



Parshas Behar & Bechukosai 2020, true courage

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the speedy recovery of Sasson Bezalel Ben Batya and Shaul Ben Berta. And dedicated to the memory of Shlomo Ben Edward and Edward Ben Shaul. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

Our Parshas begins with an overview of the laws of Shemittah and Yovel. Shemittah is a seven-year cycle in which we may farm the land for six years; however, in the seventh year, we must let the land rest.

The Yovel cycle, which also requires letting the land rest, is the first year after seven Shemittah cycles. All Jewish slaves must be released this year, and all properties must be reverted back to their original owners.

The Torah then lists the amazing rewards that G-d will bestow upon us for following the Torah and listening to His Mitzvahs. However, the Parsha also informs us of the punishments that will be given if we disobey G-d's commandments Heaven Forbid.

However, a question comes to mind: Our Parsha begins with the Pasuk,(25:1-4) (1) *"And G-d spoke to Moshe on Mt. Sinai, saying. (2) Speak to the Jewish people & tell them that when you enter the land I am giving you, the land shall rest a sabbatical for G-d. (3) For six years you may sow the lands & prune your vineyards and gather their produce"*. But weren't all the commandments given to us at Mt. Sinai? Why does the Torah specifically single out the Mitzvahs of Shemittah and Yovel?

Rashi, Rav Shlomo Yitzchaki, writes that the Torah singles out the Shemittah to teach us that just like Shemittah, all of its regulations were given at Mt. Sinai. So too, all the Mitzvahs and their nuances were given to Moshe Rabbienu at Har Sinai.

This rationale applies to all Mitzvahs, whether they are part of the Ten Commandments or clearly detailed in the Torah. They were all given to us at Har Sinai. Dovid Hamelech writes in Koheles (1:9-10), ***“There is nothing new under the sun! Sometimes there is a phenomenon of which people say, “Look, this is new!” they shall be told that it has already occurred long ago in the ages that went before us.”***

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more powerful explanation. He explains why the Torah distinguishes Shemitah; it teaches us how to fulfill this important Mitzvah.

Resting the land during Shemitah requires vast trust and belief in G-d. This is why the Torah mentions Har Sinai with Shemita, for Har Sinai teaches us that we should have a slight ego and Jewish pride to get the courage to stand out from the crowd and serve G-d.

As the Gemara in Sota writes (5a), *“From the fact that G-d decided to give the Torah on Har Sinai, which was just a little mountain, but nevertheless a mountain, we learn that a Torah scholar should have a small ego.”* The reason is so he can have ambitions in his learning and strive to help others as well.

However, there is a fine line between arrogance and a small ego balanced with the trust and belief that G-d indeed runs the world. Since a large ego is the greatest enemy opposing a real relationship with G-d, as Shlomo Hmelech says in Mishlei (16:5), ***“Every haughty heart is an abomination to G-d.”***

In our daily life, it is imperative that we understand that it takes nothing to stand on the sidelines with the rest of the masses. But it takes real courage and determination to defend your beliefs and values against an ever-growing opposition. However, that is when your true self emerges and your soul shines.

**“It is easy to stand with a crowd.
However, it takes courage to stand alone.”**

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*