

It shall be the Yovel/jubilee year for you, each of you shall return to his ancestral heritage and each of you shall return to his family." (25:10) - The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is Mine, for you are sojourners and residents with Me." (25:23)

The *halacha* of *Yovel* is a basic tenet of our faith. It teaches us that everything must ultimately revert to its original source -- Hashem. Indeed, the *Ibn Ezra* and the *Ramban* suggest that the word "*Yovel*" implies "movement" or "bringing". The imperative to observe *Yovel* is mentioned in regard to four situations: freeing of servants; prohibition of planting or reaping; the actual holiness of the jubilee year and the command of "from the field you may eat its crop;" and the repossession of the lands which had been sold. The purpose of *Yovel* as stated in the *Torah* is to teach us that everything is transitory and to demonstrate that all land belongs to Hashem, Who grants us hospitality in His land.

Horav Avigdor Miller, Shlita, explains the "movement" of the *Yovel* year as a "return of everything to Hashem." The *eved ivri*, Hebrew slave, returns to his family because he is not our servant; together he and we are servants of Hashem and not "servants of servants." The "movement" of the jubilee year is essentially a time when everything is returned to Hashem, its original owner. The concept of freedom from subjugation to man is the beginning of our return to the possession of the Creator.

Eretz Yisrael must be returned on *Yovel* to its Divine Owner, Who in turn demands that it be given to the previous possessor who had sold it. Thus, everyone, buyer and seller alike is reminded of the transitoriness of ownership. As *Horav Miller* notes, however, the laws of *Yovel* are not applicable when *Klal Yisrael* are in *galus*, exile. They no longer need a reminder then that the land is not theirs. Their constant migration from one place to another serves as "testament" that they are merely "hsng o,t ohcau,u ohrd ", sojourners and residents with Me." No man is here to stay permanently, and no man takes anything with him when he ultimately leaves.

The *Dubno Maggid* offers a profound interpretation of this phrase which serves as a lesson for us. He questions the use of the two contradictory terms for describing our relationship with Hashem. Are we "residents", or are we "sojourners" ? Do we belong, or are we guests to be merely tolerated ? Hashem posits that man is either a settler or a stranger. If man reflects upon his sojourn in this world and realizes that he is but a *ger*, stranger, then Hashem is a *toshav*, resident, in his heart. Hashem abides within this person, since this individual comprehends his own true position on this earth. If man, however, views himself as a *toshav*, a resident, who has come to "settle" in this world, then he perceives Hashem to be a *ger* in his heart. Man achieves stability in this world only when he recognizes his own fleeting presence.