



The Greater Washington Community Kollel Torah Minute

In memory of Rabbi Kalman Winter zt"l

Parasha Behaloscha 5773

The great commentator Rashi addresses the juxtaposition of our parsha, Behaloscha, which begins the mitzvah of lighting the Temple Menorah, to last week's parsha, Naso, which concludes with the tribe leaders bringing offerings to dedicate the Tabernacle. Citing the Medrash, Rashi tells us that Aharon the Kohen was disheartened that he and his tribe, Levi, were not included in bringing the offerings of dedication. To this, G-d tells him not to be disheartened, that his portion is greater than theirs. G-d then communicated the mitzvah to light the Temple Menorah, which was given exclusively to the Kohanim.

Aharon HaKohen's sentiments of loss at not being included in the offerings seem hard to comprehend. Aharon, along with Moshe, was a national leader, privy to special and unique communications with G-d himself. He was the Kohen Gadol, charged with the most sacred Temple service. It was only Aharon of all people who would be allowed to enter the Holy of Holies on that awesome day of Yom Kippur. Why then should Aharon Hakohen have these feelings? Didn't he have enough? Shouldn't he have been satisfied with his lot?

This episode gives us great insight and instruction. A true tzadik, like Aharon HaKohen, as it pertains to spiritual matters and mitzvos, is never satisfied with his spiritual accomplishments. He always strives for more - more Torah, more mitzvos, greater closeness to G-d. Seeing this opportunity for offerings, which he was not included in, caused Aharon anguish, an opportunity to come closer to G-d not being realized. It is in our material endeavors that we should feel satisfied with our lot - our wealth, rank, and prestige.

This pursuit of mitzvos is again demonstrated in our parsha by those that were unable to bring the Pascal lamb on account of being ritually impure. Rather than merely accepting that they were ineligible and content that they were not obligated, they appealed to Moshe and pleaded to be included, demonstrating the intense desire not to miss this special occasion and mitzvah. Indeed, the Medrash teaches us that the mitzvah of Pesach Sheni (the second Pesach) which would allow them to bring the Korban a month later in purity, was communicated to the nation of Israel in their honor, in reward for their demonstration of love for G-d's mitzvos.

*Have a great Shabbos,
Rabbi Menachem Winter*