

Parshas B'Haloscha

This week's parsha is B'Haloscha. In it, we are taught about the service of the Menorah, and then the parsha continues the Levite services and how they are performed. According to Mefharshim, explaining the first Rashi, why is this Parsha juxtaposed to last week, which was about the princes bringing their offering? Rashi explains that Aaron was disappointed he wasn't with the princes in their offerings, for which Hashem responded (as quoted in Rashi), "By your life, your part is greater than theirs, for you light and clean out the lamps..." Ramban comments that this is greater (than even the offering of incense) because, in the future, the descendants of the Chashmonaim will light the Menorah- which is more everlasting than the services of the Mishkan or Beis Hamikdash, some of which would end with the destruction, until the new Beis Hamikdash is rebuilt.

The word chosen to talk about lighting is "when you cause to ascend," which is very specific; what our Chassidic masters teach us applies to our kindling of a soul in another Jew. There are many inspirational quotes around the idea of surrounding yourself with greatness or rising tides lifting all boats. As applied here, the premise is that when you kindle a fire in someone else, 1) you lift them, 2) you wait until the fire is rising and burning, as Rashi explains, that the flame rises on its own accord.

When we extend a helping hand to someone, it's not enough to assist and then depart. The true value lies in our ability to uplift, remain present, and witness the rise and success of the other person. This active support and

encouragement are crucial in fostering growth and development in others.

I spoke with an associate this week, Shmuel who asked me, whether Aaron or Moshe's responsibilities were greater. He answered that Aaron's were because he was required to be extra meticulous when it came to the service in the Mishkan, and deviating from that, even on the smallest level, was liable. As we spoke, I told him this makes me think of Esav, who was Mevazeh the Bechoros when he sold his birthright to Yakov for lentils. Rashi in Bereishis stated that since Esav knew he couldn't keep the commandments of service in the Beis Hamikdash fully, he would be liable for death anyway, so he sold the birthright, which was a disgrace to the whole position. In the second Aliyah- the Torah tells us that the Leviim are to perform the service of replacing the firstborn (8:18). This service was cherished by Hashem and would stave off death from among the Jews. There is a connection, therefore, to Esav's actions, the work of the Leviim, the seriousness of the work performed by Aaron, and uplifting our fellow Jews.

Unlike Esav, whose personality is defined by selfishness, as explained in Pirkei Avos (acts of Sedom, which are comparable to Esav), we Jews are taught to care for our fellow and lift each other. Furthermore, we serve Hashem with zeal and care in our time now, when we don't have the Beis Hamikdash, but we have the Menorah and the other parts of the Torah that we can use to serve Hashem as the Leviim and Aaron did. In this way, we can hope we will stave off further problems and be redeemed speedily!

Good Shabbos