

## Of Naftali he said, “Naftali, satiated with favor, and filled with Hashem’s blessing.” (33:23)

Interestingly, prior to emphasizing that Naftali is filled with Hashem’s blessing, the Torah notes that he is a *seva ratzon*, satiated with favor, or, as we would probably translate it in *Yiddish*, *A tzufridener mench*, a happy person. Why does *svias ratzon* precede blessing? One who is not a “favorable” person does not appreciate the blessing in his life. Conversely, one who is satiated with favor does not require an abundance of blessing. To him, everything is a blessing from Hashem.

We say in *benching* and in *Sefer Tehillim* 145:16, *Poseach es Yadecha, u’masbia l’chol chai ratzon*, “You open Your hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.” **Horav Zalmen Sorotzkin, zl**, observes that the blessing, “You open Your hand,” is accompanied with the blessing, *svias ratzon*. We realize that, unless one is a satisfied, happy person, no blessing will suffice. He will always seek more. Only one who has achieved a sense of satisfaction in life will feel blessed with every gift he receives.

**Horav Shlomo Levinstein, zl**, offers an anecdotal story which supports this idea. A powerful king became ill with depression. His advisors sought out the most accomplished physicians who specialized in the treatment of depression, to no avail. Every treatment failed. Even those that worked for a short while did just that – worked for a short while. The king ultimately returned to his depressed state. Finally, they met with a top specialist who guaranteed a cure. The king would have to obtain and wear the shirt of a man who was *me’ushar*, truly fortunate. By wearing the garment, the feeling that this person had would rub off on the king.

The advisors immediately sent out agents throughout the entire land in search of such a person. Certainly, there had to be one person who felt himself to be fortunate. They had no luck in locating such a person. With whomever they met, after a few moments of conversation, they realized that this person was not happy with his life! They met with diplomats, distinguished legislators, powerful leaders, and discovered that not a single one of them was truly happy. Each one had his personal issues and demons that secretly made him miserable. They next met with the wealthiest people in the country. How surprised they were that even these people were obsessed with losing their wealth and were constantly worrying about what the next day would bring, how the market would react to world news, etc. They tried the poor, who were regrettably plagued with envy, who viewed anyone who had more than they did as their mortal enemy. This was too much. Was there no happy person in the entire land?

Finally, word reached them that a man who lived in a small hut by the beach claimed to be very fortunate. He possessed a wonderful disposition and needed nothing. Indeed, he felt that he had it all. This was too good to be true. They would finally be able to cure their beloved king of his illness.

They traveled out to the man's "abode" and asked him if he would be so kind as to lend his cloak to the king. They explained that this would cure the king.

The man listened to their request and laughed, "That is specifically the secret of my success. I do not have a shirt! You see, if I would own a shirt, I would need a jacket and a tie. After I had a suit of clothes, I would yearn for a place to go, to show it off. Then I would require a house. Once I had a house, it would not be large enough. After that, would come the decorating, etc. Do you not see that by not having anything – I require nothing? Now I can be happy!"

People are sadly trapped in a lifelong contest whereby they all strive to get more of everything: money, prestige, success, etc. While this attitude has a powerful upside to it: it motivates people to work harder, push higher, strive more – it can be taken too far and become an obsession. We benefit from overachievers, but are they happy people? A steady diet of unquenchable desires, overbearing competitiveness and constant dissatisfaction to the point that one is never happy with success can damage one's mental health. Psychiatrists have pointed out that such people are often a menace to society, because they treat those beneath them with disdain, as inferiors, and those who are above them as objects of envy and jealousy.

One who is *sameach b'chelko*, happy with his lot, who has *svius ratzon*, satisfaction, is a person who says, "I have enough." A popular secular writer was once asked concerning a certain billionaire: "How does it feel to know that he (the billionaire) made more money in one day than you (the writer) made in your entire life?" The writer replied, "I have something that he can never have!" What on earth can that be?" the man asked. "I have the knowledge that I have enough."