



THE SECRET OF THE MENORAH

The Menorah is one of the best-known Jewish symbols, prominent in the Temple and in the visions of the prophets.
What does it symbolize?

TEACHER'S MANUAL



JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS



BEHA'LOTCHA

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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India

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This week's Torah reading opens with the command to kindle lights in the Holy Temple (Source 1). Why, asks the Rebbe, does the Torah again tell us that the menorah must be built from one solid block? This was mentioned earlier, when describing the Temple vessels, and here the discussion is not regarding the vessels themselves.

B. Seven Lights, Seven Kinds of Jews.....8

In the Haftarah reading, we read of the prophet Zechariah's vision of a menorah with seven branches (Source 2). The Midrash notes that unlike other prophets, Zechariah always saw the good in the Jewish people, referring to them as "a menorah of pure gold." (Source 3)

The Alter Rebbe explains that the seven branches of the menorah represent seven kinds of Jews, each of whom serve G-d in a different way. The High Priest's duty is to "illuminate the lights," (Source 4) and help them flourish and grow in their Divine service.

The verse states: "The seven lights should shine facing the menorah," all the lights must shine in one direction. How can these seven kinds of Jews all shine in the same direction? They are all so different from each other, how can each one shine its light the same way?

The explanation is that the menorah was crafted from one solid block of gold. Rashi explains how exactly it was made (Source 5), and the midrash describes how challenging it was to craft (Source 6). Being that all seven branches—the seven kinds of souls—were made of one solid block of gold, they remained one entity. Even as they each adopted their own unique style, they all retained the same objective: to illuminate the world with G-dliness.

C. A Unified Purpose.....16

Judaism appreciates the diversity of people; different Jews have different approaches to serving G-d. But despite these differences, the overarching goal remains the same: lighting up the world. Like Zechariah saw all Jews as "pure gold," the High Priest of each generation must see the good in every Jew and encourage them to be unified in their Divine service.

Story - "I have given you the match."

Introduction

This week's Torah reading opens with the command to Aaron the High Priest to kindle the menorah's lamps. The Haftarah, too, describes Zechariah's vision of the menorah.

Why is the menorah such a central motif in Judaism and what is its message for us?

השיעור לפרשת בהעלותך

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הנחה בלתי מוגה.
תורת מנחם חלק ס' עמ' 435 והלאה.

A. Lighting or Building?

Source 1 Numbers 8:1-4

Student's
pg. 3

G-d spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to Aaron and tell him: 'When you light the lamps, the seven lights should shine facing the menorah.'" Aaron did so; he lit the lamps facing the center of the menorah, as G-d had commanded Moses.

This was the form of the menorah: hammered work of gold, it was hammered from one block, from its base to its flowers. According to the form G-d had shown Moses, so he constructed the menorah.

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. דַּבֵּר
אֶל אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ
אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה
יֵאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנְּרוֹת. וַיַּעַשׂ כֵּן
אַהֲרֹן אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְּנוֹרָה הַעֲלָה
נִרְתִּיחָהּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' אֶת מֹשֶׁה.

וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה מִקְשָׁה זָהָב
עַד יְרִכָהּ עַד פְּרִיחָהּ מִקְשָׁה הוּא
כַּמְרָאָה אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָה ה' אֶת מֹשֶׁה
כֵּן עָשָׂה אֶת הַמְּנוֹרָה.

The Torah reading begins with the commandment to kindle the lamps of the menorah. It's worth noting that the lamps weren't intended only to illuminate the Holy Temple, but also to illuminate the world beyond the Temple walls, with the spiritual light of the lamps. The windows of the Temple were fashioned in a strange way: the outer frame was wider than the inner frame, to show that the light must go from inside out, and not the opposite.

>> The Rebbe

Why Are We Discussing the Construction Details?

Student's
pg. 3

This week's Torah portion begins with "When you light the lamps," relating the details of the menorah lighting ceremony in the Holy Temple. The Torah then continues, "This was the form of the menorah: hammered work of gold, from its base to its flower it was hammered work." Meaning, the entire menorah must be hammered out from a single block of gold.

הַפְּרָשָׁה מִתְחִילָה "בְּהַעֲלֹתְךָ
אֶת הַנְּרוֹת וּגו'" (פְּרָשִׁי הַעֲנִינִים
שֶׁל הַדְּלֻקַּת הַמְּנוֹרָה) - וְלֹא אַחֲרָי
זֶה נֹאמַר¹: "וְזֶה מַעֲשֵׂה הַמְּנוֹרָה
מִקְשָׁה זָהָב עַד יְרִכָהּ עַד פְּרִיחָהּ
מִקְשָׁה הִיא."

