
God spoke to Moses, saying: speak to Aaron, and say to him 'when you kindle the lights towards the center of the menorah, shall the seven lights shine.'

Now, it says seven lights and not six lights, although the six wicks on the arms of the Menorah were pointing towards the center column which carried the seventh and central light. And therefore it's only proper to say 'towards the center of the menorah, the six lights shall point'. The seventh points straight up of its own accord. The reason is this: even where a person's *kavannah* (intention) is for the sake of heaven, he still needs understanding and insight. How to do and what to do, if he's aiming for the Will of God.

וידבר ה' אל משה לאמור דבר אל אהרן ואמרת אליו בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות, והנה מה שנכתב שבעת הנרות ולא ששת הנרות כי כל הנרות הי' מצדדים כלפי נר האמצעי, אך הענין בזה כי אף במקום שכוונת האדם לש"ש צריך להבין ולהשכיל איך יעשה ואיך הוא רצון הש"י,

And this is the meaning of the phrase 'the seven lights'. Because the seventh, i.e. the middle, corresponds to the *kavannah* to act for the sake of heaven. But this one, also, has to point towards the Shechinah, which is to say he really needs to understand the depth of the Will of God, to know where it points.

וז"ש שבעת הנרות כי נר השביעי הוא נגד כוונה לש"ש וגם זאת צריך להטה כלפי שכינה היינו שיבין עומק רצון הש"י להיכן הוא נוטה,

This becomes clear at the end of the siddur reading, where sins are recorded against Moses, Aaron and Miriam. And this hints at the verse from Ecclesiastes 10:1, 'More precious than wisdom and honor, little stupidity.' What this means is that in their minds, they agreed to have sins recorded against them in order that God's will be fulfilled.

וזה נתבאר בסוף הסדרה שנרשם חטא על משה ואהרן ומרים, וזה רומז כי [קהלת י"א], יקר מחכמה ומכבוד סכלות מעט היינו שהוסכם בדעתם שירשם חטא עליהם בכדי שישלם רצון הש"י,

Because in this week's sedra/portion, the levels of greatness of Moses finally become manifest, as will be explained in the verse 'mouth to mouth'. Miriam and Aaron knowingly agreed to have the sin recorded against them, in order that it be noted and understood how great is Moses.

כי בזה הסדרה יצא לפועל מדרגות מרב"ע כמו שיתבאר בפסוק פה אל פה, והוסכם דעת מרים ואהרן שירשום עליהם חטא בכדי שיצא לאור שיוכר ויובן מדרגות משר"ע,

This is the meaning of the phrase in the common prayer 'And purify our hearts to serve you truly'. For although we pray for the strength to serve God, if it isn't truly – it is not the service of God. But since in the service of God one may find depth far deeper than a person is given to understand in his mind, when he aims to reach the will of God, for it is found on occasion that a little stupidity is more precious than wisdom and honor. Still, it needs to be borne in mind that the verse says 'a

little stupidity'. A person should seek to minimize the stupidity so that it not be acted out, except in the least possible amount.

וזה פירש וטהר לבנו לעבדך באמת, כי אף שנאמר לעבדך ובאם אינו אמת לא נקרא עבודת ה' אך כי גם בעבודת ה' ימצא עומק עמוק יותר מהשגת האדם בדעתו שישגיג בכוונה לש"ש, כי נמצא לפעמים סכלות מעט שיקר מחכמה ומכבוד, אך נאמר סכלות מעט שצריך האדם לראות למעט שלא יצא לפועל רק דבר מועט מחסרונו:

Aaron did so.

Rashi (ibid) explains 'This comes to tell us praise of Aaron, that he did not make any *Shinui* - alteration to the command Moses conveyed to him.'

(Now, while usually translated as alteration, the Hebrew word *Shinui* can have many meanings. It can also mean repetition, it can also mean learning. Rashi is usually understood as saying 'The Torah tells us Aaron did just as Moses commanded him,' to which Rashi adds that the Torah is praising Aaron in that he didn't change any detail, but did exactly as Moses commanded.)

Here in this teaching, the Izbicy Rebbe translates *Shinui* as Repetition. So now Rashi means the Torah is praising Aaron, that the lighting of the Menorah never became a repetitious act, and that he never became accustomed to it. And so he always performed the commandment as someone coming to it freshly, with joy and care, and zeal.

