

**“The Magnificent Revelation of the Sifsei Kohen”**

**The “Shemitah” Year Represents the “Day that Is Entirely Shabbat”  
when the Land Will Produce Finished Bread without Man Lifting a Hand**

In honor of the upcoming Shabbas kodesh, parshas Behar, it is fitting that we examine the mitzvah of “shemitah”—which HKB”H reveals to us in this parsha. This calendar year, 5775, is in fact a “shemitah” year. Throughout this year, all “shomrei Mitzvos”—those who observe the Torah and its Mitzvos—observe all of the details and particulars pertaining to the mitzvah of “shemitah.” This year will complete the 825<sup>th</sup> “shemitah” year since the beginning of creation. Let us view the pesukim detailing this special mitzvah (Vayikra 25, 1):

“וידבר ה' אל משה בהר סיני לאמר, דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם, כי תבואו אל הארץ אשר אני נותן לכם ושבתה הארץ שבת לה, שש שנים תזרע שדך ושש שנים תזמור כרמך ואספת את תבואתה, ובשנה השביעית שבת שבתון יהיה לארץ שבת לה, שדך לא תזרע וכרמך לא תזמור.”

-- Hashem spoke to Moshe on Har Sinai, saying: Speak to Bnei Yisrael and say to them: When you come into the land that I give you, the land shall observe a Shabbas for Hashem. For six years you may sow your field and for six years you may prune your vineyard; and you may gather in its crop. But on the seventh year a complete rest there shall be for the land, a Shabbas for Hashem; your field you shall not sow and your vineyard you shall not prune.

Rashi comments: “בהר סיני, מה ענין שמיטה אצל הר סיני, והלא כל המצוות נאמרו מסיני, אלא מה שמיטה נאמרו כללותיה ודקדוקיה מסיני, אף כולן המצוות נאמרו מסיני, אלא מה שמיטה נאמרו כללותיה ודקדוקיה מסיני, אף כולן”—what is the association between “shemitah” and Har Sinai? After all, all of the Mitzvos were stated at Har Sinai. Rather, this passuk teaches us that just as the general rules and the fine points of “shemitah” were stated at Sinai; so, too, the general rules and the fine points of all of the Mitzvos were stated at Sinai. Thus it is taught in Torat Kohanim. The Ohr HaChaim hakadosh inquires: Why did HKB”H choose the mitzvah of “shemitah” specifically to make this fundamental point—that the general rules and fine points of all of the Mitzvos were transmitted at Sinai?

**A Valuable Introduction concerning  
the Mitzvah of “Shemitah”  
from the Teachings of the Sifsei Kohen**

We shall begin our quest to answer these questions by introducing an enlightening insight into the mitzvah of “shemitah” provided by the divine kabbalist, Rabbi Mordechai Cohen, one of the young followers of the Arizal in Tzfat, in his famous sefer Sifsei Kohen. In this week’s parsha, he comments on the following passuk (Vayikra 25, 18): “ועשיתם את חקותי ואת משפטי תשמרו ועשיתם אותם וישבתם על הארץ לבטח, ונתנה הארץ פריה”—you shall perform My decrees and observe My ordinances and perform them; and you shall dwell securely on the land. The land will give its fruit and you will eat to satisfaction; and you will dwell securely upon it. Here are his sacred words:

“אמר פריה ולא אמר פרי, לומר כי כשבראתיה לא בראתיה אלא בשבילכם, שנאמר (בראשית א-א) בראשית, בשביל ישראל שנקראו ראשית, וצווייתה להוציא פרי בלא חרישה ובלא זריעה, כי הפרי שמוציאה עתה על ידי חרישה וזריעה אינה פריה, אלא פרי שזורע האדם שמשליך שם הזרע ועל ידי חרישה, וכתוב (משלי יד-ד) ורב תבואות בכח שור, ומה שזורע עד שמוציאה על ידי יגיעה, לפי שחטא ונאמר לו (בראשית ג-יט) בזעת אפך תאכל לחם, אבל אם אתם תעשו ותשמרו מצוותי שהן מצוות עשה ומצוות לא תעשה, ונתנה הארץ פריה, הפרי שצווייתי לה להוציא בלא זריעה ובלא חרישה, ראייה לזה שאין אתם חורשים בשנה השביעית ולא זורעין והיא מוציאה פירות.”

