



churban habayis where Shmittah was kept on a majority of farmland here in Eretz Yisroel. The Chazon Ish persevered and persevered until his goal to bring Shmittah back was realized.

And all the farmers have reported that they had tremendous brocho and they didn't lose out by keeping Shmittah! Hashem keeps His promises.

Shmittah is a statement of absolute bitochon – an open recognition that we don't own anything in this world and all parnossoh comes from Hashem. Most of the time we blend our bitochon with hishtadlus and we have to keep in mind that Hashem is behind our efforts and our success. But Shmittah demands that we have bitochon without any hishtadlus whatsoever and rely completely on Hashem. Treat Hashem's promise like you would treat the promise of a multi-billionaire to support you. You need to have the same level of confidence and tranquility as if a wealthy human being made this promise.

Then we have the mitzvah of Yovel.

When Klal Yisroel initially came into Eretz Yisroel, it was very apparent that each shevet was receiving a gift directly from Hashem. They were each apportioned an area of land that was designated especially for that shevet. But as decades and decades pass by, that initial feeling that this portion of land is a gift to me directly from Hashem begins to fade. You naturally start to feel that you have total rights to this land to do with as you please. Every property owner has near absolute rights to do with his property whatever he wishes. He can sell it, give it away for free, and even destroy it.

But Eretz Yisroel is not that way. Every 50 years, the original chaluka is returned to the original family it was bestowed to. The ancestor received a gift from Hashem, and no matter what his descendants did with it, it comes back at Yovel. So if they sold it to someone outside the family, and the buyer cultivated it and invested all his time and effort in making it fertile and valuable, when Yovel arrives, it simply goes back to the seller. It isn't his to keep. It reminds us that this land belongs to Hashem, He gave it to us as a gift, and it remains a gift to each family for all time.

Then we have another halacha. Not only do you have to be careful to sell the land for a limited number of years and not mislead the buyer into thinking that he is owning it for good, you have to be honest and upfront about the defects of any item you sell. It is not limited to land. Even the shoes you sell or the computers you sell are not fully yours. They are all Hashem's property and He is letting you receive the profits on condition that you avoid deception and dishonesty in your business. And Hashem guarantees financial success – not only to farmers who keep Shmittah – but to anyone who is making an honest parnossoh and doesn't cheat others.

This theme goes through many mitzvos in the parsha. The reason why Behar with its consistent message is read during Sefiroh, is because this message is an integral part of kabbolas HaTorah. A true kabbolas HaTorah demands that we recognize that we don't run the world and we are living purely out of Hashem's kindness.

We are living in incredible times. Hashem is sending clear messages to us every day and you have to be blind not to see it. Hashem is shouting at us to wake up. We were miraculously saved from a massive attack over the entire country before Pesach. Our greatest enemies are getting killed without our having to lift a finger! Hashem is telling us He is completely in charge of what happens in the world!

In this week's parsha we are given extreme reminders that the world is not ours. The Torah makes incredible demands to force us to recognize that everything belongs to Hashem and He guarantees that by keeping the Torah we will not lose out. Although it was difficult to give up a secure steady employment and go out on his own and rely on Hashem, my grandfather had to make a decision about who is running the world. And he decided that since Hashem is running the world, all he has to do is follow what He wants me to do, and He will take care of me. And Hashem saw to it that he had a much greater parnossoh because of his commitment to shmiras Shabbos, much more than if he had decided to remain a tailor and be mechallel Shabbos.

This is how we prepare for kabbolas HaTorah.