ויעש כן אהרן, פירש"י להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה, שינה פירש שלא היה אצלו כדבר ושונה בה שעשה כדעת האדם בהרגל, רק תמיד ה' עושה את המצוה כדבר חדש שאדם עושה בשמחה ובזריזות,

This is the meaning of the Gemarrah [Rosh Hashannah, 16b] 'Every person has to purify himself for the Festival, as it is written (Deut. 14:8) "And you shall not touch their carcass", because carcass indicates something from which all life has fled.' And this is the resemblance to someone performing a mitzvah without joy and zeal, but rather like something he has become accustomed to doing. It is like a carcass without life.

וזה שאמר בגמ' [ראש השנה ט"ז:] חייב אדם לטהר א"ע ברגל שנאמר [דברים י"ד ח'] ובנבלתם לא תגעו כי נבלה מורה על דבר שיצא מאתה החיים וכן הוא העושה מצוה בלא שמחה וזריזות, רק כמצות אנשים מלומדה דומה שאין בה חיים,

Since the festivals are times when God is pouring his sustenance, pouring abundance and life upon us, a person has to make sure that he is in a state of joy and life.

ולכן ברגל לפי שהש"י משפיע חיים לישראל צריך האדם לקבל החיים בשמחה:

Aaron did so.

This tells praise of Aaron, that he did not change, (Rashi, ibid) . We learn in the kabbalistic writings of the Arizal (Rabbi Isaac Luria) that the reason we are told that Aaron did so, is because

on the surface it appeared that he did not do so, but that he had made changes to the ritual. In the original commandment, it is written 'When Aaron kindles the light, the seven lights should shine towards the center.' Which seems to suggest that they shine on their own, and not that Aaron do more than kindle them. That causing them to shine would go beyond his commandment. But afterwards, the verse tells us that 'he elevated the lights of the menorah - which seems to indicate that he did more than merely kindling them, that in fact he kept nursing them until they shone brightly and properly.

ויעש כן אהרן, [עיין רש"י] להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה, איתא בילקוטי תורה מהאר"י ז"ל [פרשת בהעלתך] שע"ז נאמר ויעש כן לפי שהי' נראה ששינה מחמת שבצווי נאמר יאירו שבעת הנרות פירש שמעצמו יאירו ולא שיעשה הוא גמר הדלקתן, ואח"כ נאמר העלה נרותיה ומשמע שהי' עושה כל ההדלקה,

And therefore, the verse says 'And Aaron did so.' What this teaches us is as follows: Aaron's job and his business was always to clarify and rectify validate the deeds of the Jewish people before God, and to fix their every deed and act. Even when it appeared to have been in error or sin, Aaron would elevate the deeds in his holiness and with his prayers until they all became merits. But this is only supposed to happen after the fact, after the deed is done. Before the act, nobody has a right to rely and depend on Aaron clarifying and rectifying his deeds. Everybody has to be responsible in as far as his hand can reach, not to do anything wrong.

וע"ז נאמר ויעש כן אהרן, והענין בזה כי עסק הכהן הי' תמיד לזכות ולברר את מעשה בני ישראל לפני המקום ולתקן את מעשיהם שעשו אף שהי' נראים כאינם מהוגנים היה אהרן הכהן מעלה אותם בקדושתו ובתפלתו עד שנעשו כזכיות וזה הוא דוקא אחר המעשה, אך קודם המעשה לא יסמוך האדם ע"ז רק צריך להזהר עד מקום שידו מגעת,

This is the meaning of the verse 'When you kindle the lights'. For although Aaron's job is to fix and elevate the deeds of the Jewish people, and to bring down to them an abundance of light, nevertheless the lights have to shine towards the center of the menorah of their own volition. Aaron has to warn the people not to rely on him to fix their deeds, but that they should look at their deeds in advance and make sure they shine of their own accord, which is to say they should do what is right in ways that does not require subsequent clarification, and definitely not to rely on Aaron and depend on him, to elevate their acts.