Student's
pg. 3

Seemingly, there is no need, in our Torah portion, to relate the details of the construction of the menorah. The details of the construction of the mishkan and all its vessels were already related at length, twice: First when the Torah relates G-d's instructions regarding the mishkan (in the portion of Terumah), and again when describing its actual construction (in the portion of Vayakhel). Our Torah portion is discussing the function of the menorah, "when you light the lamps." Why then does the Torah detail here "this was the form of the menorah"?

Student's
pg. 4

וצריך להבין²: בפרשתנו אין צורך לספר על אודות עשיית המנורה - שהרי אין זה המקום שבו מדובר אודות עשיית המשכן וכליו; ענין זה נתבאר כבר באריכות לפני זה שתי פעמים: פעם אחת - בציווי הקב"ה (בפרשת תרומה³) ופעם שנייה - בעשיית המשכן בפועל (בפרשת ויקהל⁴). ואילו בפרשתנו מדובר רק אודות תכליתה של המנורה (לאחרי עשייתה): "בהעלותך את הנרות". ואם כן, למה נאמר כאן "וזה מעשה המנורה וגו'?"

In Parshat Terumah, where Moses gives over the plans for the mishkan and its vessels, there are ten verses discussing the menorah. In Parshat Vayakhel, there are eight verses where the Torah details the construction of the menorah. Now, in Parshat Beha'alotcha, the Torah speaks about the service in the mishkan and the kindling of the lamps. Why does the Torah repeat the construction details of the menorah? All that is relevant here is the details of its use.

The Torah has previously mentioned, in other places, the functions of different vessels in the mishkan. One such example is the description of how the table in the mishkan should be used: "You should take fine flour and bake it into twelve loaves... and place them... on the pure table." However, the Torah does not proceed to then explain the details of the table's construction. The reason is simple: the construction details were already provided in the appropriate section, and here the Torah solely focuses on the instructions for baking the loaves which had to be placed on the table.

בפרטיות יותר: אין זו הפעם הראשונה שמסופר בחומש אודות תכליתם של כלי המשכן לאחרי שכבר נעשו. ולדוגמא: בנוגע לשולחן - נאמר⁵: "ולקחת סולת ואפית אותה שתים עשרה חלות גו' ושמת אותם גו' על השולחן וגו'", ואף על פי כן לא נאמר לאחרי זה בנוגע לאופן עשיית השולחן. והטעם פשוט - כיון שענין זה כבר נאמר במקום שמדובר אודות עשיית המשכן וכליו, וכאן נתחדש רק ענין אפיית לחם הפנים שצריך לשים על השולחן.

4. לו, ז' ואילך.
5. אמור כד, ה-ו.

2. בהבא לקמן - ראה גם לקו"ש חכ"ח ע' 60 ואילך. חל"ח ע' 34 (משיחה זו).
3. כה, לא ואילך.

Student's
pg. 4

Just like the Torah doesn't proceed to state "this is the form of the table" after discussing its function, similarly in our case, the Torah shouldn't state "this is the form of the menorah." Our Torah portion is about the lighting of the menorah, as emphasized right at the beginning. Even the beginner student will have the question here, why does the Torah relate the details of the menorah's construction?

וכשם שבלחם הפנים לא נאמר "זוהי מעשה השולחן" - הנה גם בהדלקת הנרות לא היה צריך לומר "זוהי מעשה המנורה", כיון שכאן מדובר רק אודות הדלקת הנרות, ולא אודות עשיית המנורה, וכמודגש בהקדמה שבהתחלת הפרשה: "בהעלותך את הנרות." ואם כן, נשאלת השאלה - גם אצל בן חמש למקרא - למה נאמרו כאן פרטי הענינים של עשיית המנורה?

Why From a Single Block?

If for some reason the Torah also wishes to describe the construction of the menorah, why does it choose specifically the detail of "hammered work" from a single block?" There are many other details about the menorah, such as the requirements that it have cups, knobs, and flowers, seven branches, and many other details. Why does the Torah give here specifically the detail about the "hammered work?"

Student's
pg. 5

It must be that the only detail about the construction of the menorah that is relevant to its lighting, is the detail of "hammered work." This can be understood based on the explanation in Likkutei Torah that the "hammered work" from one block symbolizes the concept of unity.

עוד צריך להבין: גם אם מאיזה טעם שהוא רוצה התורה לבאר גם את "מעשה המנורה" - מדוע בחרה התורה רק את הפרט של "מקשה היא", בה בשעה שישנם ריבוי פרטים בעשיית המנורה: שצריכים להיות בה שבעה קנים, גביעים כפתורים ופרחים, ככל פרטי הענינים שנתבארו בנוגע לעשיית המנורה, ומכולם הובא כאן רק הענין של "מקשה היא"?

