



Menorah Mindset

Every phrase in Torah is replete with meaning, even the statements that seem so obvious that it wouldn't occur to us to find further explanations. Rashi, in his inimitable wisdom, is always attuned to the nuances in every word and phrase. In our *parashah* we find a simple *passuk* describing how Ahron Hakohen kindled the *Menorah*. “*Vaya’as ken Aharon*”, Ahron did that, lighting the lamps to illuminate the *Menorah* as Hashem commanded Moshe (*Bamidbar* 8:3). The question is so glaring it practically jumps off the page. Would we ever have thought otherwise?! Certainly Ahron Hakohen did what Hashem commanded! Rashi's commentary, “Ahron did not deviate,” is further perplexing. Could we imagine that Ahron would do anything to deviate from his given task?

To help us understand this let us first look at the story of creation. We continuously find the Torah states, “*vayehi ken*,” and it was so, after Hashem forms each element of the world. Yet, this phrase is noticeably absent after the creation of light. Chazal explain that the original light was hidden away for the righteous to enjoy in the future so it wouldn't be abused by the wicked. This special light, which is known

as the “*ohr haganuz*,” enabled Adam to see from one end of the world to the other, representing the light of clarity. The *Malbim* notes that when he lit the *Menorah*, Ahron was able to infuse it with this special light. Thus, Ahron brought the “*ken*” that was missing at the time of creation back into the world. In doing so, the light of the *Menorah* merged with the light of clarity, radiating the belief of *ein od milvado*, the unmistakable reality that nothing exists other than Hashem. According to kabbalistic thought, Rashi's words “*shelo shinah*,” means that Ahron did not deviate as he ensured that the first day of creation would be congruous with the other days, linking them with the expression of “*ken*.”

In *Be'er Moshe*, the *Ozhorover* Rebbe notes that the word “*ken*” is related to the word “*kano*,” a base. The *Alshich Hakadosh* describes how lighting the lamps of the *Menorah* brought down Divine spiritual energies to the people. Not only did Ahron bring down this special concentration of spiritual and physical bounty, but he also created “*kano*,” a basis, the capacity for *Am Yisrael* to hold this energy and use it to grow closer to Hashem.

The *Saba* of Kelm teaches that Ahron's greatness was that he did this small act with “*ken*,” performing every task, understanding that it expressed the Will of Hashem. His preparedness and presence of mind was the same regardless of whether he

entered the *Kodesh Kodashim* or engaged in any other *avodah* of the *Beit Hamikdash*.

We are all aware that habit often breeds complacency, and how hard it is to keep up the same level of commitment. Rav Goldstein in *Sha'arei Chayim* characterizes Ahron's greatness in that he performed this service each day, always maintaining the passion and enthusiasm appropriate for doing the mitzvah.

As we *lein* this *parashah* immediately after Shavuot, there is a strong message for each of us. Let us not allow the dedication and energy we achieved on Shavuot to dwindle in any way. Let us prepare to do every mitzvah we encounter with passion and enthusiasm no matter whether it seems to be small, trivial, grand or glorious, for every mitzvah connects us to Infinity. ■



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