

## DAY NINE - FAST AND PRAY JANUARY 10, 2022

Before you read this exciting promise from scripture, remember that times and seasons matter to God. In Ecclesiastes Solomon wrote: *“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven...”* and then he went on to list many things... a time to be born a time to die – a time to plant and a time to harvest...” We need to be reminded that throughout scripture, God repeatedly does things according to times, days, seasons and even years. Most notably, the birth of Jesus took place at exactly the perfect time.

**The Jewish year 5782, which began on September 7, 2021, is not an ordinary year in the Jewish calendar.** It is known as a sabbatical year, or Shmita, and is mentioned in the book of Exodus and Leviticus. The word Shmita means *to release, to cease striving*. In the Shmita year, debts are forgiven, agricultural lands lie fallow, private land holdings become open to the commons, and staples such as food storage and perennial harvests are freely redistributed and made accessible to everyone – rich or poor.

The first reference to Shmita is in the Book of Exodus.

*For six years you are to sow your land and to gather in its produce, but in the seventh, you are to let it go and to let it be, that the needy of your people may eat, and what remains, the wildlife of the field shall eat. Do thus with your vineyard, with your olive grove. – Exodus 23:10-11 NKJV*

Here, I believe, is the value in this for us:

**2022 is a Shmita year,** a sabbath year, a year to cease striving. Listen to this promise: *“I will send you such a blessing in the sixth year that the land will yield enough for three years. <sup>22</sup>While you plant during the eighth year, you will eat from the old crop and will continue to eat from it until the harvest of the ninth year comes in.” – Leviticus 25:20-21 NIV*

**2022 is a year of rest** for the soil (new seeds may not be planted or harvested). 2021 and 2020 were years of striving and pushing, hardship and trial but **Shmita** is a time of rest. **Shmita** in scripture not only gave rest to the fields but to the people, allowing them to take a breath from back-breaking labor, *to focus instead on spiritual pursuits.*

**2022 is a devotional year**, a year to ascend, a time to draw near to God, a season to respond to the invitation “come up here.”

In that way, 2022 shall be a season of plowing, of going deeper in God. **Shmita.**

*“Sow for yourselves righteousness;  
Reap in mercy;  
**Break up your fallow ground,**  
For it is time to seek the Lord,  
Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.”  
– Hosea 10:12 NKJV*