ועל כורחך צריך לומר, שמכל פרטי הענינים של "מעשה המנורה", הענין היחידי שנוגע ל"בהעלותך את הנרות" הוא הענין של "מקשה היא" - כפי שיתבאר על פי הידוע (ונתבאר בלקוטי תורה) ש"מקשה" מורה על ענין האחדות, כדלקמן.

Apparently, the fact that the menorah is hammered out of a solid block of gold is not only relevant to the construction of the menorah, but also to its function. As a result, when the Torah details the daily lighting of the menorah, it repeats this detail.

B. Seven Lights, Seven Kinds of Jews

Entirely Beautiful

Before resolving the question we asked, let's study the Haftarah reading, where the menorah is depicted in Zechariah's vision.

To understand the vision, we must first understand the context. This vision took place during the "return to Zion," when the Jews made their way back to Israel from Babylon after being exiled there. They were led by Zerubavel ben Shaltiel, and Yehoshua ben Yehotzadak, the High Priest. The Kuthites had the Persian authorities stop the rebuilding of the Temple. In the Jewish settlement, surrounded by enemies, morale was running low, and the prophet saw fit to encourage the people.

Source 2 Zechariah 4:1-2, 4-6

Student's
pg. 6

The angel who spoke with me returned, and he awakened me like a man waking up from his sleep. He asked me, "What do you see?"

And I said, "I see a solid gold menorah with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it, with seven channels to the lamps."

I replied to the angel who spoke with me, saying, "What are these, my master?"

The angel I was talking to answered me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my master."

The angel said to me, "This is the word of G-d to Zerubavel: 'Not by might and not by power, but by My spirit,' says G-d."

וַיָּשָׁב הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר
בִּי וַיַּעֲרִנֵנִי כַּאֲשֶׁר
אָשֵׁר יַעֲזֹר מִשְׁנָתוֹ.
וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי, מָה אַתָּה
רֹאֶה?

וָאָמַר: רְאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה
מִנּוֹרֹת זָהָב בְּלֶה, וְגִלְהָ
עַל רֵאשָׁה, וְשִׁבְעָה
גִּרְתֵיהָ עֲלֶיהָ.

וַאֲעַן וַאֲמַר אֶל הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר
בִּי לֵאמֹר: מָה אֵלֶּה אֲדֹנָי?

וַיַּעַן הַמַּלְאָךְ הַדֹּבֵר בִּי וַיֹּאמֶר
אֵלַי: הֲלוֹא יָדַעְתָּ מָה הֵמָּה
אֵלֶּה? וָאָמַר, לֹא אֲדֹנָי.

וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: זֶה דְבַר
ה' אֵל זָרְכָבָל לֵאמֹר: לֹא בְחֵיל
וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם בְּרוּחֵי אֲמַר ה'
צְבָאוֹת.

Zechariah: A prophet who lived during the return to Zion. He helped boost the morale of the returnees, and build the Second Temple. His startling visions are recorded in the first part of his book while his prophecies regarding the End of Days appear in the later part.

The vision of the menorah represents the bountiful good they would receive, not through physical might but through G-d's Spirit. In the vision, everything happens on its own: the oil flows from the cups into the lamps and they light without any human intervention. You too, this vision tells the Jews, will be victorious without any effort. You will rebuild the Temple and reestablish your sovereignty in Israel.

Source 3 Midrash Rabbah, 13:3

The midrash observes something unique in Zechariah's vision.

Student's
pg. 6

Jeremiah says, "they were called tarnished silver," and Ezekiel calls them "dross." But Zechariah says "I see a solid gold menorah," in keeping with the verse: "You are entirely beautiful."

לְפִי שִׁירְמִיָּה אָמַר (ירמיהו ו, ל): כָּסֶף נִמְאָס קָרְאוּ
לָהֶם, וַיְחַזְקֵאל קוֹרָא אוֹתָם סִיגִים (יחזקאל כב,
יח): בֶּן אָדָם הָיָו לִי בֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְסִיג וְגו', בָּא
זְכַרְיָה וְאָמַר (זכריה ד, ב): רָאִיתִי וְהִנֵּה מְנוֹרַת
וְגו', שָׁל זָהָב הִיא בְּלֵהָ, לְקִיָּם מֵהָ שְׁנַאֲמַר: בְּלֵךְ
יָפָה רְעִיתִי וְגו'.

Jeremiah calls the Jewish people "tarnished silver," for they were tarnished with sin. Ezekiel calls them "dross" - foreign matter mixed with precious metals, meaning that the Jews had become mixed with foreign elements.

Zechariah comes and says something entirely different: "I saw a menorah all of gold." The entire Jewish people, all seven kinds, are all gold in my eyes! As Solomon says in the Song of Songs: "You are entirely beautiful." The Jewish nation is entirely beautiful.

