

Land in *Yovel* – Jubilee Year

Ref: *Sefer Zeraim, Hilchot Shmitah Veyovel, Chapters 11–12*



Not to sell the land in perpetuity¹⁷, To redeem the land in the *yovel* – field of inheritance and field of purchase.¹⁶

Factors

- A person should not sell his home or ancestral field, except if he becomes impoverished and needs sustenance.
- If the original owner wants to redeem his property a calculation should be made according to how many years have passed, and not according to how many crops have materialised.
- If purchaser improves the field's value, he should be compensated.
- Purchaser must maintain possession for at least 2 years and must benefit from 2 crops in these 2 years.
- Seller cannot use loan to redeem field. Has to use own resources.
- He cannot redeem back half a field. It is all or nothing.
- If he gives property away as a present, it returns to him in *yovel*.
- A husband's inheritance of his wife's property is Rabbinic. However the Sages reinforced it as Scriptural to belong to the husband.



House in a walled city¹⁸

This refers to a house in a city surrounded by a wall.

We rely only on a wall which surrounded the city at the time when Joshua conquered the land. Similarly when Ezra entered the land, all the walled cities of that time became consecrated.

Gardens, bathhouses and dovecotes are all considered as house, but a field is not.

Minimum measure for a house is **4 x 4 amah**.

Houses in Jerusalem were never divided among the tribes. Therefore a person can never permanently acquire property there.

A person who sells a house in a city surrounded by a wall, may redeem it throughout a 12 (or 13 in leap year) month period from the date of selling. This could be redeemed even on the day he sold it. When he redeems it, he returns all the money he received.

The laws are completely different to an ancestral field, and if it is not redeemed, it goes out of the possession of the seller.

Yovel does not affect house in a walled city.

HOUSE IN A NON-WALLED CITY

These houses take on both sets of advantages offered by a field and by a house in a walled city. I.e.

- He can redeem immediately if he wants and he returns all the money he received.
- After 12 months, he can redeem it until *yovel*, as is the law with a field, and receives a reduction.
- When *yovel* arrives, house returns to original owner with no charge.

When *Mashiach* comes in the Future we will again count *shmitah* and *yovel* and again sanctify the homes in walled cities.