

Transcript – The Shmita Year_ Q and A

In the meantime I'll say Chag Semeach and Chag Semeach to those who are watching with us today. We're going to start with Torah reading before we go into the main message. And they're connected to a little bit of a degree. That it's the Feast of Yom Teruah; or Trumpets as they call it, but also they're very different in the meaning of them.

Alrighty, I'm going to be speaking on the Shemita at Sukkot but going into a whole different aspect of the Shemita. But since the Shemita is actually starting today, I wanted to go over some of the more technical points of the timing of the Shemita and why are we starting it now, as a lot of people are asking.

Before I do that, I just ... from yesterday we are having our sermon on Babylon and I forgot my statistics I wanted to read to you. So before we start on the Torah reading on the Shemita I would just like to read some of these statistics to you. Because when we talk about end-time Babylon and it boggles my mind how anybody cannot see that it's United States of America. But remember you're seeing Babylon now at the **end of Babylon's 70 years**.

But I want to read you some statistics from at the beginning of Babylon. So these are statistics that are coming from 1950. So again, yesterday we said we don't know **exactly** when Babylon's reign started. We know the end time started in 1945, the last generation. And it seems to be Babylon's reign would start somewhere between 1945 and 1950. So I'm going to read you some statistics from 1950:

- In 1950 world petroleum was almost 3800 million barrels. 52% of that came only from America.
- In 1950 Britain and America mined one and half times as much coal as every nation on earth combined. So they mined a 150% of what everybody on the earth mined in coal.
- In 1950 America produced 60% of the world's steel. So remember the biggest thing of America is the production; the buying and selling – the production, **Revelation 18**. And the whole world combined only produces only 40% of the steel and America produces 60%.
- America produced 25% of milk, cheese, butter, and beef.
- America produced 70% of all the automobiles in the world.
- They produce 47% of the world's radio sets. And 69% of the world's television sets.
- They produce 1 1/3 times as much pick iron as all nations combined. They produce 95% of the world's nickel. 80% of the world's aluminum. And 75% of zinc.
- In America 1950, had 3 times the gold reserves as every nation on earth combined.
- They had over half of the world's merchant fleet tonnage. And they possessed half of the world's railroad mileage.

So like I always say, if America isn't Babylon, give me an alternative. I don't believe the Vatican's producing too much of any of those things. So that was for yesterday, today is the Shemita. So I'm going to start here in Leviticus 25. Again this won't be very long. It's only our Torah reading. But I do want to go over a few technical points for the Shemita. Leviticus 25:

Leviticus 25:1-7 *And YAHWEH spoke to Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, When you come into the land which I am giving to you, then the land shall keep a Sabbath to YAHWEH. You shall sow your field six years, and you shall prune your vineyard six years, and shall gather its produce. And*

*in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest to the land, a Sabbath to YAHWEH. You shall not sow your field, and you shall not prune your vineyard. **You shall not reap that which grows of itself of your harvest; and you shall not gather the grapes of your unkempt vine; it shall be a year of rest to the land.** And the Sabbath of the land shall be to you for food, to you, and to your male slave, and to your female slave, and to your hired one, and to your tenant, those living among you; and to your livestock, and to the animal in your land, all its produce shall be food for you.*

That's Leviticus 25:1-7 ... drop down to verse 11:

Leviticus 25:11-12 *It is a jubilee year, the fiftieth year; it is to you. You shall not sow, nor reap that which grows of itself, nor gather from its unkempt vines; for it is a jubilee, it is holy to you; **you shall eat its increase out of the field.***

So it's not saying ... it's saying that you can pick what you see in the field, but you don't **gather**, you don't gather to yourself. Let's drop down to verse 20:

Leviticus 25:20-22 *And when you say, What shall we eat in the seventh year; for, lo, we may not sow nor gather our increase? Then I have commanded My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it shall produce the increase for three years; and you shall sow the eighth year, and shall eat of the old crop until the ninth year, until the coming in of the crop; you shall eat of the old.*

So Yahweh is saying here that if you're faithful and you keep the Shemita that He's going to bless the sixth year to produce for three years because when the seventh year is over you have to plant and you have to wait so many months until the fruit comes up, or grain, whatever. So He's saying He's going to supernaturally take care of this.

