Leviticus 26:18 states: 

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל אַשְׁרֶם אֶל ה' מִשְׁפַּט שָׁבָתָה יְמֵי הַשָּׁמָּה׃

And it shall be that in the first year, when you plant, you shall not reap; and in the second year, when you reap, you shall not harvest the spontaneous growth.

Leviticus 26:34-35 states:

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁבְתָה הָאָרֶץ לְמַלֹּאות שֶׁבַע שָׁנָה: כִּי לְפָּנַי אֶלָּבָט הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה בְּשַׁבְתֹּתֶיהָ.

Then shall the land make up for its sabbath years throughout the time that it is desolate and you are in the land of your enemies; then shall the land rest and make up for its sabbath years. Throughout the time that it is desolate, it shall observe the rest that it did not observe in your sabbath years while you were dwelling upon it.

As retribution for not fulfilling the commandments, including and especially the land sabbatical every seventh year, Israel will be expelled from the land. Sure enough, when Judah was exiled in 597 and 586 BCE, the author of Chronicles 2:36-20:21 stated:

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל יֵרְמְיָהּ בֶּן נֵגִיא צְדֵיק אֲשֶׁר בָּא אֶל הָאָרֶץ בְּשַׁבְתּוֹתֶיהָ בְּשַׁבְתּוֹתֶיהָ לְמַלֹּאות שִּׁבְעִּים שָנָה.

Those who survived the sword he exiled to Babylon, and they became his and his sons’ sons to the reign of the kingdom of Babylonia, in fulfillment of the Lord’s speech, to remain until the land paid back its sabbaths; as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, till seventy years were completed.

Interestingly, the last verse also connects the return of the Jews to their land in 539 BCE under the Persian Emperor Cyrus as a fulfillment of a famous prophecy by Jeremiah in 20:10:

For thus saith the Lord: When Babylon’s seventy years are over, I will take note of you, and I will fulfill to you My promise of favor—to bring you back to this place.

If we go to the math, we see that the First Beis Hamikdash stood for about 410 years; add to that approximately 70 years of exile comes to around 480. Therefore, the total number of sabbatical years during this period was nearly 70. Considering that any Yisrael did not fulfill this and other laws during this period would explain why the land needed to be paid back for 70 years in Jeremiah’s calculation.

To add one further calculation that extends the above prophecies well into the Second Temple period, we can look to Daniel 9:2:

וַיֹּאמֶר: אֲנִי דָָֽנִּיֵֵּ֔אל בִּינֹֹ֖תִּי בַׁסְפָּרִִּ֑ים מִּסְפַַּ֣ר הַׁשָנִִּ֗ים אֲשֶֶׁ֨ר הָיָָ֤ה דְבַוְּרִ֙י הַׁלדְּוֹת יַשֹעְרָה אֱלֹהִים בַּמַּלְכֵּי מַלְכֵּי בָּבֵל.

I, Daniel, consulted the books concerning the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord that had come to Jeremiah the prophet, were to be the term of Jerusalem’s desolation—seventy years.

During the inquiries of God to know the proper way to compare the 70 years of Jeremiah’s prediction. At the end of the chapter, the angel Gabriel reveals to him that Jeremiah’s prophecy actually meant not 70 years but rather 70 weeks of years, coming to 490 years. Historians explain that Daniel saw the true fulfillment of Jeremiah’s prophecy in the rise of Hasmonean rule, the first and only period of independence from foreign domination during the Second Temple Period.

Still, we wonder, how can Daniel interpret Jeremiah’s clear words, “70 years,” as 70 sabbatical cycles? The answer may lie back in our parasha.

(continued from back)

(continued on inside panel)
**UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES**

Yom Yerushalayim at Shearith Israel
“From King David to David Rubinger”
Sunday Morning, June 5 | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
Following 8:00 am morning services, Rabbi Soloveichik will deliver a special shiur in honor of Yom Yerushalayim.

