



Bhaaloscha - Raising Light

What's special about the Menorah

At the opening of this week's Parsha Ahron HaKohen is granted the Mitzvah of the Menorah. Rashi brings the Chazal that notes that this comes on the heels of the inauguration of the Mishkan. Ahron felt sad that neither he nor his tribe of Levi participated in the inauguration of the Mishkan. Hashem was comforting Ahron and was saying: "Your [role] is greater than theirs (the Nesiim) because you light and maintain the candles [of the menorah]". This requires some explanation. What is it about the Menorah that is **like** the inauguration of the Mishkan and yet **better**?

What's Ahron doing there?

Amongst the many topics in this week's Parsha is the emergence of the Halacha of Pesach Sheini. There were some men who were 'tamei' because they were handling Corpses and therefore they could not do the Korban Pesach at its regular time. the pasuk (9:6) describes how they approached Moshe to lodge their complaint: ".....and they **came close** before Moshe and before Ahron on that day." Why is the verb "**came close**" ('vayikrivu') is used, as opposed to "went" ('vayeichu')? What does it mean that they were before Moshe **and before Ahron**? Rashi explains: "it must mean that they were both sitting in the 'Beis Medrash' at the time they raised this question. it **cannot** mean that they went to Moshe first and then to Ahron because if Moshe would not know the Halacha where would Ahron know it from (as everything we know is from Moshe)" What is what is the significance of

the fact that Ahron was there at the time? if the question was being directed at Moshe, seemingly Ahron's presence there at the time is that of any bystander! Why does the Torah find it significant?

What's missing?

The People expressed their complaint as follows (9:7): "We are 'tamei' by contact with a corpse why should we be **missing** (in Hebrew 'negara') to not be allowed to bring the Korban of Hashem at its time amongst the children of Israel". they should have simply said why should we be '**barred**'! The term they used means to be "**missing**", **what did they mean by that?**

Taking credit for Moshe's prophecies?

Moshe's response was "wait here and I will hear what Hashem will command..." Rashi says: "This Parsha of the laws of Pesach Sheini was befitting to have been said by Moshe but these people (who raised the issue) merited and it was said through them - because positive developments are brought about through the virtuous". what does this mean? they're not the ones that got the prophecy, Moshe got the prophecy of the laws of Pesach Sheini! what does it mean that it was said through them?

The Benos Tzafchad deja vu

Nearly 40 years later a totally different episode happened, however the structure of that episode is so strikingly similar to the story of Pesach Sheini. In Parshas Pinchas (Bamidbar 27:1-5) it says: "And **close** came (same verb as by Pesach Sheini "karav") the

daughters of Tzelafchad the son of Cheifer the son of Gilad the son of Machir the son of Menashe....and they stood **before Moshe and before Elazar** the Kohen..." Rashi points out that Elazar is instead of his father Ahron as this is in the 40th year when Ahron already died. Elazar (like his father Ahron before him) **was in the Beis Medrash at time** this issue was raised because it is impossible to say that they went to Elazar after Moshe because if Moshe wouldn't know where would Elazar know it from?

They express their complaint: "our father died in desert and he was not amongst those who rebelled in the assembly of Korach... and he died without any sons why should our father's name be **missing** (same verb as by Pesach Sheini "gara") from amongst his family for he has no son"

"And Moshe brought their issue before Hashem" says Rashi: **"This parsha (of the laws of inheritance) should have been written by Moshe but these ladies merited and it was written through them"**. The same question remains: it was Moshe who brought the case before Hashem and received the prophecy - why is it called that these laws got written through them? Even though we're dealing with totally different cases the structural similarity is remarkably striking! how do we understand what is happening? what is the common denominator between these two stories?

Ahron's role in our relationship to Torah

"Hillel says: Be from the Disciples of Ahron - love peace, pursue peace, loves people, and **draw them close to the Torah**". what does it mean to "draw **them** close to the Torah"? Originally it was the **Torah that came down to us** from heaven, and the vehicle to bring the Torah down to us was Moshe. **Ahron represents a reverse flow: bringing the people to the Torah!** But is that possible? The Torah is from Hashem in heaven,

seemingly it has to be delivered to us. The answer is: Initially all of Torah had to be brought to us. there was no approaching it and this is particularly accentuated by the fact that by Matan Torah there was the 'hagbala' that they're not allowed to go past the barrier and touch the mountain, symbolizing that the Torah is unapproachable and it's up to Hashem to give it. The vehicle of it's being given from Hashem is Moshe. However, once Torah is given and it's already the legacy of the Jewish people then the people can approach the Torah also as well.

Written Torah vs Oral Torah

All of Torah, the written and the oral, originally came from Heaven through Moshe. Once it's on Earth the "Torah that is dictated from above" versus the "Torah that we approach From below" becomes the difference between the written Torah and the oral Torah. written Torah remains word of Hashem that is dictated to us with no room for us to 'influence' it in any way. However, the oral Torah which is to interpret and to create new laws based on Old laws, is totally up to us. Regarding this "the Torah is no longer in heaven" (Devarim Parshas Nitzavim) we take the initiative by **"coming close"** and "the truth of Torah rises up from Earth". The interpretation and extrapolation of the law it goes "bottom up' we are drawing ourselves close to the Torah and the Torah light is being raised up by us.

How does it work

There is great complexity to this idea. as much as we are in the "driver seat" as far as the oral law, it is after all **Hashem's law** and it must be what **He wants**, not what we want. this must mean that "behind the scenes" Hashem is helping us reach correct understandings and is granting us success in our sincere effort to figure out what He would want.