He notes that the passuk employs the word פריה—meaning “its fruit”—rather than simply stating that it will bear fruit—HKB”H is emphasizing the fact that He created the land specifically for Yisrael and commanded it to produce fruit without plowing or sowing. For, the fruit it bears as a result of plowing and sowing is not its fruit—פריה; it is the fruit of man, who sowed the seed and then plowed the land. To yield that fruit demands labor and effort, because of man’s sin—as it states (Bereishis 3, 19): “By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread.” Yet, if you perform and observe My Mitzvos—which include Mitzvos aseh

and Mitzvos lo ta'aseh—the land will give forth “its fruit”—the fruit I commanded it to yield without the need for sowing or plowing. Proof of this phenomenon is the seventh year, in which you do not plow or sow, and, nevertheless, it produces fruit.

In this manner, he interprets the following passuk in this week's parsha (25, 20): **“וכי תאמרו מה נאכל בשנה השביעית הן לא נזרע ולא נאסוף את תבואתנו, וצויתני את ברכתי לכם בשנה השישית ועשת את התבואה לשלוש השנים—and if you should ask: What will we eat in the seventh year—for we will not sow and we will not gather in our crop? I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year and it will yield a crop sufficient for the three years.** Regarding this matter, the Noam Elimelech asks a well-known question in the name of his brother Rabbi Zusha, zy”a: Why did the Torah preface HKB”H’s remarks with the words: **“And if you should ask: What will we eat in the seventh year?”** Even without this question being posed, Hashem could ordain His blessing. Here is the answer provided by the Sifsei Kohen:

“אילו לא אמרתם מה נאכל, היתה הארץ נותנת את הפירות המופקדים בידה כמו שאמר ונתנה הארץ פריה, אבל לפי שאמרתם מה נאכל, ולא היה לכם בטחון בי ונעשיתם קטני אמנה, וצויתני את ברכתי ועשת [את התבואה], לא אמר ונתנה הארץ פריה, אותו הפרי המופקד בידה לא תתן, לפי שאתם קטני אמנה מפני שאמרתם מה נאכל, אלא וצויתני את ברכתי ועשת, תעשה תבואה אחרת.

ולא אמר גם כן ועשת פרי אלא התבואה, כי פרי הוא דבר גמור שנאכל כמו שהוא, כמו שאמרו חז”ל (שבת ל:): עתידה ארץ ישראל להוציא גלוסקאות... שהוא לחם גמור כמו הפירות, שאינם צריכים לא אפיה ולא בישול אלא נאכלים כמות שהם חיים, אותו לחם נקרא פרי, על זה אמר ונתנה הארץ פריה, אבל הלחם של זה הזמן אינו נאכל עד שיטחון וירקד וילוש ויאפה איננו קרוי פרי.”

Had you not said: **“What will we eat,”** the land would have given forth the fruit that had been consigned to it—as He said: **“And the land will give its fruit.”** However, since you said: **“What will we eat,”** you did not trust Me and you displayed a lack of faith, **“I will ordain My blessing . . . and it will yield a crop.”** He did not say: **“And the land will give its fruit”—** the very fruit consigned to it, it will not give; because you lack faith, as demonstrated by your statement: **“What will we eat?”** Rather: **“I will ordain My blessing . . . and it will yield a crop”—**it will yield a different crop.

