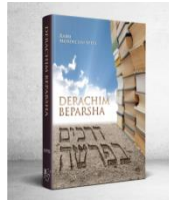


דרכים בפרשה בהעלותך

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דבר אל אהרן ואמרת אליו בהעלתך את הנרת אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות

Speak to Aaron and say to him: "When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah." (8:2)

Rashi explains the juxtaposition between Aharon HaKohen's kindling of the menorah with the dedication of the *Mizbayach* by the Nesiim and their donations. Aharon was bothered that all the *shevatim* had been included in this event except for his very own, *shevet Levi*. HaShem responded to him, "Yours is greater than theirs, for you will kindle the Menorah."

What is the meaning of Aharon's "being greater"? If anything, all he was looking for was to be equal to the others? Similarly, the Ramban asks: In any event, the *korban* Aharon brought during the *Yemei HaMeluim* was even greater than theirs, so why would he feel bad?

I believe we can explain this with a mashul: A father returned from Eretz Yisroel after an extended stay, bearing gifts for the family. Each child received a beautiful siddur with their name engraved on it. The oldest child however did not receive one. Instead, he received a full set of *shas*. Of course he appreciated the *shas* that he received but he still wanted to get the siddur. It's not that they all got the same thing and his was different; each child received their very own individualized siddur. To the children, this represented their own uniqueness in the father's eyes. The oldest child felt that he was missing out on that connection even if his own gift was greater. Similarly, each Nassi brought a *korban*. The Torah recounts all the details repeatedly, twelve times, to demonstrate the uniqueness of each and every *sheivet*. This in turn would teach Klal Yisroel that as much as we all look, talk, walk and dress the same, we are all unique in HaShem's "eyes", like an only child, a *ben yachid*. It was this connection that Aharon craved. Of course he was busy all the time with the *korbanos*, but what of the personal connection with HaShem that every *yid* longs for?

To this, HaShem responded that *Shelcha gedolah mi'shelahen*- "Yours is greater than theirs, for you will kindle the Menorah." In our mashul, the oldest son received a full set of *shas*. Long after many new siddurim are purchased, the *shas* endures. Most of us no longer have that first siddur that we received with our names on it, but if we were lucky enough to receive a *shas*, most likely we still have it. Similarly, the *korbanos* of the *nessiim*

and all of the subsequent *korbanos* were no longer once we lost the Beis HaMikdash. What still remains is the kindling of the menorah on Chanukah.

There is a well-known answer from the great Mashgiach, Rav Chatzel Levenstein z"l, that is worthwhile mentioning. He explained that those who seek *shleimus* never look for an excuse or to be exempt from something. They will grab onto any opportunity that is presented to them, and will view a *mitzvah* that is not theirs as a loss. When Avraham Avinu was told not to send forth his hand on his own son Yitzchak, the *midrash* writes that Avraham wanted to make a small little blemish so that at least a *cheilek* of the *mitzvah* would be done. He could not accept losing this opportunity. In the words of one of the great *Admorim*: If this would have been my test, I would have davened the entire day that HaShem cancel the decree, and only at the last second, with no choice, would I have acquiesced. I most definitely would have been happy if HaShem had taken away the *mitzvah*." But that is not what Avrohom wanted. For him it was a missed opportunity.

Shelcha gedolah mi'shelahen- HaShem was emphasizing that Aharon HaKohen's virtue was greater than theirs. The fact that he was bothered about being deprived of a *mitzvah* distinguished him from the others. What was the reward for having such a great approach to the *Aibeshter's mitzvos*? For "missing" a *mitzvah*, HaShem rewards him with another *mitzvah*- the kindling of the *Menorah*.

There is one more point that I would like to visit. Chazal tell us that the *korban chatas*/sin offering that the *nessiim* brought was meant to atone for the involvement of the brothers in the selling of Yosef. Aharon's *sheivet* was that of Levi. The *pesukim* tell us clearly that Levi was not just a passive observer but actually quite active, He was the one that announced, "*hinay baal hachalomos ba*-here comes the dreamer". Doesn't the tribe of Levi also need this *kappara*?

I heard the following answer from Rav Mordche Druk z"l: The sin of the *shevatim* was their jealousy towards Yosef. Moshe and Aharon demonstrated the greatest level of selflessness possible amongst brothers, continuously willing to step aside for the other. By displaying such behavior, they demonstrated that they had attained a complete *teshuvah*, thus no longer requiring the atonement. The purpose of a *korban* is not to play the role of handing out a fine. It is to impart a message to the sinner of *teshuvah*. Just bringing the *korban* without actually changing is pointless.

We can add to this idea that at the moment when the *nessiim* each brought their own *korban*, they were individuals. But as they all brought the very same *korban*, agreeing with one another, and showing a unity which cannot possibly exist when there is jealousy, it was at that moment that they effectively atoned for the *aveira*.

מרדכי אפפעי, Good Shabbos,