The Spiritual Meaning of the Menorah

Source 4 Likkutei Torah, Beha'alotcha, p. 29, third column.

The Alter Rebbe explains what the seven lamps represent and what the High Priest does with them.

Student's
pg. 7

The soul is called a flame, as the verse says "Man's soul is G-d's candle." The Jewish people in their entirety are called a menorah. Their seven approaches of Divine service are the seven lamps of the menorah. One serves G-d with a love that flows steadily like water, another with a fiery passionate love. The middle path is through Torah study, another is the attribute of victory, to overcome and be victorious in service of G-d by fleeing from negativity and doing good. Another path is through pride, as the sages said, all Jews are nobility.

Aaron the High Priest is the one who kindled these lamps, because he is one of the seven leaders who draw down G-dly energy into the Jewish souls. He brings out in them a strong love of G-d and stokes their fiery love, the fiery flames burning deep in man's heart.

כִּי הַנְּשָׂמָה קְרוּיָה נֵר, כְּמוֹ שֶׁכְּתוּב
נֵר הוּא נְשָׂמַת אָדָם, וּכְלָלוֹת נְשָׂמוֹת
יִשְׂרָאֵל נִקְרָא מְנוֹרָה. וַיֵּשׁ כָּהֵן בְּחִינַת
שִׁבְעַת גְּרוֹת, שֶׁהֵם שִׁבְעַת מְדַרְגּוֹת
בְּעִבּוּדַת ה'. יֵשׁ עוֹבֵד מְאֵהְבָה מְשׁוּבָה
כַּמִּים, וַיֵּשׁ מְאֵהְבָה כְּרִשְׁפֵי אֵשׁ, וַיֵּשׁ
עַל יְדֵי הַתּוֹרָה קוֹ הַמְּמַצֵּעַ, וַיֵּשׁ עַל
יְדֵי נִצְחוֹן לְנִצָּחַ וּלְהַתְגַּבֵּר בְּעִבּוּדַת
ה' כְּסוּר מְרַע וְעֲשָׂה טוֹב, וַיֵּשׁ עַל
יְדֵי הוֹדָיָה, וְכֵן יֵשׁ עִבּוּדָה עַל יְדֵי
הַתְנַשְּׂאוֹת כְּמֵאֲמַר רַבּוֹתֵינוּ זְכוּרֵנוּם
לְבָרְכָה כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגוֹי מְלָכִים הֵם.

וְהִנֵּה אֶהְרֵן הוּא הַמְדַלִּיק אֶת הַגְּרוֹת
הַלֵּלוּ, לְפִי שֶׁהוּא מְשַׁבְּעָה רוּעִים
הַמְמַשְׂכִּים חַיּוֹת וְאַלְקוֹת לְכָלִּלוֹת
נְשָׂמוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְהוּא מְמַשְׁבֵּי
לְהַעֲלוֹת אֶהְבָּה עֲזָה לָהּ, וּלְהַגְדִּיל
מְדוּרַת אֵשׁ הָאֶהְבָּה, כְּרִשְׁפֵי אֵשׁ
שֶׁלֵּהֶבֶת מְתַלְהֶטֶת בְּקֶרֶב אִישׁ וְלֵב
עַמִּיק.

The seven lamps symbolize seven kinds of Jews who serve G-d differently, based on the seven kabbalistic attributes.

Chesed or Kindness

Water-like love: Love based on understanding G-d's might and greatness. This inspires feelings of love for G-d because we have the merit of being close to Him. This love flows calmly like water.

Loving G-d is also expressed in love for His children, the Jewish people.

Story - Hospitality Out of Love

Rabbi Eliezer, the father of the Baal Shem Tov, lived in a small village, and was known for his hospitality. When beggars would arrive in town, he'd welcome them into his home and hand them a generous donation, before they'd even ask. Rabbi Eliezer knew that most of his guests were poor, coming to collect money. After he'd given them money, the guest could finally relax, knowing their goal had been achieved.

Rabbi Eliezer was once praised greatly in Heaven for his generosity, and it was decided to put Rabbi Eliezer to the test. "Who will test him?" they asked. Elijah the Prophet volunteered.

Elijah arrived at the rabbi's door during Shabbat, disguised as a beggar who'd just come to town, with a cane and a knapsack. "Good Shabbos!" the beggar called out.

The guests around Rabbi Eliezer's table told him to throw the beggar out for desecrating the Shabbat by traveling. But the rabbi was gentle, and didn't want to embarrass the man. He invited him to join the third Shabbat meal, and after dark invited him for the "Melave Malkah" meal.

On Sunday morning, the rabbi gave the beggar a donation, without reprimanding him for violating the Shabbat.

