Parshas B'Haloscha

This week's Parsha, B'Haloscha, begins with the commandment to light the Menorah in the Mishkan and in the Beis Hamikdash. Eventually, even during golus, it refers to us lighting the Menorah on Chanuka. Rashi discusses how a flame rises, and the halacha is that the lighting is complete when you raise the flame; this is a metaphor for how we can ignite a flame in another person. We teach and inspire them until their flame is lit. The Torah also discusses Pesach Sheni, the Jewish concept of second chances, that is, in Yiddish, *Nisht do kein farfallen*, all is not lost. Continuing with the theme of how the Torah views humans, it is very real. Not every person, at any given moment, is perfect, and there is always a chance to reconnect. Even in this Parsha, where second chances are discussed, the recounting of the Jews' dissatisfaction with the Manna, even when they were getting G-d's food, shows a human element of naysayers being human, and that is expressing dissatisfaction, because that process is real and possible, even when the truth is there and obvious. This is why the Parsha begins with reigniting and kindling within oneself and another a flame that may seem extinguished; it can be relit, not just for a second, but by sitting and waiting until the flame is rekindled and stays lit on its own.

There is something happening in the world, with blatant antisemitism. People are replacing the word Jew (about any conspiracy under the sun) with Zionist just to make it "allowable". There is no better time to recognize the awareness of Jews that has not been seen before (simply because of social media). That said, we must be flames that light a positive fire in everyone around us, make Kiddush Hashem, and show the truth of Torah and the goodness that exists within it and because of it. Nothing is new under the sun, and everything is in the Torah. The Avoda of being human is in the Torah. The same Parsha that speaks about problems also talks about second chances and the ability to become a flame that can inspire others. This can happen whenever and wherever we are able, as the Baal Shem Tov said: when we are able to teach an aleph, it is incumbent on us to do so. May we then be blessed to be flames, to light the fire of truth and Torah in the world.

Good Shabbos