kingdom. Using Edward Thiele’s work, The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings, Thiele has identified that the year Solomon became king was in the year 970 BC. We can now present a more accurate timeline that lines up with other calculations that will now be discussed. There is a discrepancy with the Biblical account of 1 Kings 6:1 and the chronological dates. (A timeline sheet of the chronology of the Judges and Kings is included on the next page).

**1Ki 6:1** And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

There are multiple problems with this verse because the KJV has **480 years** and other translations such as the Septuagint reads **440 years.** But all the numbers and dates have to fit within the window of 5881 years to fulfill YHWH’s timeline for mankind (flesh). We have a mathematical equation to figure out: 2458 + 2045 + 966 + X = 5881 (\*remember, there is no 0 from 1BC to 1CE)

5881 years for mankind -2458 years until the Exodus from Egypt = 3423 years left

3423 Years left – 2045 (the year of the next Yovel) = 1378 years left

1378 years left - 966 (1BC to 967 BC =966 yrs) for Solomon’s 4th year reign = 412

**X = 412 years! So from 2458 (1379 BC) until Solomon’s 4th yr 2870 (967 BC) is 412 years!** According to the chronology, the years from Israel leaving Egypt (2458 years from Adam) to the 4th year of the reign of Solomon (2870 years from Adam) would be only 412 years, not 440 or 480 years. We now have all the data that fits within the 5881 years! I understand that this may be hard to follow, so I have attached the following chart that may help out with the mathematics.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Years from the creation of Adam until Israel leaves Egypt | Years counting from 1 BC to the 4th year of King Solomon’s reign | Years counting from 1 CE to today’s date of 2013 CE | Years left within this Yovel cycle (120th Yovel in year 2045 CE) |
| Yr 1 to Yr 2,458  | 966 BC to 1 BC | 1 CE to 2013 CE | 2013 to 2045 CE |
| = **2,458 Years** | = **966 Years** | = **2013 Years** | **= 32 Years** |

We now have to add up the following years from the above chart.

2,458 years + 966 years + 2,013 years + 32 years = **5,469 years**

If we take the 5,469 years from YHWH’s timeline for mankind of 5,881 years (5,881 – 5,469) we end up with 412 years. This should be the total number of years reported in 1 Kings 6:1; 412 years, not 480.

This next chart shows the timeline of the Judges and Kings of Israel, keep in mind that we have solved the years between the Israelites leaving Egypt (1379 BC) until the 4th year of King Solomon’s reign (967 BC) being 412 years. There are overlapping years in the chronology when the Judges ‘judged’ Israel.

Chart of Judges and Kings



The next two pages are additional charts showing the 840 Shmittah years within the 5881 year plan of YHWH. As you will see, they all fit into place.

The following chart shows the Shmittah years FROM Adam until the last Shmittah year within the 5881 years. Notice they are in seven year ‘patterns’. Remember that between BC and common era (CE), there is no year ‘0’. The dates colored in blue are in the BC timeline and those dates colored in light red are in the common era timeline. The two dates in bold are: [1] the 7th Shmittah year (49th year) before Israel entered into Canaan **2499**, and [2] the 7th Shmittah year (49th year) as one of the dates referencing 1 Kings 19:29, the year Sennacharib invaded Judah- **3136**.



This chart is an overlay of the previous chart placing the dates in their respective years. As you can see, the numbers and dates fit! The two dates in bold are **1338 BC**, the year before Israel entered the land of Canaan, and **701 BC**, the year Sennacharib invaded Judah. Again, both dates are 7th Shmittah years, the last year before the Yovel! Notice the other dates of 456, 162, 134, 43, 36, and 22 BC; along with 42, 56, 70, 133, and 140 CE- all fall on Shmittah years. These are the 12 known historically recorded Shmittah years and they each fall into place with a 49 year Yovel cycle. They would not fit into a 50 year Yovel cycle. If you look at the far right column you will see that our next Shmittah year is 2016…we are in the last Yovel cycle!



This last chart (for reference) is a more detailed account of the Exodus showing that Israel was in the wilderness for more than 40 years AFTER they left Egypt.

It is my opinion that the plagues of Egypt only lasted 6 months; from around the Fall Feasts of YHWH (Sept./Oct.) until Passover (Mar./Apr.). Moses was 80 years old when he spoke to Pharaoh. This is when the plagues began. In order for the times to fit within the window of 42 years from 2458 after Adam until 2500 (a Yovel year), AND Moses passing away at the age of 120 (two years BEFORE Israel enters into Canaan), the plagues could not have lasted more than one year. If so, then the dates of Moses would not fit. Exodus 7:7 says that Moses was 80 years old when he spoke to Pharaoh and if the plagues lasted 2 to 3 years then Moses would have to be 82 – 83 years old BEFORE Israel left Egypt and would have then died (at 120 years) 4 – 5 years before Israel entered into the land of Canaan.



