

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The song that accompanies a korban (cont.)

The Gemara inquires whether Nesachim that are brought on their own must be accompanied by song.

An unsuccessful attempt to resolve this inquiry is recorded.

2) Destruction of the Beis HaMikdash

The Gemara challenges the earlier Baraisa's assertion that the first Beis HaMikdash was destroyed in the year following Shemittah.

Ravina suggests a resolution to this challenge.

This resolution is unsuccessfully challenged.

The Gemara challenges the Baraisa's assertion that the second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed in the year following Shemittah.

This challenge is reconciled with the assertion that the Baraisa follows R' Yehudah's opinion that the fiftieth year counts towards both Yovel cycles.

This explanation is challenged.

Two resolutions to this challenge are presented.

Proof to the latter interpretation of the Baraisa is presented. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. When Nesachim are brought on their own are they accompanied by song?

2. How many stages of exile were there in the first Beis HaMikdash?

3. Is the Yovel year part of the previous cycle of the coming cycle?

4. Was the second Beis HaMikdash destroyed in a year after Shemittah?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The count of Shemittah and Yovel in Eretz Yisroel

ואי אתה יכול לומר משעה שנכנסו מנו וכו' אלא צא מהם שבע שכיבושו

A Baraisa reports that the first and second Batei Mikdash were each destroyed in a year following a Shemittah year.

The Gemara first analyzes the 420 years of the Second Beis HaMikdash. Eight Yovel cycles of fifty years each totals four hundred years. The remaining twenty years are two Shemittah cycles (14 years), and the remaining six years (until 420) do not result in a post-Shemittah year. The Gemara answers that this Baraisa was authored by R' Yehuda who holds that a Yovel cycle is 49 years, because the fiftieth year, the Yovel year, counts as number fifty for the previous cycle and as number one for the next Yovel cycle. Accordingly, the eight Yovel cycles are not 400 years, but 392 years. If we take the remaining eight years we just gained, and add it to the remaining six we had, we have a total of 14 years, which is precisely two full Shemittah cycles. The 420 years of the Second Beis HaMikdash were eight Yovel cycles and four Shemittah cycles. The destruction was the next year, a post-Shemittah year.

The calculation of the 410 years of the First Beis HaMikdash are then analyzed. As we noted above, the presence of the Jews in Eretz Yisroel predated the building of the First Beis HaMikdash by 440 years. The Beis HaMikdash itself lasted 410 years. The cycles of counting for Shemittah and Yovel did not begin immediately with the Jew's entry into the land, because there were seven years of conquering the land and seven more years during which the nation divided the land among the tribes and their populations. Therefore, out of the 850 years from when the Jews entered the land until they were exiled, only 836 were included in the Shemittah and Yovel count. Eight hundred years is sixteen Yovel cycles of fifty years each, and the remaining 36 years are five Shemittah cycles plus one year. This also coordinates perfectly with a prophecy of Yechezkel who stated that his vision was during a Yovel year, fourteen years after the destruction of Yerushalayim. Fourteen years after the 36th year into the Yovel would, in fact, be another Yovel year. However, the Gemara's question is that this entire calculation must be reviewed according to R' Yehuda, where the 836 years divided by 49-year cycles is 17 Yovel cycles (833 years), with a remainder of 3 years, which is not the year after a Shemittah.

HALACHAH Highlight

Calculating the Shemittah year

וכן בשניה

And the same is true regarding the second Beis HaMikdash

Rema¹ relates that the precise calculation for determining the Shemittah year is subject to dispute but the primary opinion to follow is that the year 1560 c.e. and 1567 c.e. were Shemittah years. This dispute was already recorded in Tur² who wrote that according to R"l the year 1328 was Shemittah whereas according to Rashi 1329 was Shemittah and the correct opinion to follow is Rashi's. This dispute took on practical significance after the Jews were expelled from Spain and some of them settled in Eretz Yisroel.

Rambam's opinion³ which is based on an ancient tradition is that when the Baraisa cited in our Gemara states that the first Beis HaMikdash and the second Beis HaMikdash were destroyed in the year following a Shemittah year it does not mean that they are exactly the same. The first Beis HaMikdash was actually destroyed in the year after Shemittah but the second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed during the Shemittah year. When the Baraisa states that the second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed in the year after Shemittah the intent is that the year that began a couple of months after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash was the year after Shemittah

(Insight...continued from page 1)

Regarding the first fourteen years of conquest and division of Eretz Yisroel when Shemittah and Yovel were not counted, Rambam (Hilchos Shemittah v'Yovel 10:2) learns this from the verse (Vayikra 25:3) "Six years you shall sow your land, etc." Every person must recognize his own land before Shemittah can be counted. The Gemara in Kesubos teaches that terumos and ma'asros were not in effect until after these fourteen years, when the Mishkan was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh. ■

but the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed during the Shemittah year. The reason why the Gemara focuses on the Tishrei that followed the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash is that the beginning of the year for calculating Shemittah and Yovel is Tishrei and the year that began after the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash was the first year of the next Shemittah cycle. In other words, Rashi and Rambam agree about the year the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed, i.e. 3829, but they disagree whether that year was Shemittah or not. According to Rashi it was the year after Shemittah whereas according to Rambam it was actually a Shemittah year. Accordingly, there was a disagreement when to observe the halachos of Shemittah. ■

1. רמ"א חו"מ סי' ס"ז סעי' א'

2. טור שם.

3. רמב"ם פ"י מהל' שמיטה ויובל ה"ו. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

A Time of Challenge

במוצאי שביעית מי משכחת לה

On today's daf we find that the Beis HaMikdash was purposely destroyed either before or after Shemittah, since bad things happen during times that are already difficult.

Keeping Shemittah in Israel was a big conflict not too long ago. Hardly anyone was doing it—even otherwise religious farmers—and those who were willing were often intimidated by their peers. The Chazon Ish, zt"l, wrote a beautiful letter of encouragement to those farmers who were willing to consider sacrificing what appeared to be their advantage in order to keep the

letter of the law.

"I am a farmer who makes his living through the work of my hands. It is now almost Shemittah and a riveting thought has gotten into my head: I want to keep the laws of Shemittah with courage and boldness. I am alone and unaided, a joke to all of my neighbors. 'How could it be?' they asked when I began. 'You won't plant and you won't harvest? You can't fight against reality!'

"But my chutzpah stood me well and despite the indisputable fact that anyone with intelligence knows that it is physically impossible to keep these halachos unless one has a silo filled with grain for three years—since Shemittah is obviously impossible to fulfill in our times without enough grain before the seventh year. Now is-

n't like it used to be, they say; you cannot rely on miracles. Yet the year is already halfway over and it looks like one can keep Shemittah after all. I planted everything before Rosh Hashannah, while it was still the sixth year, and during the seventh year I have not worked my field. I am careful to treat the produce which overlaps from the sixth year to the seventh with holiness and I hope to make peace with reality—or that reality should mete out what is good for me.

"My neighbors mock me—yet the weather mocks them. It works out to be good for one who planted early, but not for their crops planted during Shemittah. Only my early-planted crops have survived!"¹ ■

1. קובץ אגרות, ח"יב, ס"ט. ■