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**Parsha Behar-Bechukotai**  
**by Julie Zhuk on 2023-05-13**

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The name for every parsha has a name and it translates to something. For this week, the first part Behar translates to Being on Mount Sinai. The second part Bechukotai translates to In My Statutes. It is on the Mountain of Sina that G-d is communicating to Moses about the laws of the Sabbatical year. G-d states that every seventh year all the work on the land has to come to an end. The produce becomes free for the taking for all man and all animals as well. We learn in this parsha, that seven sabbatical cycles are followed by a fiftieth year . It's known as the jubilee year, and work on that year comes to an end. Indentured servants are set free. Any ancestral estates in the Holy Land have been sold revert to their original owners. There are additional laws put in place to govern the sale of lands.

There are prohibitions against fraud and lending money with interest included there. G-d promised the Jews, if the people of Israel keep His commandments, they would, in turn, enjoy material prosperity. They will also dwell securely in the land of Israel. G-d reprimands the Jews harshly, He warns of the exile, persecution, and other evils that will befall them if they are to abandon their covenant with Him. G-d tells the Jewish people that even when they are in the land of their enemies, G-d will not cast them away. He will never abhor them either. He never wants to do anything to break the covenant He has with them. He is reminding them that He is their G-d. The ending of the parsha gives details about how to calculate the values of different kinds of pledges. These are made to G-d. This included the mitzva of tithing produce and livestock.

Another interpretation about this parsha focuses on the pride that humans have. Over the years many rabbis have different opinions on the pride that people have inside of themselves. One example is that a Torah scholar should have 1/64 part of pride, this way the lightheaded one won't act arrogantly towards him. Also for his words to be accepted by him. This is coming from Rashi. There was a famous rabbi known as Rav Yehoshua who had a son and his name was Rav Hun. Rav Hun once said, this small measure of pride adorns him as the bristle adorns the ear of grain. There is an old Jewish idea that anyone who possesses pride, needs to be placed under a ban of ostracism. On the other hand, anyone who lacks the quality of having any pride should be placed under a ban. In Judaism, we believe that everyone should possess a small amount of pride within ourselves. If we don't have it, the neighbors around us will not be in awe of us. The worst part is we won't have the power to reprimand someone when they need to hear it. This is coming from Rashi.

If we have pride within ourselves, then we can appreciate something that is realistic. If we do that then we are not appreciating someone's deeds and potential. If a person feels proud of their achievements, in this case their pride is justified they are denying G-d's providence to some degree. When humans take pride we are ascribing the success we have to our own efforts. If we do that, we are not acknowledging that G-d had something to do with us having pride. It's important for people to realize their success in life is a gift coming from G-d. G-d is the one who grants humans the potential to be successful. The parsha tells us that we should not be minimizing the importance of the person's endeavors. We are supposed to remember that G-d

will bless us in all that we do. This is implying that a human's efforts to be successful are necessary. The person's effort is the medium that G-d uses to help the person become successful. G-d is using the medium to bless humans in reaching their successes.

The person's efforts are seen as no more than a medium, all of their successes are coming from blessings from G-d. When success comes from G-d's blessings, there is no reason for an individual to feel personal pride. There is a reason why the parsha tells us to have any pride, the slightest bit at all important. Having the slightest bit of pride gives a person some kind of level of confidence within themselves. Having self-confidence helps them have self-assurance as well. Self-confidence and self-assurance will help them persevere when times in their lives become difficult. When people have feelings of satisfaction and pride within themselves, they feel joyful. This is a fundamental component of G-d's Divine Service. Humans should try to be careful how much pride they have within themselves, there is a deeper sense of pride than oneself, one's abilities, or one's achievements.

It is at the end of the parsha, we learn that G-d has made Jews holy through His commandments. The point of this is to draw Jews closer to Him and to complete His service. He wants to endow with Jews a bond that has such a strong connection. This is to complete His mission of elevating and refining the world at large. When Jews are conscious of this connection with G-d and when we identify ourselves as Jews, the mission is doing something strong. It is generating inner pride, people feel satisfied that G-d picked them out to be Jews. Lastly, they feel everything they have done in their lives has been fulfilled.