How should we keep the Shmittah today?

Overall, YHWH’s Torah is the same yesterday as it is today and so many concepts and principals still apply to us current day. Quite simply, if we are trying to follow YHWH’s instructions of the Shmittah in today’s world; we are instructed not to plant, harvest or reap anything from the land. We can eat that which the land produces on its own. Anything in the wild or what grows without any work from us is ok to pick and eat for the day. For instance, if you have an apple tree or grapevines (5 years or older) then you may pick what you need for that day, but not harvest to store up. If you have a fenced in garden then this is the year that you open your garden up to anyone (and that includes your neighbor and wild and domestic animals) to freely eat from anything that has sprung up. Any wild edible plants are ok to eat. Are you wondering if you will have enough food? Just as we stock up on food supplies during the 6th year to carry us through the 7th year Shmittah, so too we stock up on food supplies during the 6th year to carry us through the last Shmittah (49th year) and Yovel (50th year). YHWH has said that He would send us the blessing in the 6th year (Lev 25:21) which will bring forth produce for three years. Do you believe this? He said that He would provide!!

One thing that my wife and I feel led to do is to try and observe this command as best we can by storing up food items in the 6th year (2015) and not buying anything from the grocery store (produce, etc.) in the Shmittah year of 2016. Anything that grows of itself can be eaten. We would like to try and buy only meat that is free range (poultry) and grass fed (cows from pasture) not fed store bought grains. This includes the eggs from the poultry and the milk and cheese from pasture animals (Biblically clean processed). This is only our opinion here and what we feel led to follow along with our own personal convictions and we would encourage everyone to carefully pray about how they should observe the Shmittah.

If you have anyone that owes you anything, you need to release them of their debt to you- no matter how much they owe you. This also includes sin debt. Ideally, in accordance with Deuteronomy 31:10-13, read the Torah out loud for the brethren to hear during Sukkot that they “…may hear, and that they may learn, and fear YHWH your Elohim, and observe to do all the words of this Torah. (31:12)” Each person should make an attempt and try to keep the Shmittah year as best as they can. I believe YHWH looks into our hearts to see if we truly are committed in keeping his instructions. This is only a partial list and I would encourage you to read these passages carefully to understand His instructions clearly. Remember, IF we love YHWH with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength; then we should try to honor the Shmittah and Yovel years BECAUSE we love Him and want to obey His Word! It comes down to the heart: do you want to love and obey our Heavenly Father and attempt to keep the Shmittah as best you can or do you choose to simply ignore his instructions? You decide…

Why is it important to keep the Shmittah and Yovel?

As discussed earlier, the Israelites were exiled for not only disobeying YHWH’s Torah, but for not observing the Shmittah year or the Yovel. The land was not given its rest. Servants were not set free. Debts were not canceled. Nehemiah says it best.

Neh 10:28-31 And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of Elohim, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding; They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in Elohim's Torah, which was given by Moses the servant of Elohim, and to observe and do all the commandments of YHWH our Adonai, and his judgments and his statutes; And that we would not give our daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons: And *if* the people of the land bring ware or any victuals on the Sabbath day to sell, *that* we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the holy day: and *that* **we would leave (let alone) the seventh year, and the exaction of every debt.**

If you love the Elohim of Israel and desire to obey His instructions and keep His Torah, then this commandment for the Shmittah is like the Sabbath and Holy Days.

Exo 23:11 But the seventh *year* thou shalt let it (the land) 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.

**Lev 25:3-14** Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land, **a Sabbath for YHWH**: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land. And the Sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat. And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed. For it *is* the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession. And if thou sell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyest *ought* of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another: Lev

Lev 25:17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear your Elohim: for I *am* YHWH your Elohim.

By doing what YHWH says which includes observing the Shmittah and Yovel, here is what HE will do for YOU:

Lev 25:18-21 Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: **Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years**.

Deu 11:22-27 For **if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments** which I command you, to do them, to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him; **Then** will YHWH drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be. There shall no man be able to stand before you: *for* YHWH your Elohim shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you. Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; **A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of YHWH your Elohim**, which I command you this day:

Our desire should be to love and obey our Heavenly Father, we need to keep His commandments. Keeping the Shmittah and Yovel is another commandment we need to keep, regardless if we live in Israel or not. Let’s all try our best to follow after YHWH and keep his commandments, that includes keeping the next Shmittah year of 2016!

Shalom Aleichem ~

[www.returnoftheremant.com](http://www.returnoftheremant.com)

Questions? Contact us at: returnoftheremnant@gmail.com

Or visit us on the web at: [www.returnoftheremnant.com](http://www.returnoftheremnant.com)

RESOURCES & REFERENCES:

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