

This week is פרשת נשא, which is the longest פרשה of the year in terms of פסוקים. In fact, while it is technically the longest פרשה, it's also not really the longest, because the latter half of נשא consists of the קרבנות brought by each of the נשיאים during the המשכן. So for a בר מצוה boy, נשא isn't nearly as daunting as it might seem, since many of the פסוקים are repeated over and over again. There's a whole חזרה of תורה on why the Torah chose to repeat each נשיא's קרבן individually rather than summarizing. But from my vantage point, I want to draw out a practical message: this reinforces something I've always said, that the עיקר of learning is חזרה. Being חוזר over and over again is the way to achieve real success in תורה. Now, it's true that each of the נשיאים had his own חזרה, as explained by the various מפרשים. So it's not simply repetition. But nonetheless, the lesson of חזרה stands.

R' Shlomo Zalman Sonnenfeld, the great-grandson of R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, wrote a beautiful sefer on חומש with all of the insights of his great-grandfather R' Yosef Chaim, the beloved rav of Yerushalyim. At the beginning of this פרשה, he brings a fascinating question. R. Yosef Engel, who was a gigantic גאון עולם, wrote a sefer called גבורות שמונים, in which he listed 80 possible answers to a particular קשיא regarding the korban brought by a סוטה. R' Shlomo Zalman's father, R' Yosef Chaim's grandson, asked his grandfather R' Yosef Chaim, "Why did R. Yosef Engel specifically pick 80? He could have picked any other number?" R' Yosef Chaim said, "You tell me, what do you think?" "It might be because the סוטה of גמטריא is 80." R' Yosef Chaim was delighted with the answer and said, "Yes, that is certainly the reason, I'm only surprised he did not mention it in his sefer."

Having said that, I saw a fascinating story about R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld this past week which I'd like to share with you. One morning, his son entered his father's room and saw that his father's face was shining. Puzzled, he asked, "What happened?" R' Yosef Chaim brushed it off: "No, no, it's nothing." His son insisted: "Please, tell me!" Finally, R' Yosef Chaim said, "I'll tell you - but only on condition that you don't share this with anyone until after I pass away." He explained: "For several weeks, I've been grappling with what seemed like an insoluble problem in the sefer ספרא דצניעותא, a very esoteric sefer on קבלה, along with the ווילנא גאון's commentary on it. Last night, the גאון came to me in a dream and explained the difficult passage to me. When I awoke this morning, I realized that the matter had indeed become perfectly clear." I thought that was an astounding little vignette about R' Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld and the ווילנא גאון.

The next highlight in this week's פרשה, in my opinion, beyond the נשיאים and their קרבנות, is ברכת כהנים. The sefer שמחת התורה, which brings down דברי תורה from R' Simcha Sheps - who was ראש ישיבה in תורה ודעת, a wonderful man, whom I got to know a little bit and took care of for a short while. He was a גאון עולם, was a מגיד שיעור and a real big חכם. He brings down a מדרש תנחומא on the ברכת כהנים which says גשמים means what? It means עושר, means wealth. וישמרך - that you should do mitzvos. וישם לך שלום - that Hashem should give you שלום. But the קשיא is: why does the Torah start with גשמים, with money, before moving to רוחניות and finally שלום? You would think that רוחניות is more important. And שלום is the most important - without שלום, there is nothing. So why is it last?

To understand this, he explains: The ברכה of גשמים doesn't mean lots of money or נכסים. That's not the definition of blessing. What is the real ברכה of גשמים? The ברכה of גשמים is to be satisfied. איזהו עשיר. השמה בחלקו. If a person is rich but not satisfied, and sees someone who has more than him, he can become devastated: "How can he have that and I don't?" The true purpose of עושר is הסתפקות - to feel that you don't need more than what you have. If you understand that, then you are truly rich.

There was once a rich man who came to a גדול for a ברכה. The גדול blessed him: "You should always think that you have a lot of money and that you don't have enough שמים." What does that mean? A person should feel that in גשמים, he has more than enough - but when it comes to שמים, he doesn't have enough and wants more. That's a tremendous יסוד in life. You should have a תאוה to have more and more



יראת שמים. We should never be satisfied with what we have in terms of יראת שמים. Now we understand Hashem should give you a ברכה with ממון, that you should have enough what you need and should not need more. And once you have that ברכה of הסתפקות, which means satisfaction, then you will have מנוחה שלימה, you'll have the ability to have a calm mind, will be שמה בחלקו, and after that, you can get the ברכה of וישמרך. Then, when you have this calmness of mind and satisfaction, you'll be able to do more and more מצות, because you'll have the ability to focus on doing what's important in life, and that is to do מצות. And after that, once you have those two aspects, then certainly you will have שלום, because once you are שמה בחלקו and do all the מצות, there cannot be possibly anything more שלום than that. You'll have ברכת השם that you'll have עושר in both רוחניות and גשמיות.

My final vort is a tremendously interesting question brought down in the ספר אוצר פלאות התורה. I got this from a very חושב friend of mine, R' Mendy Pollak, who should live and be well, a wonderful fellow. This sefer was written by a בעלבוס who turned out was a tremendous גאון. The man knew everything in ש"ס. Now, here's his question, which was asked to a rav called R' Aharon Mordechai Brisk and it's brought down in בריסק מהר"ם שו"ת: Let's say a בן ארץ ישראל is in חוץ לארץ for יום טוב, and he happens to be a כהן. He doesn't keep גלויות של יום טוב שני, because he has כוונה to go back home. So is he allowed to duchan with the other people who are who are duchaning on גלויות של יום טוב שני? R' Brisk answered לענין דעת - In my humble opinion, it's clear that a בן ארץ ישראל who's in חוץ לארץ can definitely duchan on the second day on Yom Tov. Why? Because what's the reason why don't we duchan every single day in חוץ לארץ? Because we're busy with our פרנסה, we can't be involved with those things that we which really give us true שמחה, which is מצות ומעשים טובים. Only on a day like יום טוב, when we don't have that דאגה of פרנסה can we duchan. So therefore, if a בן ארץ ישראל is in חוץ לארץ, and he can't do מלאכה on יום טוב, בפרהסיא, so he's not worried about his פרנסה, he is שרוי בשמחה and he certainly would be entitled and is eligible to do ברכת כהנים, and he can even say it with a ברכה, there's no חשש לבטלה.

