

Parshas B'Haloscha

This week's Parsha is B'Haloscha, which means when you light [the lamps], I cannot help but see a divine reference to Israel's attack on our enemy, who was lit up. Although the lighting of the Menorah is meant to symbolize the spreading of spirituality and the light of Hashem in the world, as Rashi explains, in Halacha, one must light the wick of the candle until it is lit on its own. This can be likened to the metaphor that when you light someone's life up and uplift them, one shouldn't just provide light to them; they must also lift them and wait until they are lit on their own.

This Parsha begins with the lighting of the Menorah, but also presents other challenges, such as the complaint about wanting fish from Egypt, and the subsequent punishment (and forward to next week's Parsha, which resulted in the Jews remaining in the desert for 40 years). Although there may be moments when we fall, Hashem has always provided us with the tools to stay strong in times of despair. We have the light of the Menorah and the Torah, even if it doesn't seem so.

This is further demonstrated with the posuk of 10:35, which, according to the Gemara in Shabbos 115b, is as if the Chumash had a whole separate book. However, Rashi notes that the posuk wasn't intended to be here, but rather to distinguish between the troubling incidents that were being repeated. As if to say, when you go out with the Torah, even among all the bad things, there is Torah, and it has a protective surrounding,

as it does in the Torah, the posuk is surrounded by two Nuns.

Furthermore, the Torah also teaches us that not only do we have Torah as a tool and guide, but we also have second chances. Meaning that one may despair and think that if they were disconnected, then there is no chance to be absolved of their record. However, the Torah explains that we have Pesach Sheni—the chance to do better and start over, without entirely missing an opportunity.

Whatever the lesson, the critical thing to note is that we have Torah, and with Torah, we have Mitzvos, which are the actions we take on a day-to-day basis to connect to Hashem. Even when the night seems dark, there is still light, there is still hope, and there is Hashem.

Why is there an inverted nun? Firstly, the numerical value of nun is 50, which is 10 times the five books of Chumash, for a total of 500, which references the idea that completeness is symbolized by 100 and further our need to recite 100 Blessings throughout the day. By keeping the Torah, we will be blessed a hundredfold with protection.

May we then challenge ourselves to live with the Torah, and let it be the shining and guiding light, truly, in our lives, so we may be protected.

Good Shabbos