He did not say also: **“And it will yield fruit (פרי),”** but rather **“a crop (תבואה).”** Because “fruit” is a finished object ready to be consumed as is—as Chazal stated (Shabbas 30b): “In the future, Eretz Yisrael will produce rolls (of bread) . . . a form of finished bread similar to fruit; they do not require either baking or cooking; they are eaten fresh as they are. That sort of bread is called a “fruit.”

With regards to it, He said: **“And the land will give its fruit.”** The bread we have currently, however, is not consumed until it is ground, sifted, kneaded and baked; it is not considered a “fruit.”

### **“To work it” by means of Mitzvos Aseh and “to guard it” by means of Mitzvos Lo Ta’aseh**

It appears that we can elaborate on this precious notion. To begin with, let us recall the events leading up to the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as.” HKB”H warned Adam HaRishon (Bereishis 2, 17): **“ומעץ הדעת טוב ורע לא תאכל ממנו כי ביום אכלך ממנו מות תמות”- and from the Eitz HaDa’as Tov VaRa you shall not eat thereof; for on the day you eat of it, you shall surely die.** Why, of all the possible punishments, was Adam HaRishon punished specifically with the dire punishment of certain death? Additionally, we must endeavor to explain why HKB”H also punished Adam HaRishon in the aftermath of his sin in the following manner (ibid. 3, 17):

“ולאדם אמר כי שמעת לקול אשתך ותאכל מן העץ אשר צויתך לאמר לא תאכל ממנו, ארורה האדמה בעבורך בעצבון תאכלנה כל ימי חיך, וקוץ ודרדר תצמיח לך ואכלת את עשב השדה, בזיעת אפך תאכל לחם עד שובך אל האדמה כי ממנה לוקחת כי עפר אתה ואל עפר תשוב.”

To Adam He said, “Because you listened to the voice of your wife and ate of the tree about which I commanded you saying, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ accursed is the ground because of you; through suffering shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread until you return to the ground from which you were taken. For, you are dust, and to dust shall you return.

This deserves further clarification. Now, we have a principle in the Gemara (Sanhedrin 56b) that the Torah does not prescribe a punishment unless a warning has been issued first. Seeing as HKB”H did not warn Adam HaRishon that if he ate from the Eitz HaDa’as, he would have to labor for his sustenance by the sweat of his brow, why did HKB”H impose this punishment upon him?

We can propose an answer based on the following passuk (Bereishis 2, 15): **“ויקח ה' אלקים את האדם ויניחהו בגן עדן לעבדה —Hashem Elokim took the man and placed him in Gan Eden, to work it and to guard it.** The Zohar hakadosh provides the following clarification (Bereishis 27a): **“לעבדה —“to work it” by means of Mitzvos aseh and “to guard it” by means of Mitzvos lo ta’aseh.** We find a similar interpretation in the Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 21,

62a): “ויניחהו בגן עדן לעבדה בפקודין עשה ולשמרה בפקודין דלא תעשה.”  
We must endeavor to explain how our blessed sages derived this interpretation—that “לעבדה ולשמרה” refers to working it and guarding it spiritually, by observing the 248 Mitzvos aseh and the 365 Mitzvos lo ta’aseh. Why didn’t they suffice with the simple explanation that HKB”H placed him in Gan Eden to work and guard it by means of plowing, sowing and harvesting?

### Prior to the Cheit Eitz HaDa’as It Was Not Necessary to Perform Physical Labor

Let us explain. Before Adam HaRishon sinned with the Eitz HaDa’as, he didn’t have to physically work the land. Due to his kedushah—his lofty spiritual level—he exemplified the notion of (Berachos 35b): “בזמן שישראל עושין רצונו של מקום מלאכתו” —when Yisrael perform the will of the Omnipresent, their work is performed by others, as it states: “Strangers will stand and tend to your flocks.” This is consistent with what we learn in another Gemara (Sanhedrin 59b): “היה רבי יהודה בן תימא אומר, אדם הראשון מיסב בגן עדן היה, והיו מלאכי השרת צולין לו בשר ומסנגין לו” —Rabbi Yehudah ben Teima would say: Adam HaRishon would recline in Gan Eden; ministering angels would broil meat for him and strain wine for him.