When Elijah saw the rabbi's kindness and generosity, he revealed himself. "Know that I am the prophet Elijah," he told the rabbi. "I came to test you. In reward for your kindness, you will have a son who will light up the Jewish people."

This is how Rabbi Eliezer merited a son like the Baal Shem Tov.

Gevurah, or Strength

Fiery love: Love that stems from a feeling of distance. This is like a child far away from their parents, burning with feelings of longing. A person who feels they aren't close enough to G-d, or not spiritual enough, has a burning desire to get closer to G-d.

Tiferet, or Beauty

Torah study: The level of Tiferet is between Chesed and Gevurah. Like a stunning work of art, whose beauty lies in bringing together different shades, Tiferet unites Chesed and Gevurah. This level is expressed through Torah study. An intellectual uses their mind to balance the feelings of kindness and strength.

Netzach, or Victory

Perseverance and triumph: After heading out to battle one cannot withdraw, despite the costs involved in staying the course. The feelings of steadfastness and pride don't allow for withdrawal. This attitude has a positive side as well. When we take on a positive resolution and share it with others, we've got to follow through. We won't break our word and we'll muster up extra strength to get us there.

Hod, or Splendor

Humility and acknowledgement: When we are humble, we take nothing for granted. We don't feel that we deserve everything; we thank G-d for what we have. This is generally the path of simple, pure people.

Story

The Tzemach Tzedek once heard a simple person reciting Psalms from the depths of his heart, and cried: "If only I were able to say one verse of Psalms with such sincerity and purity."

In the times of the Tzemach Tzedek, the Russian army would forcibly draft young Jewish children, known as Cantonists. They would be forced to serve for 25 years. After they were free, they would try to pray and keep the mitzvot to the best of their knowledge, but they had very little understanding of Jewish practice. The Tzemach Tzedek said that their observance was with self-sacrifice without mixing in knowledge and understanding, and we cannot fathom how dear their prayers are to G-d, even more so than one who prays with the loftiest kabbalistic intentions. It is said that when Moshiach comes, the true greatness of the simple people who pray and recite Psalms with sincerity will be revealed.

Yesod, or Foundation

connection: Yesod is connecting with G-d. It gives us the ability to devote ourselves to G-d no matter the circumstances. A Jew connects to G-d, giving themselves to Him, and is prepared to give their life for Him.

Story - Stay Connected to the Baal Shem Tov

When the Alter Rebbe was imprisoned, the first question he was asked was whether he was a student of the Baal Shem Tov. If he would have said no, they would have freed him, but he refused to disassociate himself from the Baal Shem Tov for even a moment, and would not deny his connection.

Malchut, or Majesty

Pride: Every Jew is a prince, therefore we feel important and prestigious. This pride helps distance us from sin, because it wouldn't be appropriate for the child of a king to act in such a manner.

Story

One of the Alter Rebbe's students, when faced with a spiritual test, would tell himself, "Me, a senior student of the Rebbe, how can I do such a thing?!" In this way, he used his pride for Divine service.

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The seven lamps represent different kinds of Jews: for the first, it's fun to be Jewish. The second always feels guilty that they aren't a good enough Jew. The third has a good balance. The fourth is determined and will even give their life for their Judaism. The fifth lacks any ego and is always thankful to G-d for what they have. The sixth feels constantly connected to G-d, and the seventh feels that they are royalty and can change the world.

The High Priest's role isn't to change them or tell them to do anything differently, but rather to help them grow in their own path. This is what the Torah instructs the High Priest: "When you light the lamps, the seven lights should shine ..." You must fill all Jews with light, in their own way.

>> The Rebbe

Seven Types of Souls, United

The Torah portion begins with the verse "When you light the lamps, the seven lamps should shine facing the menorah." Meaning, all of the seven lamps need to shine in one direction - the front of the menorah (the main stem of the candelabrum).

The Torah itself requires that there be seven lamps. The reason why seven physical lamps are needed is because there are seven spiritual lamps, each of which has its own individual role. How then can we make them all shine in the same direction, facing the menorah? These are seven distinct lamps, how can we make them all do the same thing?

ביאור הענין: בהתחלת הפרשה נאמר: "בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות", והיינו, שכל שבעת נרות המנורה צריכים להאיר לכיוון אחד - אל מול פני המנורה."

ולכאורה אינו מובן: התורה עצמה אומרת שצריכים להיות "שבעת הנרות". הסיבה לכך שבגשמיות צריכים להיות שבעה נרות - לפי שברוחניות ישנם שבעה נרות, שכל אחד הוא ענין בפני עצמו. ואם כן, איך יכולים לפעול ש"אל מול המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות", היינו, שעם היותם שבעה נרות שונים, יעמדו כולם בענין אחד - אל מול פני המנורה!?"

