



## Trimming Branches

In the previous issue we discussed *tosefet sheviit* – the law that extends the prohibitions of the *shemittah* year both before and after it. During our study of the second *perek* this week we learnt that not all activity is prohibited during this extended period.

The *Bartenura* (2:2) explains that any activity that is required by the fruit of the sixth year is permitted, even during *tosefet sheviit*. If however that activity is simply for the benefit of the trees, then it depends on whether that activity is prohibited on a biblical level during the *shmittah* year. If it is prohibited on a rabbinic level, then the *Chachamim* allowed it during *tosefet sheviit*.

In the *Mishnah* that follows, a number of activities are debated – “*mekarsemin, mezardin, mefaslin*” – activities that relate to trimming the dry branches, thinning a tree and pruning. The first opinion is that it is permitted up until *Rosh Hashanah*; *R' Yehoshua* maintains that the pruning of the sixth year is even permitted into the *shmittah* year; while *R' Shimon* argues that it must cease by *Shavuot*. What is the basis of this debate?

The *Mishnah Rishona* poses this question and explains that they debate in this *Mishnah* is not about how to categorise these activities, but rather the very rule that we cited from the *Bartenura*. The first opinion is that these two reasons, independently allow such activities, but only until *Rosh Hashanah*. This is consistent with the rule we cited from the *Bartenura*.

According to *R' Yehoshua* however the two reasons can even justify these activities during the *shemittah* year, however both reasons are needed together. In other words, it must be for the benefit of the fruit of the sixth year and the activity must not be prohibited on a

biblical level. The *Mishnah Achrona* uses this understanding to explain the unexpected language used when presenting the position of *R' Yehoshua*: “just like the thinning and pruning of the fifth year, so too the sixth year.” In other words, just as the fruit in the fifth year is still on the trees in the sixth year, so too in the *shemittah* year, there will be fruit that remained on the trees from the sixth year. Since it is fruit from the sixth year and the activity normally rabbinically prohibited, it is permitted even in the *shemittah* year.

Finally, to explain the position of *R' Shimon*. The *Mishnah Rishona* explains that *R' Shimon* partially agrees with the first opinion, that any concession would only be during the sixth year. However *R' Shimon* argues that these activities are only permitted while the tree still has fruit. If however it no longer has any fruit, then the work must stop by *Shavuot*.

The *Mishnah Rishona* uses this understanding to again, explain the wording of the *Mishnah*. *R' Shimon* states, “the entire time that one is permitted to work the tree, one is permitted to prune them”. *R' Shimon* could have more succinctly said, “one is not allowed to prune from the time working the tree is prohibited.” The *Mishnah Achrona* however explains that, based on the above explanation, that would be inaccurate, since it would imply that all pruning must cease at *Shavuot*. Since however the *Mishnah* records *R' Shimon's* opinion after *R' Yossi* his comment is based on *R' Yossi's* which assumes the tree has fruit. Consequently, *R' Shimon* argues that it is true that the fact that the tree has fruit permits work on the tree for a longer period, but no longer than any other work on the tree alone is permitted – until *Rosh Hashanah* – as stated in the previous *Mishnah*.

**Revision Questions**

שביעית א' ה' – ב' י'

- Can trees owned by different people combine to define the area as a *sde ilan*? (א' ה')
- When is the latest time that one can plough a field containing young trees?
- During this time how large an area is one allowed to plough?
- Does it make a difference how the trees are arranged? (א' ו')
- Which other vegetable combines with young trees to enable an entire *beit se'ah* to be ploughed? (א' ו')
- Explain the debate regarding the time period when a tree is defined as a young tree? (ח' א')
- What is the latest time *erev shvi'it* that one can:
  - Plough a field of grain? (ב' א')
  - Fertilise their field?
  - Prune?
  - Water a field that does not get enough rain water? (ב' ב')
  - Remove stones? (ג' ב')
  - Water his trees?
  - Insulate or repair his trees? (ד' ב')
- Explain the debate regarding placing oil on unripe figs prior to, and after the *shmittah* year? (ב' ה')
- When is the latest time that one can plant a new tree prior to *shmittah*? (ב' ו')
- What is the law regard one that plants after this time? (ב' ו')
- What is exceptional about the grain listed in *mishnah 7* and why is this important for the laws of *ma'asrot* and *shmittah*? (ב' ו')
- What other foods are added to the above group by other *Tana'im*? (ב' ח')
- What is special about the cut off time for onions that don't produce seeds and Egyptian beans? How does the law differ if the products were planted in a field that receive enough rain water? (ב' ט')
- What determines whether pumpkins that are intended to be used for replanting, are *kedushat shvi'it*? (ב' י')
- Explain the debate regarding watering a *sde lavan*. (ב' י')

**Melbourne, Australia**

**Sunday -Thursday**

10 minutes before *Mincha*  
Mizrachi Shul  
 Melbourne, Australia

**Friday & Shabbat**

10 minutes before *Mincha*  
Mizrachi Shul  
 Melbourne, Australia

**Efrat, Israel**

*Shiur in English*

**Sunday -Thursday**

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf  
 9:00am  
Kollel Magen Avraham  
 Reemon Neighbourhood

**ONLINE SHIURIM**

*Rabbi Chaim Brown*  
[www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/](http://www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/)

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**SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON**

*Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss*  
 In US dial: 718 906 6400  
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**Next Week's Mishnayot...**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
14 August י' אב	15 August י"א אב	16 August י"ב אב	17 August י"ג אב	18 August י"ד אב	19 August ט"ו אב	20 August ט"ז אב
Sheviit 3:1-2	Sheviit 3:3-4	Sheviit 3:5-6	Sheviit 3:7-8	Sheviit 3:9-10	Sheviit 4:1-2	Sheviit 4:3-4