Therefore, prior to the sin, there was no need for Adam HaRishon to exert himself in the field—to plow, to sow, to clear the thorns and thistle. All of the trees and grain grew on their own in accord with the will of Hashem, without thorns or thistle. After the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as,” however, the earth was cursed: “Accursed is the ground because of you; through suffering shall you eat of it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread.”

In this light, it is somewhat difficult to comprehend that which is written prior to the cheit: “ויקח ה' אלקים את האדם ויניחהו בגן עדן” —Hashem Elokim took the man and placed him in Gan Eden, to work it and to guard it. This passuk suggests that it was necessary for Adam to work and protect the trees in Gan Eden. Yet, we have seen that prior to the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as,” he did not have to perform any physical labor at all; everything was provided for him by Hashem. This prompted the Zohar hakadosh to interpret the phrase “לעבדה ולשמרה” in the spiritual sense; it did not mean that he had to physically work and guard the land but rather to “work it” by performing Mitzvos aseh and to “guard it” by observing Mitzvos lo ta’aseh.

Based on this understanding, the Maor Einayim (Vayakheil) explains why it is prohibited to perform work on Shabbas Kodesh. As the Gemara explains, Shabbas is a semblance of Olam HaBa (Berachos 57b): “שבת אחד מששים לעולם הבא”—Shabbas is one-sixtieth of Olam HaBa. Similarly, the Gemara states elsewhere (R.H. 31a): “בשביעי היו אומרים, מזמור שיר ליום השבת ליום שכולו שבת”—on the seventh day, they would say: “A psalm, a song to the day of Shabbas,” to a day that is entirely Shabbas.

Now, le’atid la’vo, after the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as” will finally be rectified, it will no longer be necessary to physically labor for one’s sustenance—as it states in the Gemara (Shabbas 30a): “עתידה ארץ ישראל שתוציא גלוסקאות וכלי מילת”—Eretz Yisrael is destined to produce rolls of bread and fine woolen garments. Thus, we see that people will not have to exert themselves by grinding the wheat into flour in order to make rolls of bread; instead, the land itself will produce rolls ready to be eaten without any further effort or preparation. Therefore, on Shabbas, which is a semblance of Olam HaBa, it is prohibited to perform work; everything is done by itself.

### “Let us make man” All of the Universes Are Incorporated in Man

It appears that we can explain this matter in greater depth based on a wonderful introduction from the teachings of the Arizal in Likutei Torah (Ki Tisa), addressing the passuk (Bereishis 1, 26): “ויאמר אלקים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו”—and G-d said, “Let us make man in our image, as our likeness.” Our blessed sages take issue with the use of the word “נעשה” in the plural; after all, HKB”H is the One and Only. Hence, the Arizal purports that HKB”H addressed all of the universes and said: “נעשה אדם”—indicating that every universe should contribute its part to the creation of man; so that man would be a microcosm incorporating within his being all of the universes. As a consequence, when he would succeed in correcting his ways, he would in essence be rectifying all of the universes. If he were to sin, chas v’shalom, he would damage and corrupt all of the universes. Here are his precise words:

“והנה בבריאת האדם נאמר ‘נעשה’ בלשון רבים, ולא עשה כן בכל השאר אלא ‘יהי אור’ ‘יהי רקיע’ לשון יחיד. אלא המאציל העליון ברא הבריאה, ואין בעולם הבריאה כח להשיג אלא מדרגתה לכד ולא נקודה אחרת למעלה, וכן יצירה, וכן עשיה. ולא עשה כן אל האדם, [משום] שרצה שישגי כל העולמות ויקשור את כולם.

