



## A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

### מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

### פרשת בהעלתך

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. דַּבֵּר אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהִעָלְתָּךְ אֶת הַנֵּרֹת אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְנוּחָה יְאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת. (במדבר ח, א-ב)

*Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying, "Speak to Aharon and say to him: When you kindle the lamps, towards the face of the Menorah shall the seven lamps cast light." (Bamidbar 8:1-2)*

Following the list of *korbanos* presented by each Nasi during the Mishkan's inauguration in last week's *Sidrah*, this week's *Sidrah* focuses on the lighting of the Menorah.

The Torah uses the rather unusual term *בְּהִעָלְתָּךְ* (lit. when you make [the lights] go up) instead of the more conventional *בְּהַדְלִיקָךְ*, meaning "when you light" or "ignite." Rashi offers two explanations for this distinction. First, he explains that the Kohen had to hold the fire to the wick until the flame rose by itself. Secondly, Rashi cites Chazal, who derived from this that there was a step in front of the Menorah where the Kohen would stand while preparing and lighting the lamps.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita*, shares an insight from his father, R' Leib *zatzal*, regarding this Chazal. R' Leib clarified that this understanding of Chazal changes how we interpret the *possuk*. It is to be understood as follows: *בְּהִעָלְתָּךְ* - when you raise *yourself*; *אֶת הַנֵּרֹת* - *together* with the lights. When the Kohen lights the Menorah and raises its flame, he must also raise himself by ascending the steps leading up to the Menorah.

Furthermore, R' Leib explained that the act of the Kohen raising himself while lighting the Menorah conveys an important lesson. It is well known that the light of the Menorah symbolises the light of Torah, as stated in the *possuk* (*Mishlei* 6:23): *כִּי נֵר מִצְוָה וְתוֹרָה אֹר*, *for a mitzvah is a lamp and the Torah is light*. While the Aron also represents the Torah, there is a significant difference, as the Malbim (*Shemos* 25) clarifies. The Aron symbolises the Torah in its raw state, as it was received from Hashem. Therefore, it contains the *luchos*, which were given to Klal Yisroel through *nevuah* at Har Sinai. In contrast, the Menorah represents the Torah that comes from the toil and effort to understand its depths.

The Mishnah in Pirkei Avos (6:1) states: *כָּל הַעוֹסֵק בְּתוֹרָה לְשִׁמְהָ, זֹכֶה לְדַבְרִים הַרְבֵּה ... וּמְקַשְׁרָתוֹ*, *Whoever engages in Torah study for its own sake merits many things ... it makes him fit to be righteous, devout, fair, and faithful etc...* The term *עוֹסֵק* refers to labouring with one's full effort and exertion. Therefore, Chazal teach that through genuine toil and dedication to Torah learning one elevates oneself to greater spiritual heights.

This concept is reflected in the steps leading to the Menorah: a person's elevation through the study of Torah. Just as the Kohen elevated himself physically when lighting the Menorah, a

person who dedicates himself to learning Torah with total energy and commitment raises himself spiritually to a higher *madreigah*, enhancing his entire character and personality.

The Rosh Yeshiva provides a further reference to the illumination offered by the Torah and its effect on one's life. In the *berachah* of שִׁים שְׁלוֹם recited at the end of *Shemoneh Esreh*, we daven: בְּרַכְנוּ אֲבִינוּ, כָּלֵנוּ כְּאַחַד בְּאוֹר פְּנִיךָ, כִּי בְּאוֹר פְּנִיךָ נִתַּת לָנוּ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ תוֹרַת חַיִּים, וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד, וְשְׁלוֹם וְרַחֲמִים, וְיִצְדִּיקָהּ וּבְרַכָּהּ וְרַחֲמִים, וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם. *Bless us, our Father, all of us as one, with the light of Your countenance, for with the light of Your countenance You gave us, Hashem, our G-d, the Torah of life and a love of kindness, righteousness, blessing, compassion, life, and peace.* The Siddur Iyun Tefillah (authored by the Kesav veHakabalah) explains that the seven expressions represent seven lights emanating from the אוֹר הַתּוֹרָה and are symbolised by the seven branches of the Menorah. He explains that the light of Torah grants a person the following:

תּוֹרַת חַיִּים – The Torah that guides how to live.

וְאַהֲבַת חֶסֶד וְיִצְדִּיקָהּ – A love of kindness and righteousness.

וּבְרַכָּהּ – It enables our existence to be a source of blessing for our surroundings.

וְרַחֲמִים וְחַיִּים וְשְׁלוֹם – The Torah teaches us about compassion, peace, and the appreciation of life by recognising the potential it offers to humanity.

The middle blessing mentioned here, וּבְרַכָּהּ, represents the central branch of the Menorah. This is because, through all the lights and their meanings, a person who studies the Torah can generate blessings in their environment,

We can learn from this lesson about the profound impact that the Torah has on those who toil in studying it. The *lomeid Torah* who invests effort in learning will benefit from its illumination and experience personal growth. As a result, he becomes a source of blessing for everyone around him.