

משה רבינו is unique, as the הטורים points out, because it is the only פרשה after the birth of משה רבינו where his name is not mentioned. Everyone is familiar with the מדרש which explains that this is due to משה רבינו's statement (32:32) מִחֲנִי נָא מִסַּפֶּרֶךָ. A קללת חכם, even if made תנאי, is מתקיים.

There is much discussion as to why this specifically happens in פרשת תצוה. The most well-known answer is that it almost always coincides with ז' אדר, the yartzeit of משה רבינו. Why this connection exists is an interesting שאלה on its own. However, I'd like to focus on something else.

I haven't counted how many times, but the word ואתה appears numerous times throughout פרשת תצוה. The first word of the פרשה itself is ואתה, with משה רבינו speaking directly to הקדוש ברוך הוא. This is remarkable when you think about it because we often take for granted the direct communication between הקדוש ברוך הוא and משה רבינו. From beginning to end, it's ואתה, ואתה, ואתה, followed by ונתת, וצפית, ועשית, - constant dialogue between משה רבינו and הקדוש ברוך הוא.

The first מצוה in פרשת תצוה is (27:20) שָׁמֹן זֵית זָךְ כִּתִּית לְמִאֹר לְהַעֲלֹת נֵר תָּמִיד. The idea of תמיד is central here. Interestingly, the final section of the פרשה discusses the מזבח הזהב, the Golden מזבח for קטורת. The קטורת was brought every single day, בבוקר, בבוקר, but the מזבח הזהב also had another function: once a year on יום כיפור, as the פסוק states (30:10): וְכִפֹּר אֹהֶרֶן עַל קַרְנָיו אֶחָת בַּשָּׁנָה מִדָּם חֹטֵאת הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶחָת בַּשָּׁנָה (30:10). Even though this was a once-a-year event, it held an element of תמיד, of constancy, reinforcing the central theme of this פרשה.

This leads to an interesting מחלוקת in the מדרש about which פסוק in the תורה includes all others. I heard this vort from my father, עליו השלום, who heard it from Rabbi Hollander זצ"ל, the מרת דאסרא of Mount Eden Shul in the Bronx, where we grew up. This was his דרשה on פרשת תצוה.

Which פסוק, [in his cute way he would say is the most important פסוק in the תורה, of course it's not such a thing, they're all equally important], but the מדרש says which פסוק is כולל all of the other פסוקים in the שמעון בן וְאֶהְיֶה לְרֹעֶה כְּמֹדֶה (ויקרא י"ט:י"ח) says בן ננס; שָׁמֹעַ יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד (דברים ו:ד) says בן זומא? תורה אֶת הַכֹּהֵן הָאֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בִּבְקָר וְאֶת הַכֹּהֵן הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָּיִם: פינחס says from our פרשה, and also repeated in פסוק (שמות כ"ט:ל"ט) the פסוק which refers famously to the קרבן תמיד. All the מצוות in the תורה are intended to create a continuous connection to הקדוש ברוך הוא. The goal is לנגדי תמיד ה' - maintaining the awareness of ה' before us at all times.

In English, להבדיל, we use the term "constant," but there's another crucial word: "consistent." Our relationship with הקדוש ברוך הוא must be consistent - no breaks, no moments of stepping away by saying, "I'll be back soon." Everything revolves around maintaining a continuous, consistent connection with הקדוש ברוך הוא.

This is the message of the פרשה: פרשת תצוה - להעלות נר תמיד - light is upon us at all times. Our עבודה must be one of constantly and consistently. אֶת הַכֹּהֵן הָאֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בִּבְקָר וְאֶת הַכֹּהֵן הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָּיִם - constantly and consistently. The highest form of that was the עבודה of יום כיפור, which again, was a constant עבודה for דורות, even though it only happened once a year. That is the message of the פרשה: משה רבינו's name is not there, but his presence is there very consistently, ואתה, ואתה, ואתה. משה רבינו is constantly representing us before הקדוש ברוך הוא, constantly bringing us back to Hashem, constantly reminding us of what our עבודה is, and we should be successful in that דורות. Good Shabbos!

