



Parshas Behar & Bechukosai 2023, you are worthy

This week's Parsha Perspective is in honor of the immediate and speedy recovery of Daniel Aaron Moshe Ben Ruth. May he and all those who need a Refuah Shlema experience G-d's mercy and compassion swiftly!

This week's Parsha Perspective is in loving memory of Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

This Shabbos is **Shabbos Chazak**, as we end the third book of the Torah, Sefer Vayikra. Our Parshas begins with an overview of the laws of Shemitah and Yovel. Shemitah is a seven-year cycle in which we may farm the land for six years; however, we must let the land rest in the seventh year.

The Yovel cycle, which also requires letting the land rest, is the first year after seven Shemitah cycles. All Jewish slaves must be released this year, and all properties must be reverted 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, a question comes to mind: At the beginning of Parshas Bahar, where it discusses the Shemitah and Yovel cycles, the Torah asks a question. (25:20 - 21) *"If you should ask, What are we to eat in the seventh year if we can not plant our crops? I will ordain My blessing for you in the sixth year, so it shall yield a sufficient crop for three years."*

Besides the fact that the Torah doesn't usually ask this type of question, the previous Pasuk already mentions blessings of abundance. Why does the Torah repeat the blessing of abundance for following the laws of Shemitah and Yovel?

The Rabbienu Bachya, Rav Bachya Ben Asher, gives a simple explanation. He writes that the Pasuk is not referring to the Shemitah year, rather the eighth year, the year after Yovel. As mentioned above, the first year after seven Shemitah cycles was another sabbatical year, Yovel.

The Rabbienu Bachya explains that it is common practice to eat the yield of your crop a year later but not so two years later. Meaning, that the sixth year should provide for the seventh but not necessarily for the eighth. Hence the Pasuk repeats the blessing with emphasis on Yovel, the eighth year.

However, the Netziv, Rav Naftali Tzvi Yeudah Berlin, gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He writes that the Torah reiterates the blessing for a very specific purpose, to alleviate the worry of those who feel unworthy. For it is nothing short of a miracle that the ground yield crop for three years in one harvest cycle.

The Netziv explains that the worry is not necessarily a lack of faith but rather a feeling of not deserving such an open blessing and miracle. Therefore, the Torah reiterates and repeats the guarantee of abundance to encompass the entire nation.

The reward of abundance is not just for righteous people who follow the laws, but also for those who feel unworthy and undeserving of such immense blessings. As the Pasuk states, (25:21) "וְצִוִּיתִי אֶת־בְּרַכְתִּי לָכֶם" - **I will command My blessing upon you,** irrespective of perceived worthiness or lack thereof

This lesson is ever more relevant as we celebrated Lag B'Omer this week. Lag B'Omer is a profound and holy day with immense blessings and spiritual growth opportunities.

This window of opportunity is open, ready and available to all of G-d's children, especially those who share His light with the world!

In our daily life, it is imperative that we feel worthy and deserving of happiness, growth and fulfillment. It is only by believing that we are deserving of the good things in life that we can indeed receive more and appreciate them.

Research shows that individuals who feel worthy are more likely to have a positive outlook and greater appreciation for life. When faced with failure or negativity, they are able to bounce back with confidence, faith, and optimism. They are willing to take risks and achieve great things, recognizing the inherent value in themselves, the beauty of others and their place in the world.

**"The more you celebrate the good,
the more good you discover that is worthy of celebration."**

- Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*