וזהו באור הפסוק בהעלותך את הנרות, כי אף שהיה אהרן מתקן ומעלה את מעשה בני ישראל והוא משפיע להם אור, ועכ"ז אל מול פני המנורה יאירו, היינו שיזהיר אותם כי קודם המעשה יראו שיאירו מעצמם, היינו שיעשו מעשים כשרים ומבוררים ולא יסמכו ע"ז שאהרן מעלה אותם,

This, then, is the meaning of the verse 'And Aaron did so'. Because he always made sure to warn people not to rely on him for fixing their deeds, and that everyone has to be responsible so far as his hand can reach. After the fact, however, once the deed is done, then Aaron did his job, which is to fix everything. And this is why it says in the past tense 'He elevated the lights'. And this is the meaning of the phrase that he did not alter the command.

וזהו ויעש כן אהרן כי קודם ראה שהזהיר שלא יסמכו עליו שיתקן כל אחד ואחד עד מקום שידו מגעת, ועל מעשים הנעשים כבר תקן אהרן את הכל, וזה העלה את נרותיה העלה הוא לשון עבר, וזהו שלא שינה:

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses regarding the Kushite woman that he had taken, for Moses had married a Kushite woman. And they said 'Has God only spoken to Moses? God has spoken with us, too.' And God heard. And the man, Moses, was very humble – more than any person on the face of the Earth. God said suddenly to Moses and to Aaron, and to Miriam, 'Go, all three of you, to the Tent of Meeting.' And all three of them went out. And God came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the opening of the Tent, and called Aaron and Miriam, and the two of them left. And He said 'Hear, now, my words: If you prophecy of God, it is in a vision to him. In dreams I speak to him. Not so, my servant Moses, for he is trustworthy in all my house. Mouth to mouth, I speak with him, and appear not in riddles. Images of God, he sees. Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?'

We learn in the Talmud [Sanhedrin 104b] 'They sought to include to count King Solomon among the number of those who had no place in the World to Come'. King David, Solomon's father, came to plead with them, but they refused to hear him. Fire surrounded them, but they ignored it – until an echoing voice came from Heaven, saying 'Shall you pay it, from yourselves?' (Job 34:33).

ותדבר מרים ואהרן במשה על אדות האשה הכשית אשר לקח כי אשה כשית לקח: ויאמרו הרק אך במשה דבר ד' הלא גם בנו דבר וישמע ד': והאיש משה עניו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה: ויאמר ד' פתאם אל משה ואל אהרן ואל מרים צאו שלשתכם אל אהל מועד ויצאו שלשתם: וירד ד' בעמוד ענן ויעמד פתח האהל ויקרא אהרן ומרים ויצאו שניהם: ויאמר שמעו נא דברי אם יהיה נביאכם ד' במראה אליו אתודע בחלום אדבר בו: לא כן עבדי משה בכל ביתי נאמן הוא: פה אל פה אדבר בו ומראה ולא בחידת ותמנת ד' יביט ומדוע לא יראתם לדבר בעבדי במשה, הענין מצינו בגמ' (סנהדרין ק"ד:) אף שלמה המלך בקשו למנות כו' להטה אש סביבם כו' עד שיצתה בת קול [איוב ל"ד ל"ג] המעמך ישלמנה כו',

The truth is that the men of the Great Assembly received a tradition, and all the laws they passed and executed were exactly as they had received them. And thus according to the law they received, it was only proper for them to rule that Solomon be counted among those without a place in the World to Come. Until the voice came from Heaven, asking 'Shall you pay from yourselves?', meaning that the light of Solomon was suddenly opened to them and they could see explicitly that King Solomon's light was far, far greater than they could grasp with their minds. And it was then, that they realized there was nothing for them to say or do, and they desisted.

הענין בזה כי באמת נמסר לאנשי כנסת הגדולה כל הלכות כפי אשר יצא מאתם, ולכן כפי ההלכה רצו לפסוק להיות שלמה נמנה כו', עד שיצתה בת קול המעמך ישלמנה, היינו שנפתח להם האור בפירוש של שלמה המלך ואז ראו מפורש האור שלו אשר הוא יותר ויותר מכפי השגתם אזי עוד לא אמרו ולא מידי,

And so when God said to Aaron and Miriam, here 'Not so my servant Moses', and when He said to them 'mouth to mouth, I speak, – immediately, as the words came from God, they saw explicitly the light and reach of Moses with their own eyes. And when God said the words 'with him', they lost it. And that's when they only began to understand how great Moses was.