ונמצא שרצה המאציל שיתנו כל עולם ועולם חלק ברצונם כדי שכולם ירחמו עליו, ואם יחטא יפגום בכל העולם וכולם יבקשו רחמים עליו, ואם יזכה יגילו וישמחו בו



כולם, ולכן רצה שיתנו לו חלקם... ועל כן אמר 'נעשה' בלשון רבים, שנתיעץ בפמליא שלו עליונים ותחתונים שיתנו כולם חלקם ברצונם בו, וכן היה והשיג חלקו מכולם".

With regards to the creation of man, it says 'נעשה'—"let us make"—in the plural tense; He did not do so with all of the other creations; instead, He said, "Let there be light" and "let there be a firmament"—in the singular. The Creator created each universe so that it could only perceive and ascertain its own level but not any level above it. This applies to the universe of **בריאה** as well as to the universes of **יצירה** and **עשייה**. He did not create man in this manner, because He wanted man to possess the ability to perceive all of the universes and tie them together.

It turns out that the Creator wanted each and every universe to contribute a part voluntarily, so that they would all have mercy on him. Thus, if he were to sin and harm the entire universe, they would all seek mercy on his behalf. On the other hand, if he would be meritorious, they would all rejoice in his accomplishments. Therefore, He wanted them to contribute a part to him . . . For this reason, He said: 'נעשה'—employing the plural form, because he sought counsel from His entire entourage, above and below, so that they would all contribute a part willingly to his creation. So, it was that he received a portion from all of them.

This in fact is what we find in the Torah's description of the creation of Adam HaRishon's body, which was created from the soil of the earth. It is written (ibid. 2, 7): **וַיִּצֶר ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶת** "and Hashem G-d formed man of soil from the earth, and blew into his nostrils the soul of life; and man became a living soul." Rashi comments: **צבר עפרו מכל האדמה מארבע רוחות שכל מקום**—"He gathered together soil from the entire earth, from the four directions, so that wherever he might die, there the earth will take him in for burial." This requires further explanation. For, had Adam HaRishon not sinned with the Eitz HaDa'as, he would not have died. So, why was it necessary for HKB"H to gather soil from the four corners of the earth for the purpose of creating man's physical body?

## The Earth Is Composed of 248 Limbs and 365 Sinews

Let us propose a noble idea based on a notion from the Zohar hakadosh (Vayishlach 170b). The Zohar explains that HKB"H magnanimously and mercifully provides us with 248 Mitzvos aseh with which to sanctify our 248 limbs and 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh with which to sanctify our 365 sinews. Furthermore, regarding the following passuk (Koheles 1, 4): **דור הולך ודור בא**

**generations go and come but the earth endures forever**—Chazal inform us (K.R. 1, 4) that the earth is also composed of 248 limbs and 365 sinews:

"כל מה שברא הקב"ה באדם ברא בארץ לדוגמא לו, אדם יש לו ראש והארץ יש לה ראש, שנאמר (משלי ח-כו) וראש עפרות תכל. אדם יש לו עינים והארץ יש לה עינים, שנאמר (שמות י-ה) וכסה את עין הארץ. אדם יש לו אזנים והארץ יש לה אזנים, שנאמר (ישעיה א-ב) והאזיני ארץ. אדם יש לה פה והארץ יש לה פה, שנאמר (במדבר טז-לב) ותפתח הארץ את פיה. אדם אוכל והארץ אוכלת, שנאמר (שם יג-לב) ארץ אוכלת יושביה. אדם שותה והארץ שותה, שנאמר (דברים יא-יא) למטר השמים תשתה מים".

Everything HKB"H created in man, He created in the earth. For example: Man has a head and the earth has a head, as it states (Mishlei 8, 26): "the head of the dust of the world." Man has eyes and the earth has eyes, as it states (Shemos 10, 5): "And it covered the eye of the earth." Man has ears and the earth has ears, as it states (Yeshayah 1, 2): "And give ear, O earth." Man has a mouth and the earth has a mouth, as it states (Bamidbar 16, 32): "The earth opened up its mouth." Man eats and the earth eats, as it states (ibid. 13, 32): "A land that eats its inhabitants." Man drinks and the earth drinks, as it states (Devarim 11, 11): "By the rain of the heavens, it drinks water."