Student's
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Student's
pg. 8

Student's
pg. 8

If all of the lamps serve the same role, then there should only be one stem on the candelabrum to begin with. And if seven branches are required, how can they all be made to face one direction, the center stem?

וממה-נפשך: אם כל הנרות צריכים להיות בענין אחד - הוצרך להיות לכתחילה (ברוחניות, ובמילא גם בגשמיות) נר (קנה) אחד, ולא שבעה נרות (קנים); ואם צריכים להיות שבעה נרות - איך יכולים להיות כולם "אל מול פני המנורה!?"

Source 5 Rashi, Numbers 8:4

Student's
pg. 8

Hammered: It was made of a solid block of gold, pounded with a hammer and carved with an axe to create the body of the menorah. It wasn't created by attaching separate pieces together.

From its base: Its base was the hollow box above the legs, like the silver candelabra that stand before the nobleman.

מקשה. בטדי"ץ בלעז, לשון "דא לדא נקשן" (דניאל ה), עשת של כפר זהב היתה, ומקיש בקרנס, וחותך ככשיל, לפשט אכריה כתקנו, ולא נעשית אכרים אכרים על ידי חבור.

עד ירכה עד פרחת. ירכה היא השדה שעל הרגלים, חלול, פדרך מנורות כסף שלפני השרים.

Source 6 Midrash Tanchuma, Shemini, 8

Student's
pg. 8

How was the menorah made?

When Moses went up to heaven, G-d showed him how to build the mishkan. When G-d showed him the menorah, Moses had a difficult time understanding. G-d told him: "I'll make one right now."

G-d showed Moses white flames, red flames, black flames, and green flames, and created a menorah of them. He told Moses, "Do it like this." As the verse states, "This is the form of the menorah." This teaches us that G-d showed him personally how to build the menorah. Yet, Moses still had difficulty.

מעשה המנורה כיצד היה?

שבשעה שעלה משה, והיה הקדוש ברוך הוא מראה לו בהר היאך יעשה את המשכן. כיון שהראה לו הקדוש ברוך הוא מעשה המנורה, נתקשה בה משה. אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא, הרי אני עושה אותה לפניך.

מה עשה הקדוש ברוך הוא? הראה לו אש לכנה ואש אדמה ואש שהרה אש ירוקה, ועשה מהן את המנורה, גביעיה כפתוריה ופרחיה וששת הקנים. והוא אומר לו: כך וכך עשה אותם, שנאמר: וזה מעשה המנורה (במדבר ה, ד). מלמד, שהראה לו הקדוש ברוך הוא באצבע את המנורה, ואף על פי כן נתקשה בה הרבה משה לעשותו.

G-d then drew it on Moses' palm, as the verse states: "See and make it in this shape," the same way G-d drew it on his palm. Still, Moses couldn't understand, telling G-d: "Make it hammered [Mikshah]," meaning "Mah kashah," how hard this is to make!

G-d responded: "Throw the gold into the fire and it will make itself," as the verse states: "the menorah should be made hammered." It says should be made, meaning that it will make itself.

>> The Rebbe

To answer this challenge, the verse continues and states "this was the form of the menorah: hammered work." This means that the seven lamps are actually all one concept, and only through being pounded with a hammer do they become cups, knobs, flowers, seven branches, etc. Ultimately they all come from one source and represent the same concept - unlike all the other vessels of the mishkan, which were constructed from multiple parts assembled together.

Since they are really one concept, even after they are fashioned into seven lamps they can still be made to do the same thing: shine facing the central stem of the menorah.

The difference between the menorah and the other vessels of the mishkan is that all the other vessels were assembled from multiple parts of gold and wood, welded together. The menorah, by contrast, was built in a much more complex manner. The artisans had to take a large block of gold, and hammer it and carve it until it assumed the shape of a beautiful menorah with seven branches, decorative flower shapes, etc. The Torah says that Moses indeed had difficulty constructing the menorah, and G-d needed to assist him in doing it.

מה עשה הקדוש ברוך הוא? חקקה על כף ידו של משה. אמר לו: וראה ועשה בתבניתם (שמות כה, מ), כשם שחקקתיה על כף ידה. ואף על פי כן נתקשה בה משה ואמר, מקשה תעשה המנורה (שמות כה, לא). כלומר, מה קשה לעשות.

אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא, השלך את הזהב לאש והמנורה תעשה מאליה, שנאמר: מקשה תעשה המנורה. כתיב תעשה, מעצמה תעשה. מלמד, שנתקשה לו המנורה, והראה לו הקדוש ברוך הוא באצבע, שנאמר זה.

