

“At the end of seven years, in the set time of the year of Shemittah, during the Festival of Succos...You shall read this Torah before all Yisrael, in their ears.” (31:10-11)

The *mitzvah* of *Hakheil*, convening of *Klal Yisrael* at the beginning of the eighth year, immediately following the *Shemittah* year, is set at this time by design. The timing of this event, when all Jews gathered together to hear the Torah read by the *Melech Yisrael*, Jewish king, was scheduled to impart the greatest impression. What is unique about this time?

Horav Mordechai Rogov, z.l., explains that after *Klal Yisrael* has experienced a year of *Shemittah*, a year of unparalleled faith and trust in the Almighty, they are now attuned to hear and accept what the Torah has to say. They had just completed an entire year when their daily sustenance was always a question in their minds. “What shall we eat during the seventh year?” they would ask. They survived – and thrived, despite the daily anxiety regarding their subsistence. It now dawned on them that they “made it” without plowing, planting or harvesting. They did nothing! Yet, they had what they needed because Hashem, as usual, took care of their needs. It was their faith in Hashem that carried them through the year.

Is it any wonder that after such an incredible year of faith and apparent blessings they were primed and ready to listen to the word of Hashem?

This idea rings true every time we successfully navigate the sea of ambiguity and pain and come to the realization that Hashem has been there with us throughout our ordeal. As the nation now understood that Torah fulfillment would serve for their ultimate benefit, so, too, should we accept the fact that whatever we have is from Hashem. Our response should be clear and unequivocal. As the people now have come to realize that *Shabbos* and *Shemittah*, as well as involvement in any other *mitzvah*, does not detract from our material success, but, instead, guarantees it, so should we strengthen our resolve and commitment towards Torah observance. *Mitzvah* observance reinforces a sense of confidence and security that they are not only a means of serving Hashem, but also rungs in the ladder which leads to success and fulfillment. In truth, every encounter with Hashem’s beneficence should engender within us feelings of hope and courage in the knowledge that Hashem is always there for us.