Based on what we have just learned, we find a tremendous chiddush in the Kedushat Levi (Shelach). Just as man must fulfill and observe the 248 Mitzvos aseh and 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh to sanctify his 248 limbs and 365 sinews respectively; in the process, he also sanctifies the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of the earth. Here are his sacred words:

"איתא במדרש כמו שיש רמ"ח אברים ושס"ה גידים באדם, כמו כן יש בארץ, כמו שכתוב ערות הארץ, לב הארץ, טבור הארץ, עין הארץ. והנה הרמ"ח אברים שבאדם כנגד רמ"ח מצוות עשה, ושס"ה גידים כנגד שס"ה מצוות לא תעשה, שכל גיד מחוייב לשמור לכל יעבור הלאו המגיע לו, וכמו כן גם כן בארץ, האברים וגידים מחוייבים לשמור התרי"ג מצוות, וכשישראל עושין המצוות בארץ, אזי על ידי זה הארץ חשקה וחפצה שיהיו ישראל בארץ לעשות התרי"ג מצוות התורה".

It states in the Midrash that just as man has 248 limbs and 365 sinews, so, too, does the earth—as it is written: "the nakedness of the earth," "the heart of the earth," the navel of the earth" and "the eye of the earth." Now, the 248 human limbs correspond to the 248 Mitzvos aseh; and the 365 sinews correspond to the 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh that every sinew is obligated to observe lest it transgress the prohibition associated with it. The same applies to the earth. Its limbs and sinews are obliged to observe the 613

**Mitzvos. When Yisrael perform the Mitzvos in the land, as a consequence, the land desires and wants Yisrael in the land—to perform the 613 Mitzvos of the Torah.**

### **The Tikun of the Earth through the Tikun of Man's Body**

This now enlightens us as to why HKB"H gathered earth from all four corners of the world in order to create Adam's body. As we have learned, the earth has 248 limbs and 365 sinews which can only achieve tikun through man's actions. Therefore, HKB"H in His infinite wisdom created man's 248 limbs and 365 sinews from the earth's corresponding limbs and sinews. Thus, man would perform the 248 Mitzvos aseh and observe the 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh having in mind the tikun of the earth's 248 limbs and 365 sinews, which are incorporated in the human body.

This explains very nicely that which is written prior to the "cheit Eitz HaDa'as: **וַיִּקַּח ה' אֱלֹקִים אֶת הָאָדָם וַיְנִיחֵהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לַעֲבֹדָה**—Hashem Elokim took the man and placed him in Gan Eden, to work it and to guard it. As we have learned, the Zohar interprets the term "לַעֲבֹדָה" as the performance of the Mitzvos aseh and the term "וַיְנִיחֵהוּ" as the observation of the Mitzvos lo ta'aseh. For, the purpose of creation was so that man would fulfill the 248 Mitzvos aseh and 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh and in the process would achieve tikun for the earth's 248 limbs and 365 sinews. As a result, le'atid la'vo, the earth would produce all sorts of plants and vegetation on its own.

This provides us with a wonderful understanding of an idea presented by the Beit HaOtzar in the name of the sefer Yad Eliyahu (Berachos 6b), authored by the Gra of Vilna, zy"a. The term "אָדָם" is masculine; as opposed to the term "אִדְמָה", which is feminine. Similarly, the term "חָכָם" is masculine as compared to the term "חֲכָמָה", which is feminine. Based on what we have learned, we can provide the following explanation. This comes to teach us that the purpose of the creation of "אָדָם" was so that he would fulfill the role of the male. By performing the Mitzvos, it is his job to exert his influence on the female "אִדְמָה"—helping it achieve its tikun and ultimate completeness and perfection.