וכן כשאמר הש"י להם כאן לא כן עבדי משה ובאמרו אליהם פה אל פה אדבר היינו תיכף כשיצא הדבור מן הש"י המלות האלו אז ראו מפורש האור וההשגה של מרב"ע עין בעין, וכאשר אמר הש"י תיבות בו נעלם מהם ואז הבינו מדרגות משה רבינו ע"ה,

Similarly, when God said 'and the image of God', There suddenly entered into their hearts the light that Moses perceived. When God said 'he sees', it was shut off from them. Thereafter, there remained something in their heart of Moses' perception, from time to time they would grasp things

the way Moses grasped things. But they were aware, all the time, that this didn't belong to them; that this was Moses' level. And they became aware of how much they lacked, compared to the level of Moses' prophecy.

וכמו כן כשאמר הש"י ותמונת ה' נכנס בלבם האור וההשגה של משה רב"ע וכו' וכאשר אמר תיבת יביט נסתם מהם, וגם אח"כ נשאר בלבם זאת ההשגה שהי' משיגים לפעמים כהשגות משרב"ע אך שהי' יודעים שזה אין שייך להם רק למדרגות מר"ע והשיגו מה שחסר להם נגד מדרגות מר"ע

Before this happened, They had been under the misapprehension that there was no higher level of prophecy than theirs. And now, they became aware that there are higher levels. The time that they sinned in talking about Moses, they hadn't understood that this light was not part of their experience because they had thought that it was something that belonged to them. Even as God was talking and they were shown levels of enlightenment and prophecy that were usually only available to Moses, they still thought that they were connected to it. That it was merely a higher level of their own prophecy. When they were tasting the taste of revelation that belonged to Moses, they were mistakenly thinking that it was their own. Because the taste of one's own attributes goes far beyond the experience of someone else's. Having to taste something which belongs to someone else, does not compare to tasting something and feeling that you own it yourself.

כי קודם זה הי' סוברים שאין שום מדרגה למעלה ממדרגותם, ואח"ז נודע להם שיש למעלה, אך בשעת החטא לא הבינו שזה האור אין שייך לחלקם כי הי' בדעתם שזה ההשגה הוא מצדם ולא מצד הש"י שירצה להראות להם מדרגות מר"ע, ולכן טעמו אור גדול יותר מכפי אשר הי' יכולים לטעום כאשר הי' יודעים שאין שייך לחלקם כי אז לא הי' יכולים לטעום רק כפי אשר יתבונן האדם בחלק חבירו ולא כאשר יהנה בשלו,

When they were still in their sin, which is to say their misunderstanding and God showed them Moses' levels of prophecy, they experienced it as though it was their own. Because God really wanted to demonstrate to them how high was Moses' prophecy in order that they truly appreciate his worth. This is the meaning of the Talmudic dictum [Berachot 35a] 'Whoever takes pleasure from this world without making a blessing, it is as though they desecrate'. And the reason is this: someone who makes a bracha (blessing) acknowledges that what they are about to enjoy really belongs to God. And the pleasure and the holiness of the thing is really something that belongs to someone else. When someone enjoys something without the blessing, it is as though he says 'This is mine'. This is the meaning of 'it is as though he desecrates'. Contemplate, because this is very, very deep.

וכאשר הי' דרך חטא וסברו שזה הוא חלקם אז טעמו כאדם הנהנה משלו, וזהו לפי שרצה הקב"ה להראות להם מדרגות מר"ע בלי מגרעת בכדי שיכירו את ערכו, וזה פירש הגמ' כל הנהנה מעולם הזה בלא ברכה כאילו מעל כי הנהנה בברכה היינו שמכיר שאין שייך לו הדבר רק לה' ולכן לא יגיע לו הנאה מקדושת הדבר רק כאדם הרואה, וכאשר יאונה לאדם שיהנה בלא ברכה אז כאילו נהנה מקדשי שמים בשלימות, וזהו כאילו מעל, ודו"ק כי עמוק עמוק הוא:
