

1. Devarim 31: 10-13

וַיִּצַו מֹשֶׁה אוֹתָם לֵאמֹר מִקֵּץ | שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים בְּמַעַד שָׁנַת הַשְּׁמִטָּה בְּחַג הַסִּפּוֹת:

And Moses instructed them as follows: Every seventh year, the year set for remission, at the Feast of Booths,

בָּבוֹא כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל לִרְאוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר תִּקְרָא אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת נֶגֶד כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאָזְנֵיהֶם:

when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place that He will choose, you shall read this Teaching aloud in the presence of all Israel.

הִקְהַל אֶת־הָעָם הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנָּשִׁים וְהַטָּף וְגֵרְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ לְמַעַן יִשְׁמְעוּ וְלִמְעַן יִלְמְדוּ וְיִרְאוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְשָׁמְרוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת:

Gather the people—men, women, children, and the strangers in your communities—that they may hear and so learn to revere the LORD your God and to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching.

וּבְנֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדְעוּ יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִלְמְדוּ לִירְאָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כָּל־הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם חַיִּים עַל־הָאָדָמָה (אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ: פ)

Their children, too, who have not had the experience, shall hear and learn to revere the LORD your God as long as they live in the land that you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.

2. Sefer Hachinuch 612

מִשְׁרָשֵׁי הַמִּצְוָה. לִפִּי שָׁכַל עֵקֶרֶן שֶׁל עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל, הִיא הַתּוֹרָה, וּבִהּ יִפְרְדּוּ מִכָּל אוֹמָה וּלְשׁוֹן לִהְיוֹת זֹכִינ׳ לַחַיִּי עַד, תַּעֲנוּג נִצְחִי שְׁאִין לְמַעַלָּה הֵימְנוּ בִּנְבִירָאִים, עַל כֵּן בִּהְיוֹת כָּל עֵקֶרֶן בַּהּ רָאוּי שִׁיקְהִלוּ הַכֹּל יַחַד בְּזִמְנָא אֶחָד מִן הַזְּמַנִּים לְשִׁמּוֹעַ דְּבָרֶיהָ, וּלְהִיוֹת הַקּוֹל יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ כָּל הָעָם, אֲנָשִׁים וְנָשִׁים וְטָף לֵאמֹר מַה הַקְּבוּץ הָרַב הַזֶּה שֶׁנִּתְקַבְּצוּ יַחַד כּוֹלָנוּ? וְתִהְיֶה הַתְּשׁוּבָה, לְשִׁמּוֹעַ דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהִיא כָּל עֵקֶרֶנוּ וְהוֹדְנוּ וְתַפְאֶרֶתֵנוּ, וַיְבוֹאוּ מִתּוֹךְ כֵּךְ לִסְפֵּר בְּגוֹדֵל שְׁבַחָהּ וְהוֹד עֲרֻכָּהּ וַיְכַנִּסוּ הַכֹּל בְּלִבָּם חֲשֵׁקָהּ, וְעַם הַחֲשֵׁק בַּהּ יִלְמְדוּ לְדַעַת אֶת הַשֵּׁם וַיִּזְכּוּ לְטוֹבָהּ, וַיִּשְׂמַח הַשֵּׁם בְּמַעֲשָׁיו, וַיַּעֲנִין שְׂכָתוֹב בְּפֶרוֹשׁ בְּזֹאת הַמִּצְוָה וּלְמַעַן יִלְמְדוּ וִירְאוּ אֶת יי

It is from the roots of the commandment [that it is] because the entire essence of the people of Israel is the Torah; and through it are they separated from every nation and language, to be meritorious for life of the forever - eternal pleasure that is not surpassed by anything among the creatures. Therefore since their entire essence is in it, it is fitting that everyone should gather together at one point in time to hear its words, and for the voice to go out amongst the whole nation - men, women, and infants - to say, "What is the great gathering, that we have all been gathered together?" And the answer would be, "To hear the words of the Torah, which is our

entire essence and glory and splendor." And they will come from this to tell of the great praise and the splendor of its value; and its yearning will enter all of their hearts. And with this yearning for it, they will learn to know God and merit good, and 'God will be happy with His creations' - like the matter that is written in explanation of this commandment "and in order that they will learn and fear the Lord."

3. Netziv Devarim 31:10

במועד שנת השמטה. קרא שנת השמינית שנת השמטה. משום שיותר ניכר שביתת הארץ בחוה"ס של שמינית שלא היה קציר ואסיף לפניו. מחה"ס של שנה שביעית עצמו. שהגרנות מלאים בר

4. Rabbi Dovid Tzvi Hoffman Devarim 15:1-3

בדרך כלל נחשב חג הסוכות ל,,חג האסיף", אבל עם גמר שנת השמיטה, שאין בה אסיף, מצוה לחוג את חג הסוכות על ידי קריאת התורה, בתור אסיף רוחני של תבואת הדעת. רב דוד צבי הופמן, דברים טו, א-ג

Generally, Sukkot is referred to as the holiday of gathering. But with the end of the shemittah year, a year when [nothing was plowed and therefore nothing] harvested, it is a mitzvah to celebrate Sukkot through reading the Torah, in becomes a spiritual harvest of the grain of knowledge.