The chidushei HaRim points out that that which Chazal say: "Toil and you will find - believe it!" seemingly is an oxymoron. "toiling" is to work towards something and the outcome should be foreseeable and duly deserved. "finding" is something that you get out of nowhere and for nothing. He explains that indeed we toil, and that is our **coming close to the Torah**, but at the end we just **"find the truth"** - meaning that Hashem enlightens us and we discover the truth of Torah. in the Merit that we toiled so hard to "get close" we **find** the truth that Hashem surely agrees with and yet He gives us credit as if we invented it!

This is the effect that Ahon has on the Jewish people. once Torah came down **through Moshe**. Now it is possible for a man to not just sit back and wait for the Torah to come to him, but he can approach the Torah and discover the truth. that's why in both instances "they came before Moshe and before Ahron /Elazar" - Ahron/Elazar mentioned second. Ahron/Elazar's contribution can only come after Moshe brought the Torah down.

Close Relatives

what does it mean to be **close?** in Hebrew the word for close - "karov" also means relative. we must feel a closeness to the point that the Torah and us are like immediate family. this is the effect Ahron, and those who carry the torch after him, have on the Jewish people. they are the pillars of the Jews feeling 'kinship' to the Torah. This is particularly expressed in the oral law. The gemara in Gittin says that the main Covenant between us and Hashem is in the oral law. We have explained (Parshas Vayigash & Parshas Emotional) that Ahron and the kohanim have a special guardianship on the the oral law. This is part of their function of having the gift of pure speech and blessing. it should be noted that in the full

text of the midrash that Rashi cites at the beginning of Parsha it says that in addition to the Menorah "you have the power of Blessing which is forever". Kohanim have this power of pure speech from **the power of the oral law** and that's why their blessings are forever

Coming close

We can Now understand the significance of the structural similarity between the story of Pesach Sheini and the daughters of Tzelafchad. in both cases they **came close** and in both cases they complain **why should we be missing out** they're expressing their kinship to the Torah and missing it **hurts them**. in this week's Parsha they feel less, if they're missing a piece of themselves, because they cannot do the Mitzvah of korban Pesach so they come **before Moshe and Ahron** - Moshe first because **Ahron's and Elazar's power of making people close to Torah is derived from after Moshe brought the Torah down**. Ahron and Elazar are mentioned "to teach you that they were in the Beis Medrash at the time". to teach you that **it was Ahron's, and after him Elazar's, influence on the people, making them feel a kinship to the Torah, a insatiable yearning to get closer and closer to the point that if they are denied a Mitzvah against their will they don't view it as having been "let off the hook", they view it as having been cheapened and lessened!**

Initiating Moshe's prophecies

It is only because they "came close" that Moshe gets this prophecy as to what the Halacha should be. that's what it means "it was said through them" "it was written through them". All of Torah has to be the word of Hashem otherwise it's not Torah. Moshe remains forever the vehicle that brings it to Earth. However over here the cause and effect is not that Hashem dictated it and Moshe brought it down. the people

brought themselves close and yearn for it and in response to that Moshe gets it. It is like how we in this day and age toil and then Hashem enlightens us and we see the truth. But in that day and age Hashem didn't have to send subliminal messages, Moshe was there to be the medium of communication. It is because of **their coming close** that Moshe got this prophecies. that's why it's called 'it was said by them or written by them' - it was because of them!

Menorah vs Chanukas Hamishkan

With this we were turn to beginning of the parsha. In the full text of the Midrash cites it says that when Ahron was comforted with the Menorah Hashem added an amazing thing: "the Nesim brought sacrifices offerings which is only applicable at the time when there's a Beis Hamikdash but your candles forever shine!" how is that possible? who did the Mitzvah of lighting the candles ever since the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed? The pasuk says: "for a Mitzvah is a candle and Torah is light". Chazal explain the "Mitzvah candle" is the oral law. the light of the menorah is representative of the Oral law in contrast to the ark with the Luchos that represents the written law. The ark is in the 'holiest of holies' which is Hashem's domain representing that it emanates from Hashem's domain out to us, top - down.

Raising Light

The light of the menorah is the light of the oral Torah in man, as man also is called a candle as the pasuk says "the candle of Hashem is the Neshama of a person". we explained last week that the inauguration was "to put light in vessels"- to finalize the light of Torah being internalized within the Jewish people and dwelling amongst them. it was finalizing the light going top down.

By lighting the candles it's the opposite, the flame of the candles rises up! The pasuk says "when you raise up the candles..." it's bottom

- up! as Rashi says "to light it so the flame should **climb** by itself"

The inauguration was about internalizing the light of Torah in the midst of the Jewish people . Ahron and the Menorah that he maintains is symbolic that it went a step further - it was totally integrated to a total Oneness that now man could actually seemingly produce Torah! Torah doesn't have to come down anymore! man can initiate and cause Torah to be produced- like the flame that rises bottom - up!

Menorah forever

This is the power of the oral law which is the secret of Jewish Vitality. Yo find new meaning and produce new Torah whenever we need it - like lighting a candle to dispel the darkness. That is what is 'forever' about the candles of Ahron - the power that he put in the Jewish people to **come close and Rise Up** and Shine the Light of Torah

For a supplement on this discourse go to the site and listen to the audio "The Blind Creator"

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Good Shabbos



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