In this manner, we can explain very nicely why had Adam HaRishon not sinned, he would not have had to die. Had he not sinned and had he fulfilled Hashem's command "לַעֲבֹדָה וּלְשִׁמְרָה" as intended—through the Mitzvos aseh and Mitzvos lo ta'aseh—man's body, formed from the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of the earth, would have been fully rectified. Consequently, the four basic elements of the human body would not disintegrate but

instead would remain at full strength and intact, in perfect health. Yet, since he violated Hashem's command and partook from the Eitz HaDa'as, he damaged the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of the earth contained in his body. As a result, the elements of his body disintegrated, preventing him from living on eternally.

For this very reason, the earth was cursed: **וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדַּר תַּצְמִיחַ לְךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה, בְּזִיעַת אִפְיְךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֶךְ אֶל הָאֲדָמָה--thorns and thistles shall it sprout for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread until you return to the ground.** For, these two things are related to one another. Man's death was inevitable, because the force of the soil incorporated in his physical body was damaged as a result of the "cheit Eitz HaDa'as." For this very same reason, the force of the earth itself was altered and damaged; as a consequence, it could no longer produce perfect plants without also producing thorns and thistle. All of this was necessary so that man would exert his flawed body to work the land, in order to remedy the force of the soil in his body together with force of the earth—which were both damaged as a result of the "cheit Eitz HaDa'as."

This explains very nicely the Sifsei Kohen's comments regarding the passuk: **"You shall perform My decrees and observe My ordinances and perform them; and you shall dwell securely on the land. The land will give its fruit and you will eat to satisfaction; and you will dwell securely upon it."** If Yisrael observe the 248 Mitzvos aseh and 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh: **"וַיְנִיחֵהוּ בְּגֵן עֵדֶן לַעֲבֹדָה וּלְשִׁמְרָה"**—"the land will give its fruit"—the earth will yield the fruit consigned to it without the need for plowing or sowing. This was the intended, ideal situation that would have persisted had Adam HaRishon not sinned with the Eitz HaDa'as. This is the anticipated reality of le'atid la'vo—when the land will produce whole, finished rolls of bread, requiring no effort on man's part.

According to what we have learned, let us explain. Man's 248 limbs and 365 sinews were formed from the soil of the four corners of the earth, which is also comprised of 248 limbs and 365 sinews. So, by fulfilling the 248 Mitzvos aseh corresponding to his 248 limbs and by observing the 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh corresponding to his 365 sinews, man is able to afford a tikun for the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of the earth. As a consequence, the earth will yield its fruit without any human effort. This is the situation that prevailed prior to the "cheit Eitz HaDa'as"; Hashem placed man in Gan Eden **"to work it" ("לַעֲבֹדָה")** with the 248 Mitzvos aseh and **"to guard it" ("וּלְשִׁמְרָה")** with the 365 Mitzvos lo ta'aseh.

## The “Shemithah” Year the Seventh Year Resembles Shabbas Kodesh

We can now begin to comprehend the prohibition against working the land during the “shemithah” year. The Torah states explicitly: “ושבתה הארץ שבת לה” —the earth shall rest, observing a Shabbas for Hashem. Rashi comments: “לשם ה' כשם שנאמר בשבת בראשית” —for the sake of Hashem, just as it is stated with regards to the Shabbas of creation. It is evident from Rashi that the “shemithah” year during the seventh year resembles Shabbas, which is the seventh day. In similar fashion, the Even Ezra writes: “שבת לה'” —like the day of Shabbas; here is an allusion to the secret of the days of this world. In the commentary on the Even Ezra (4), he writes:

“כלומר כי שנת השמיטה דומה לשבת כי גם היא שביעית בשנים. והנה תראה כי כמו שניתנה השבת להבין מעשה השם יתברך ולהגות בתורתו... כי כל ימי השבוע אדם מתעסק בצרכיו. והנה זה היום צריך להתבודד ולשבות בעבור כבוד השם, ולא יתעסק אפילו לשוח בצרכיו ובעסקיו שעברו... וכן שנת השמיטה מאחר שלא יעשה שום מלאכה בשדה, יהיה ראוי להתבודד בדרכי השם יתברך ובמצוותיו ולהגות בתורתו.”