Devarim 31:11

עכשיו עם גמר שנת השמיטה, ששבתו שנה שלימה מעבודת קרקע לכבודו של ה', ולא זרעו ולא קצרו, נתחייבו כל ישראל אנשים נשים וטף לבוא לפני ה' יתברך, להודות לו שנתן להם פרנסתם אף בשנה זאת אשר אין בה חריש וקציר, לקבל עליהם שוב את התורה כמו שקבלו אז במדבר, ולהבטיח בזה, שהם מוכנים להקדיש את חייהם לעבודתו יתברך שמו בכל זמן ובכל מצב.

And now, with the conclusion of the shemittah year, a year in which one abstained from working the land in deference to the honor of God, a year in which one did not plow, nor did one harvest. At the end of this year, all of Bnai Yisrael, the men, the women and the children, were commanded to appear before God, to thank Him for providing with their sustenance during this year when there was no harvest. [At this time] they will accept upon themselves the Torah, similar to how they accepted the Torah in the desert. And through this acceptance, they affirm that they are ready to dedicate themselves to serving God at all times and under all conditions.

5. Malbim Devarim 31: 10

This is the most beneficial time for the [reading of the “Torah” – Sefer Devarim , in fact] to take place, because during the shemittah year when the land was holy and undergoing a Sabbatical year, Bnai Yisrael were not working the land and were occupied with learning Torah. Now while it is true that the shemittah year concluded [some weeks before Sukkot], the Jews were busy with Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur and then with building their sukkot and acquiring a lulav and etrog. Rather, Hakhel is celebrated, “as all of Israel came to revel in the presence of God”- and God who knows the inner working of every person’s hearts knows that each one is preparing his heart for God.

6. Kli Yakar Devarim 31:12

Since the seventh year also causes assembly and peace by way of one not planting and growing upon it. And the destitute of His people eat on it, since the [landowners] are not permitted to hold on to their produce on the seventh year as [would usually be the way of] an owner. And without a doubt, this is a cause of peace, since all disagreements are from the trait of "what's mine is mine" [and] "this one says, 'it is all mine.'" And this is not so [prevalent] on the seventh year, since [even if] in the positive acts, not all are equal, in the negative acts, all are equal, and this is truly the way of peace. And so [too] with the festival of Sukkot, when everyone goes out from a permanent dwelling to a temporary dwelling and sits under the 'Sukkah (hut) of His peace.' Behold, [accordingly] on the first of the intermediate days, the king was commanded to make an impression about peace and this is the matter of hakhel. As all of this is a preparation to repentance, and [so] he reads from Deuteronomy words of exhortation and rebuke. And this is [the meaning of] what they said, "'the men' to learn, etc, 'the youngsters' - why are they coming, to bring reward to those that bring them." Since in the time when Israel repents, they offer supplications in front of Him, may He be blessed, for the forgiving of sin and say, "If not for our sake, then do it for the sake of those weaned from their mothers, who have not sinned." [This is] as it is found in the text of 'Avinu Malkenu' - Have mercy on our sucklings and on our youngsters.

7. Vayikra Raba 30:12

אלו ישראל, מה אתרוג זה יש בו טעם ויש בו ריח, כך ישראל יש בהם בגי אדם שיש בהם תורה ויש בהם מעשים טובים. כפת תמרים, אלו ישראל, מה התמרה הזו יש בו טעם ואין בו ריח, כך הם ישראל יש בהם שיש בהם תורה ואין בהם מעשים טובים. וענף עץ עבת, אלו ישראל, מה הדס יש בו ריח ואין בו טעם, כך ישראל יש בהם שיש בהם מעשים טובים ואין בהם תורה. וערבי נחל, אלו ישראל, מה ערבה זו אין בה טעם ואין בה ריח, כך הם ישראל יש בהם בגי אדם שאין בהם לא תורה ולא מעשים

טובים, ומה הקדוש ברוך הוא עושה להם, לאבדן אי אפשר, אלא אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא יקשרו כלם
אגדה אחת והן מכפרין אלו על אלו,

Just like this citron (etrog), which has taste and has smell, so too Israel has among them people that have Torah and have good deeds. "The branches of a date palm" - these are [referring to] Israel. Just like this date, which has taste and has no smell, so too Israel has among them those that have Torah but do not have good deeds. "And a branch of a braided tree (a myrtle)" - these are [referring to] Israel. Just like this myrtle, which has smell and has no taste, so too Israel has among them those that have good deeds but do not have Torah. "And brook willows" - these are [referring to] Israel. Just like this willow, which has no smell and has no taste, so too Israel has among them people that have no Torah and have no good deeds. And what does the Holy One, blessed be He, do to them? To destroy them is impossible, but rather the Holy One, blessed be He, said "bind them all together [into] one grouping and these will atone for those."