Graduation Kiddush and Scroll of Honor
Saturday, June 11
Let’s spread the good news and celebrate the success and accomplishments of all our graduates from preschool to PhDs! Go to shearithisrael.org/graduation2016 by THIS Wednesday, June 8 to ensure your graduate is listed on our scroll of honor. Even if you cannot attend, consider co-sponsoring our graduation kiddush for $180 or just $36.

Shabu’ot Public Lecture
When Jews Owned Slaves: An Often Untold Tale of History, Ritual and Jewish Law
Saturday Night, June 11 | 11:30 pm
Join us for what has become a popular Shabu’ot night tradition for the greater UWS and UES community. After the talk, guests are invited to mingle over cheesecake. Please consider sponsoring this lecture. Go to shearithisrael.org/shabuot-public-lecture.

Girls’ Megillat Ruth Reading
First day of Shabuot | Sunday, June 12
The girls of our synagogue recite Megillat Ruth for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary after services. We hope you will attend and support our girls. We are seeking additional sponsors and contributors for the kiddush in honor of our girls. For more information, and to sponsor go to shearithisrael.org/girls-book-ruth-reading

Donate to the Sisterhood’s Shabu’ot Decorating Efforts
Looking forward to the botanical splendor in our sanctuary on Shabu’ot! The Sisterhood makes that happen every year. Please consider making a donation to the Sisterhood in appreciation for all that they do. Go to shearithisrael.org/sisterhood to donate.

Indoor Picnic for Young Couples and Families
Saturday, July 2, 2016 | Following Morning Services
Who wants to fret over rain clouds or bother with insect repellent? After all, the best thing about picnicking is relaxing with friends and enjoying casual picnic fare. Organized by our fabulous committee of young couples, this year’s end-of-year picnic will be held at the synagogue, where we can enjoy our protected, park-facing Portico as well as the Elias Room. Fun for the kids and a rabbi’s lecture for the adults will keep everyone happy. Go to shearithisrael.org/indoor-picnic to sign up by Tuesday, June 28.

Register now for PTTS Hebrew School
Polonies Talmud Torah School, provides children and teens, ages 3-16, with a substantive Jewish education in a positive and engaging environment. NEW: Refer a new family and earn a $100 reduction in your synagogue dues or PTTS tuition. Register at shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool

Contribute to the PTTS Hebrew School Scholarship Fund
We offer many scholarships to ensure that all qualified applicants can receive a Jewish education. Please consider sponsoring a student for an academic year or semester or contributing to our Hebrew school scholarship fund with a tax deductible contribution of any amount. Go to shearithisrael.org/hebrew-school-scholarship-fund

Sisterhood’s Elsie Adlman Camp Fund
For many years the Sisterhood’s Elsie Adlman Camp Fund has helped children and senior citizens, who could otherwise not do so, enjoy a Jewish summer experience outside the City. In this time of great economic need, it is more important than ever to be able to help change their lives for a month... a week... or even a day. Please help us by responding as generously as you can. Go to shearithisrael.org/sisterhood-elsie-adlman-camp-fund to donate.

**WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION**

For details go to: shearithisrael.org/judaic-education

**Tuesday**
◊ Rambam’s Mishneh Torah | Rabbi Hidary | 7:45 am
◊ Feasts and Fasts: The Festivals in Jewish Thought-A Class for Women | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am
◊ Talmud Class: Tractate Rosh Hashana and the Philosophy of Jewish Time | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm | Spring semester sponsored by Gregory Bell.

**Sunday**
◊ The Book of Kings | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am |
◊ Saadia Gaon’s Book of Beliefs and Opinions | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

Don’t let us go dry.
Be a scotch or arak sponsor. To sponsor or contribute go to shearithisrael.org/scotch-and-arak-sponsorships

Please consider sponsoring a semester or a class. Go to: shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass

Parnas Office Hours
Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you. Please schedule a visit at parnas@shearithisrael.org.

Our next public tour is:
Wednesday, June 15 at 11:00 am