אך על זה נאמר בהמשך הכתוב - "וזה מעשה המנורה מקשה גו": לאמינו של דבר שבעת הנרות הם (לא שבעה ענינים שונים, אלא) ענין אחד - "מקשה", ורק על ידי זה ש"מקיש בקורנס כו" (כלשון רש"י) נעשו שבעה קנים, גביעים כפתורים ופרחים כו', אבל באמת ענינם אחד, כיון שנמשכים כולם מאותו מקור (ולא כמו שאר עניני המשכן שנעשו מחלקים שונים ואחר כך חיברו אותם כו').

וכיון שבעצם ענינם אחד, לכן, גם לאחר שנעשו "שבעה נרות", יכולים לפעול שיהיו כולם בענין אחד - "אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות".

The spiritual meaning of this is that while there are different types of Jews who serve G-d in different ways, they all share a single core. Even when they express themselves differently they are part of the same unit. This is why they all shine facing the center of the menorah - they are all striving towards the same general goal, illuminating the world with G-d's light.

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Moreover, the entire form of the menorah was hammered out of the same single block. Starting with the lowest element, the box-shaped base with legs underneath, all the way to the flowers which adorned the menorah for beauty. This hammered block included every detail, from the lowest to the loftiest and everything in between.

יתירה מזו - "עד ירכה עד פרחה": "ירכה" -
"היא השדה שעל הרגלים" (כפירוש רש"י),
שזהו החלק התחתון ביותר שבמנורה;
ואילו "פרחה", שנעשה ליופי, מורה על
דרגא נעלית ביותר. והיינו, שהענין של
"מקשה" כולל את כל פרטי הענינים
שבמנורה, מהענין היותר עליון עד לענין
היותר תחתון, ובמילא מובן שכולל גם את
כל הדרגות שבינתיים.

The verse emphasizes that all the parts of the menorah were formed from one block. From the lowly base to the beautiful flowers, all were chiseled from the same block.

C. A Unified Purpose

>> The Rebbe

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As discussed several times, every detail in Torah serves as a directive for our Divine service. Kabbalah teaches that the menorah represents the Jewish people, and the seven lamps represent seven levels within the Jewish people.

ההוראה מזה בעבודת האדם (כאמור כמה פעמים שכל ענין בתורה מהווה הוראה בעבודת ה'): מנורה - מתייחסת לכנסת ישראל, ושבעת הנרות הם שבע מדריגות כו', כך, שיש ביניהם חילוקי הדרגות על פי תורה (נוסף על החילוקים שבין כהן, לוי וישראל, ועד לעשרה יוחסין, כמובא במשנה⁸).

The mishnah in Tractate Kiddushin lists ten types of Jews. Priests that serve in the Temple, Levites that devote themselves to teaching the Jewish people Torah, simple Israelites that work hard to make a living, and additional categories.

Judaism doesn't ignore the fact that there are different types of Jews who live different lifestyles.

The main function of the lamps is to illuminate. A lamp and a wick are not complete when they are not shining, only when the lamp is lit and illuminating its surroundings is it fulfilling its purpose. The same is true regarding the human soul, which the verse compares to a candle, and whose purpose is to shine with Divine service.

ואף על פי כן, בנוגע לענין של "יאירו שבעת הנרות", - שזוהי המטרה העיקרית של הנרות, כפי שרואים במוחש, שאפילו בשעה שיש נר ופתילה, הנה כל זמן שהנר אינו מאיר לא נשלמה כוונתו, רק כשמדליקים את הנר ומאיר את כל המקום שמסביבו, אזי נשלמה כוונת הנר; על דרך זה בנוגע ל"נר ה' נשמת אדם"⁹, שהתכלית היא שהנשמות יאירו בעבודת ה' - עומדים כולם בשווה באופן ש"אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות".

Everyone shares the same general goal: illuminating the world. Each in their own way, but the goal is identical.

All of the seven lamps do the same thing, shining facing the center of the menorah. The reason for this is that it is one block: all Jews are a single unit, originating from the same source - G-d. There are distinctions between individual Jews, from the "flowers"

וטעם הדבר - כיון ש"מקשה היא": כל בני ישראל הם מציאות אחת, כיון שנמשכים כולם מאותו מקור - הקב"ה, "אב אחד לכולנה"¹⁰, ואף שיש חילוקים ביניהם, "עד ירכה עד פרחו", ש"פרחה" מתייחס לאלו שבדרגת הראש, ו"ירכה" מתייחס לאלו שבדרגת רגל, הנה החילוקים הללו הם רק בחיצוניות, אבל בפנימיות, הנה גם לאחרי חילוקי

9. משלי כ, כז.
10. תניא רפ"ב.

7. ראה לקו"ת ריש פרשתנו. ובכ"מ.
8. קידושין רפ"ד.