In other words, the “shemithah” year resembles the Shabbas; for, it is also the seventh with respect to the years. See that just as the Shabbas was given in order to understand the ways of the blessed Almighty and to study His Torah... Because all week long, man is busy tending to his necessities. Therefore, this special day, he must seclude himself and rest from work for the honor of Hashem; he should not even engage in speaking about his needs or his past dealings... Similarly, the “shemithah” year—seeing as he should not perform any work in the field—is appropriate for secluding himself in the ways of the blessed Almighty and His Mitzvos and studying His Torah.

This coincides with the words of the Mateh Moshe (473); he addresses the connection between the mitzvah of “shemithah” and the mitzvah of Shabbas. For, in reality, it would have been fitting for the earth to rest on Shabbas, as well, just as man does; however, Hashem established that the earth should not rest on every Shabbas as man does. Rather, it should rest once every seven years for an entire year—in order to compensate for all of the Shabbasot that it did not observe during the previous six years.

Now, since it is required to observe Shabbas every seventh day, Shabbas is always one seventh of the time. Hence, during

the course of seven years, the Shabbasos—which are one seventh of the time—constitute an entire year. Therefore, in order for the earth to compensate for all of the Shabbasos she failed to observe, HKB”H commanded that the earth rest from all her work during every seventh year.

Thus, we can explain very nicely why the Torah compares the “shemithah” year to Shabbas: “ושבתה הארץ שבת לה” and Rashi’s comment: “לשם ה' כשם שנאמר בשבת בראשית”. Now, the Agra D’Kallah on our parsha explains why it is prohibited to work the land during the “shemithah” year. He explains that the “shemithah” year, the seventh year, alludes to the seventh millennium—to the day and time that is entirely Shabbas. At that time, it will not be necessary to perform labors of the field and vineyards.

Accordingly, we can suggest that just as it is prohibited to perform work on Shabbas—since Shabbas is a semblance of Olam HaBa, when man will no longer need to perform physical labor—so, too, for this same reason, during the “shemithah” year—which represents the Shabbas of the earth—it is prohibited to work the fields. For, the “shemithah” year is an allusion le’atid la’vo, when mankind will merit the complete tikun and will not need to work the fields or vineyards, as promised by the navi: “ועמדם זרים ורעו” —“Strangers will stand and tend to your flocks.”

This now enlightens us with regards to the association of the “shemithah” year with Har Sinai; as Rashi explained: “מה שמיטה נאמר” —just as the general rules and the fine points of “shemithah” were stated at Sinai; so, too, the general rules and the fine points of all of the Mitzvos were stated at Sinai. As explained, the prohibition to work the land during the “shemithah” year stems from the fact that the “shemithah” year represents the future geulah—a time when man will no longer need to actually perform physical labor.

Therefore, the Torah wishes to teach us how to hasten the arrival of the geulah—when the tikun of the earth will be complete. That feat will be accomplished by means of the fulfillment of the 248 Mitzvos aseh and the 365 Mitzvos lo ta’aseh. By fulfilling all of these Mitzvos, man is able to rectify all of his 248 limbs and 365 sinews, which were formed from the soil of the earth. By rectifying the portion of the soil incorporated in his body, he is able to rectify the entire earth. As a result, the situation will revert to the situation that existed prior to the sin of Adam HaRishon, who was placed in Gan Eden by HKB”H: “לעבדה ולשמרה”—to work it with Mitzvos aseh and to guard it with Mitzvos lo ta’aseh.

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