If we go to Exodus 12 because the next question comes, **when do we start the Shemita** though? Exodus 12 in verse 1 and 2:

Exodus 12:1-2 *And YAHWEH said to Moses and to Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be the head of months for you. It shall be the first of the months of the year for you.*

And He's talking about Aviv. So if Aviv is the first of the months, according to the Biblical calendar, then why are we starting the Shemita now on the first day of the seventh? Because according to the Biblical calendar there's two calendars that actually over cross each other. **There's the yearly calendar; or the annual calendar; which goes from Aviv to Aviv. But there's an agricultural calendar that's goes from Tishri to Tishri.** So I'll prove that to you now. Let's go to Exodus 34 in verse 21:

Exodus 34:21 *You may work six days, and on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest.*

So the first thing we see here is the principle of the Sabbath day – six days you work, the seventh day you rest; whether its plowing time or harvest, it's the same. So in the Shemita year it would be the same. You don't sow, you don't reap because where the Sabbath is a weekly event every seventh day, the Shemita is a yearly event every seventh year. Now the next verse:

Exodus 34:22 *And you shall observe a Feast of Weeks for yourself, the first-fruits of the harvest of wheat; also the Feast of Ingathering after (or at) the turn of the year.*

So now this is very interesting scripture because most of the time the feast in the fall is not called Ingathering; it's called the Feast of what? Sukkot. But there's several times where Yahweh calls it Feast of Ingathering and He calls it the Feast of Ingathering when He's talking about the calendar because it's an ingathering of what? All the harvest fruits! And **He's says that this happens at the turn of the year.**

Well, we're in the first day of the seventh month. Why would this be the turn of the year? **Because the agricultural year goes from equinox to equinox;** from the spring equinox in March to the fall equinox that's coming now.

Let's go to Exodus 23, we'll continue this thought. Exodus 23 and one verse, verse 16. Verse 15 is talking about again, keeping Unleavened Bread, keeping these things and then verse 16:

Exodus 23:16 *Also the **Feast of Harvest**, the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. Also the **Feast of Ingathering**, (after or) at the going out of the year, at the gathering your work from the field.*

So again, Yahweh's calling Sukkot again – the Feast of Ingathering, not the Feast of Sukkot. Because when we're looking at the **meaning** of the Feast, we call it Sukkot **because that's the meaning of why we're keeping it, why we're dwelling in booths.** But when we're looking at the calendar and when to keep it, it's called Ingathering **because you're gathering in your fruits.**

So when we're looking at the Shemita year, we have to think logically the way that the Biblical calendar went. And the way the Biblical went is like it says here; this is the **going out** of the year. Right now at this time all of the harvest was taking place. Right around Yom Teruah, what we're keeping today, within a matter of a week let's say, within the matter of one week of Yom Teruah, people would have harvested everything that they had in the field; wheat, dates, barley, grapes, olives, figs, pomegranates – the seven species.

And now is the fun time! They waited all year praying to Yahweh for rain and good harvest to get these things. So now they don't have super bus in those days. They don't have El Dan rental cars. They only have most of them walking service, maybe some rich ones had a camel or a donkey. So now everybody starts going up to Jerusalem. And you're bringing all your harvest with you. And Yahweh says in **Deuteronomy 16:16**, *you are to appear before Him with the harvest that He blessed you with.* And you are to rejoice with your family. You're able to kill an animal and have meat and all the harvest fruits that you got to bring to Jerusalem and you have a blessing before Yahweh.