Student's who are on the level of the head, and the
pg. 10 "bases" who are on the level of the feet. But these distinctions are only superficial, internally the Jewish people are all "one block," all on the same level.

Student's The menorah was formed specifically from a
pg. 11 block of pure gold, with no dross. Even the Jews that are termed "base" are pure gold, because there is no dross in any Jew. This is expressed by G-d's calling the Jewish people "the work of my hands in whom I take pride." G-d doesn't lend His name to something negative, so this proves that the Jewish people are completely good, and all of them are pure gold. As a result, all Jews can serve G-d together, all "seven lamps shining facing the menorah."

The prophet Zechariah called all the different types of Jews pure gold. He didn't see any dross or imperfect materials, only pure gold. This is what enables the High Priest to fulfill his role of helping every Jew spread light in their unique way. Because every Jew is pure gold.

This is an eternal directive for all generations, even when the Temple is not standing and the physical menorah is not shining. Even in our time, the spiritual service of lighting the lamps—all facing the center of the menorah—is relevant. This matter is especially relevant at the time when we read this Torah portion, as the Alter Rebbe—the first Chabad Rebbe—taught that we must "live with the times," with the weekly Torah portion. So this is a concept that must guide all of us in our Divine service.

We no longer light the menorah in the Temple, but the menorah's unifying message is as relevant today as ever.

הדרגות - "מקשה היא", מציאות אחת, והיינו, לא רק באופן שזה משפיע וזה מקבל, אלא כולם באותה דרגא.

ולא עוד אלא שהמנורה היא "מקשה זהב" - "זהב טהור"¹¹ ללא סיגים, והיינו, שגם אלו מבני ישראל שנקראים בשם "ירכה", הרי הם "זהב טהור", כיון שאצל כל בני ישראל אין ענין של סיגים כו'. וכמוכח גם מזה שהקב"ה אומר על בני ישראל "מעשה ידי להתפאר"¹² - שהרי אין הקב"ה מזכיר שמו על דבר לא טוב¹³, וכמו שכתוב¹⁴ "מפי עליון לא תצא הרעות", ובהכרח לומר שאצל בני ישראל יש רק טוב, וכל אחד מהם הוא בבחינת "זהב טהור". ולכן יכולים לפעול שבעבודת ה' יהיו כולם ביחד" - אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות."

ענין זה מהווה הוראה נצחית לכל הדורות, אפילו בזמן שאין בית המקדש קיים, ואין הדלקת המנורה בפועל - שגם אז צריך להיות הענין של "בהעלותך את הנרות" בעבודה הרוחנית באופן ש"אל פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות"; ובפרט בבוא הזמן שבו קורין פרשה זו, כפתגם רבינו הזקן¹⁵ שצריכים "לחיות" עם הזמן, עם הפרשה שקורין בתורה - הרי בוודאי שענין זה צריך להיות הוראה בעבודת כל אחד ואחת מישראל.

14. איכה ג, לה.
15. סה"ש תש"ב ע' 29 ואילך (נעתק ב"היום יום" ב חשון).

11. תרומה כה, לא. ועוד.
12. ישעי' ס, כא. וראה סנהדרין ר"פ חלק.
13. ראה תנחומא תוריע ט (בסופו). תוס' תענית ג, סע"א.

Story "I have given you the match"

Yehudah Avner was an Israeli diplomat, serving as an ambassador to several nations and an advisor to five Israeli prime ministers.

During a private audience with the Rebbe, the Rebbe explained to Avner what a Rebbe's role is:

"I will tell you what I'm trying to do . . . Reb Yehuda, imagine you are looking at a cupboard, and I tell you to open that cupboard. You open the cupboard, and you see there a candle, but I tell you that it is not a candle—it is a lump of wax with a thread inside. When do the wax and the wick become a candle? When you bring a flame to the wick. That is when the wax and the wick turn into a candle, and fulfill the purpose for which they were created.

"And that is what I try to do—to help every man and woman fulfill the purpose for which they were created.

"The wax is the body, and the wick is the soul. Ignite the soul with the fire of Torah, and then the body and the soul will fulfill their purpose.

"And that is my mission," the Rebbe concluded, "to ignite the soul of every Jew with the fire of Torah."

As the meeting drew to a close, Avner asked the Rebbe: "Rebbe, have you lit my candle?"

"No," the Rebbe said, clasping Avner's hand. "I have given you the match. Only you can light your candle."

The Rebbe was telling Avner the concept we learned in this class. The High Priest's role was to help every Jew shine in their own way. He must give them the match, the push, the love, so they can shine on their own.

משיחת ש"פ בהעלותך, ט"ז סיון, ה'תש"ל

הנחה בלתי מוגה.

תורת מנחם חלק ס' עמ' 435 והלאה.