8. Abravanel Devarim 31:14

And I have already read, that every year it was either the Cohen Gadol or a prophet or judge or the greatest of the generation who would read a portion of the Torah on Sukkot. And he would complete reading from Sefer Bereishit, and Shemot, and Vayikra, and Bamidbar in six years. And on the seventh year, the year of Shemittah, the king would read from Sefer Devarim. And he would complete reading in this manner... and from here stems the modern custom on the eighth day, the holiday of Atzeret, which is also called Simchat Torah, that on this day we conclude the reading of the Torah. And an elder of the community stands and concludes the reading. And he reads by himself without the meturgeman [translator] to echo what the king would do in those days.

9. Rambam Hilchos Melachim 3:6

שְׁנֵי אֲמָר (דברים יז יז) "וְלֹא יִסּוּר לְבָבוֹ". שֶׁלְבּוֹ הוּא לֵב כָּל קְהֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל

Hilchos Chagiga 3:6

וַיֵּרָאָה עֲצָמוֹ כְּאִלּוֹ עֵתָה נִצְטָוָה בָּהּ וּמִפִּי הַגְּבוּרָה שׁוֹמְעָה. שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ שָׁלַיִחַ הוּא לְהַשְׁמִיעַ
דְּבָרֵי הָאֵל:

10. Chagiga 3a

ת"ר מעשה ברבי יוחנן בן ברוקה ורבי אלעזר (בן) חסמא שהלכו להקביל פני ר' יהושע
בפקיעין אמר להם מה חידוש היה בבית המדרש היום אמרו לו תלמידך אנו ומימך אנו
שותין אמר להם אף על פי כן אי אפשר לבית המדרש בלא חידוש

The Sages taught: There was an incident involving Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Beroka and Rabbi Elazar ben Ḥisma, when they went to greet Rabbi Yehoshua in Peki'in. Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: What novel idea was taught today in the study hall? They said to him: We are your students and we drink from your water, i.e., all of our Torah knowledge comes from you, and therefore how can we tell you something you have not already learned? He said to them: Even so, there cannot be a study hall without a novelty.

שבת של מי היתה שבת של ר' אלעזר בן עזריה היתה ובמה היתה הגדה היום אמרו לו
בפרשת הקהל ומה דרש בה

He asked them: Whose week was it, i.e. who was the lecturer this week? They said to him: It was Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya's week. He inquired: And on what subject was the lecture today? They said to him: He spoke about the portion of the mitzva of assembly. Rabbi Yehoshua persisted: And what verse did he interpret homiletically with regard to this mitzva?

דברים לא, יב) הקהל את העם האנשים והנשים והטף אם אנשים באים ללמוד נשים (
באות לשמוע טף למה באין כדי ליתן שכר למביאייהן אמר להם מרגלית טובה היתה
בידכם ובקשתם לאבדה ממני

They said to him that Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya interpreted the following verse: "Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones" (Deuteronomy 31:12). This verse is puzzling: If men come to learn, and women, who might not understand, come at least to hear, why do the little ones come? They come in order for God to give a reward to those who bring them, i.e., God credits those who bring their children to the assembly. Rabbi Yehoshua said to

them: This good pearl of wisdom was in your hands, and you tried to conceal it from me?

11. A Tribute to the Rebbitzen of Talne Tradition Magazine Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik Spring 1978 Issue 17.2

What is torat imekha? What kind of a Torah does the mother pass on? I admit that I am not able to define precisely the masoretic role of the Jewish mother. Only by circumscription I hope to be able to explain it. Permit me to draw upon my own experiences. I used to have long conversations with my mother. In fact, it was a monologue rather than a dialogue. She talked and I "happened" to overhear. What did she talk about? I must use an halakhic term in order to answer this question: she talked me-inyana de-yoma. I used to watch her arranging the house in honor of a holiday. I used to see her recite prayers; I used to watch her recite the sidra every Friday night and I still remember the nostalgic tune. I learned from her very much. Most of all I learned that Judaism expresses itself not only in formal compliance with the law but also in a living experience. She taught me that there is a flavor, a scent and warmth to mitzvot. I learned from her the most important thing in life -to feel the presence of the Almighty and the gentle pressure of His hand resting upon my frail shoulders. Without her teachings, which quite often were transmitted to me in silence, I would have grown up a soulless being, dry and insensitive. The laws of Shabbat, for instance, were passed on to me by my father; they are a part of mussar avikha. The Shabbat as a living entity, as a queen, was revealed to me by my mother; it is a part of torat imekha. The fathers knew much about the Shabbat; the mothers lived the Shabbat, experienced her presence, and perceived her beauty and splendor. The fathers taught generations how to observe the Shabbat; mothers taught generations how to greet the Shabbat and how to enjoy her twenty-four hour presence.

12. Yerushalmi Yevamot 1:6

שהיתה אמו מולכת עריסתו לבית הכנסת בשביל שיתדבקו אזניו בדברי תורה.ירושלמי
יבמות פרק א הלכה ו

His mother would bring his cradle to the bet hakenesset so that the words of
Torah would cling to his ears.