Because this is the going out of the year; this is when everything is done right now. And you get a few weeks up to a month off. Then after Sukkot you go back to your land and it starts all over again. You have to plow the land. You have to plant your seeds and you wait for the early rain. But you're not going to see your grain for six months, **if Yahweh blesses you.**

So you could see why the Shemita which is all about the land and agriculture, it has to go by the agricultural calendar; or it wouldn't make any other sense. Because do you realize you don't lose any harvest when you go

by the agricultural calendar because the Shemita is just starting now, right? So at least 50% of the harvest could have already been harvested – wheat, dates, barley, grapes, olive, figs, pomegranates. You could have harvested at least 50% of all of that. And **the other 50% would be on the trees that you're going to eat the rest of the year. So you don't lose anything.**

But if you start the Shemita in Aviv that means during Sukkot you couldn't harvest **anything!** And **there would be a year that you would lose your whole harvest except what you can eat at that time.** And how would you get the harvest fruits to go up to Jerusalem? You would only be able to carry one in your hand. So you would actually miss not only your whole Sukkot harvest, you would miss two grain harvests.

Because if you're starting your Shemita in Aviv that means you could have planted now or next month after Sukkot, but you can't harvest in Aviv. So you would lose that whole harvest. Then the next year at Sukkot it would be the Shemita you couldn't even plant. So you would actually lose two whole harvests.

Where now by keeping the Shemita according to the agricultural calendar we wouldn't plant after Sukkot, but Yahweh says from last year He's going to let that go into two years. And then after next Sukkot you can plant again. So there's nothing that's being lost in that sense.

And this is why the Jews called this day, Rosh Hashanah because during a sabbatical year, the day starts, the year starts today. Let's go to **Ezekiel 40**, I want to show you this from scripture. Because all throughout antiquity there's never been a Jubilee that we know of that's been recorded. There are a couple indications of a Jubilee year. One is possibly with Joshua because they use the word *yobel*, but there's nothing for sure except for one scripture. First let me read you Leviticus 25, let's go there first. Because I want to show you that it's not just human logic why we're starting the Shemita year in the seventh month but the scripture tells us this. Leviticus 25 in verse 8:

Leviticus 25:8-10 *And you shall number to yourself seven Sabbaths of years, seven years times seven, and all the days of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be to you forty nine years ... So we see that **the sabbatical year is connected to the Jubilee** ... And you shall let a ram's horn resound ... right? It's the Feast of Yom Teruah ... a signal in the seventh month, in the tenth of the month; in the day of atonement, let a ram's horn pass throughout all your year ... this is in the Jubilee ... and you shall make the fiftieth year holy, one year. And you shall proclaim liberty in the land to those living in it; He shall be a jubilee to you. And you shall return every man to his possession; yea, you shall turn back each to his family.*

So clearly we see that in the Jubilee year; which is another sabbatical year. You don't grow in the Jubilee, just like the sabbatical. That He's saying you're announcing this when? In the tenth day of the seventh month. So where the regular sabbatical year starts on the first day of the seventh month, the Jubilee that's set apart starts on Yom Kippur. So why wouldn't every sabbatical start on Yom Kippur because you don't start the month on the tenth day of month, you start it on the first day of the month.

It's the same reason why we go to the first new moon after the equinox, not before the equinox. So the month starts on day one. It doesn't start on day ten, except for the Jubilee which is something that's totally different that's never even been kept.

The other reason why we start on the first of Tishri and not the tenth of Tishri for the sabbatical year is that you wouldn't have time to harvest your food for Sukkot if that would happen after the year. When the year is over you wouldn't have time to get the fruit for Sukkot for the next year.

So today is the first day of the Shemita right? Next year the Shemita will end again on Yom Teruah and we'll still have a week to ten days to get harvest to take up to Jerusalem. But if it ended on Yom Kippur you wouldn't have any time. You'd have maybe a day; which would be virtually impossible to harvest in a day.

And remember in **Romans 3** the oracles of Yahweh were given to the Jews to preserve it for us. And praise Yahweh that the Jews have preserved that today is Rosh Hashanah. And even though only one of seven is actually Rosh Hashanah, at least they preserved it for us that we know it. So let's go to Ezekiel 40 now because it's the only time in Scripture that shows you a clear cut Jubilee. It says:

Ezekiel 40:1 *In the twenty fifth year of our exile ... Ezekiel 40 verse 1 ... **in the beginning of the year in the tenth of the month**, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck, on that same day the hand of YAHWEH was on me, and He brought me there.*

So this is the only time that we clearly see in Scripture, it's the beginning of the year. Do you know in Hebrew what it's called? Rosh Hashanah; only time in Scripture Rosh Hashanah is every mentioned is Ezekiel 40. But the beginning of the year is on the tenth day of the seventh month which shows it has to be a Jubilee.

One or two other things about the Jubilee and then I think I'll end, is when we look at the spirit of the Jubilee. Now there's a lot of deep spiritual meaning, not to Jubilee, I'm sorry, the Shemita, the sabbatical year. There's a lot of very deep meaning to the sabbatical year of the Shemita. And like I said I'll get into more of that at the message to Sukkot.

But just looking at the commandment side of it; if the command is you're not allowed to plant and you're not allowed to reap; now if some of us are farmers for a living that would be very difficult but it's still a commandment. For most people who have little gardens it's not such a big deal, right? Maybe not though because if you think about it logically from Yahweh's pattern, what is the difference whether you're planting something in your garden and reaping it; or somebody else is farming in the field and selling it all to the supermarket?

So **during the Shemita year, we should not be buying our fruits and vegetables and grain in the supermarket** because they're violating the Shemita commandment. It's no different than if a man was at the corner and he's selling watermelons for 25 cents a watermelon. But you know he's selling them for 25 cents because he stole them from somebody down the road.

You're not going to say, "Well, I didn't steal them so I don't mind buying them." No, if you buy them you're part of that crime of him stealing them. So the same way, **if you're going to the supermarket and you're buying apples that somebody harvested during the Shemita, you're part of his crime.**

And the Shemita primarily was given for Israel, but it's really for all over the world because the nation of Israel went into Diaspora all over the world because they were breaking the Shemita. And in the end time Yahweh

tells us in our Diaspora that if we cry out to Him and repent of our sins and are obedient, He will allow us to come back to the Land. So how do you justify breaking the Shemita in your Diaspora?

Do you know the Jews do something here in Israel because every Passover we have to get rid of our leaven, right? Whatever leaven is in your house: yeast, baking soda, cookies, has to be getting rid of and thrown out. So the Jews take all their leaven and they sell it to an Arab for one week, for one dollar and then when the week is over they buy it back for a dollar. They do the same thing during the Shemita. They sell their land to an Arab for a dollar. The Arab produces all the fruit and vegetables which they take; and then at the end of the year they buy it back for the dollar ... *ha, ha we got over Yahweh*. It doesn't work that way.

There's an old joke that they say that the Rabbi's spend half their time writing the law and the other half figuring out how to get around the law they just wrote. That's not what our job is. So again to buy fruits and vegetable, grain - are people that are breaking the Shemita would be inhibiting their crime.

So what can we do? Maybe some people are saying, "Oh I wish I would have known this before. I could have prepared better." First thing we do is have faith in Yahweh of course, because we didn't prepare because we didn't want to, maybe you didn't know any better. But we have to **trust that He's going to provide for the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, into the ninth year.**

The second thing you can do is buying frozen vegetables that were harvested before the Shemita. Most of them have the date on it when they were put in the bag so you can see. If you have enough room in your freezer, or whatever, you can keep many frozen vegetables.

You could do the same thing with canned food. We were storing war food that we'll use now for the Shemita. Praise Yahweh we didn't have war but maybe that's why He inspired it, for the Shemita? You can also dry your foods out, your fruits. You could dry them out to make dried apples, dried figs, anything.

So there are things that Yahweh has put in the provision that you could still be able to eat fruit and vegetables this year even if you didn't harvest, without breaking the Shemita and buying from people who are breaking the Shemita.

So I think we will stop the tape there and if there's any questions maybe we can go over.

Chag Semeach.