

# perceptions

BeHa'alsecha • Sivan 14, 5783 • June 3, 2023 • Issue #1099

This week's *parsha* is dedicated in loving memory of **Sima Zlota bat Mendel v'Yetta, a"b**, the mother of very close friends of mine and a wonderfully warm person whom I knew since my own childhood. May her soul have *aliyah* after *aliyah* and may she be a *meilitz yosbar* for her family and all of *Klal Yisroel*.  
*HaMakom yenachem . . .*

The *parsha* begins with the *mitzvah* for the *kobanim* to light the *Menorah* in the *Mishkan*. But after discussing it, the Torah adds:

*This was the form of the Menorah: hammered work of gold, from its base to its flower it was hammered work, according to the form that God had shown Moshe, etc."*  
 (Bamidbar 8:3)

*Rashi* mentions some interesting points based upon the wording of the verse, one of which is that the *Menorah* was made by itself, that is that God caused it to be made miraculously. But just before this, *Rashi* said: "According to the design He had shown him on the mount, as it says, "Now see and make according to their pattern [which you are shown on the mountain]" (*Shemos* 25:40). (*Rashi*)

Regarding this verse, *Rashi* said back in *Shemos*:

*Now see and make*: See here on the mountain the pattern that I am showing you. [This] tells us that Moshe had difficulty with the construction of the *Menorah*, until The Holy One, Blessed is He, showed him a *menorah* of fire. *Which you are shown*: It is as the *Targum* interprets, "which you are shown." (*Rashi*, *Shemos* 25:40)

On the surface of it, being *shown* something means that you *see* it, which is usually

the case in everyday life. But here there is a significant difference, something which requires a verse at the end of the *parsha* to become clearer.

After Miriam and Aharon complain about their brother's prophecy ethic, being too busy to spend time with his wife Tziporah, God came down to set them straight. He told them:

*If there will be a prophet among you, [I] God will make Myself known to him in a vision; I will speak to him in a dream. It is not so regarding My servant Moshe, who is faithful throughout My house. With him I speak mouth to mouth, in a vision and not in riddles, and he beholds the image of God. (Bamidbar 6:9)*

What God was essentially telling Miriam and Aharon was that their brother was no ordinary prophet. Therefore the expectations of him were very different than that of other prophets, including themselves. They were mistaken to compare Moshe's level of prophecy to the level of others, and they were censured for it by God Himself.

What the verse however is telling us, is that Moshe *Rabbeinu's* difficulty in grasping the *Menorah*, something that doesn't make sense to us since it seems so easy to make one, had more to do with how high his prophecy was, not a lack of it. As the *Leshem*, based upon the *Zohar* will soon explain, it was not only what Moshe didn't know that stumped him, but what he did know.

## **Shabbos Day**

NOT ONLY DID Moshe *Rabbeinu* have trouble with the *Menorah*, but originally, he was supposed to build everything and he declined. What is interesting is that, in the end, Betzalel, Oholiav, and all the rest of the craftspeople involved in making all the elements of the *Mishkan* and its vessels seemed to have had no problem. What did they know that Moshe *Rabbeinu* did not?

More precisely, what did Moshe *Rabbeinu* know that they did not?

“All of it was done through Betzalel and Oholiav, because they intended for the plan that was shown on the mountain. But for Moshe *Rabbeinu*, *a”b*, it was difficult to intend for this because of his great grasp and unity through the *Aspekalaria HaMeirah*, which is void of any description or plan. It was hard for him to intend for the example and plan above because with his grasp [of the higher level on which] there is no plan and example above at all. Therefore, he withdrew from making them, as previously mentioned.” (*Sefer HaKlallim, Klal 18, Anaf 10, Siman 2, Os 5, Ma'areches HaA"V, Se'if 2*)

A fundamental of *Kabbalah* is that nothing can exist down here if it doesn't exist up there. Everything physical has a spiritual root, and the level of that spiritual root will determine how spiritual, or holy, something will be down here. You can assume that everything made for the *Mishkan*, and especially the *Mishkan* itself, was rooted on very high levels in the spiritual realm.

Furthermore, the higher up a root is, the more abstract it becomes. Most of the roots are beyond human grasp, with the exception of Moshe *Rabbeinu*. His level of prophecy was with the *Aspekalaria HaMeirah*, literally the *window that illuminates*. This refers to his being able to view extremely spiritual concepts in his mind's eye as if looking through a clear window.

This is why he was “shown” but he did not “see.” On Moshe's level of prophecy there is no form or pattern for anything, just the spiritual reality to be known but not seen. Therefore, for Moshe *Rabbeinu* the roots were so sublime that he could not imagine how they could translate into actual physical objects without distorting their essence.

Betzalel and Oholiav, on the other hand, only knew what they were shown and saw, the patterns and forms God showed them. Betzalel knew how to arrange the letters of the *Aleph Bais* to produce what God had specified, and he did everything he could to do it accurately. But that was as far as his knowledge took him, because:

“The erecting of the *Mishkan* and the ordering of its vessels were specifically through him (Moshe), because he could accurately intend for their hidden unity at the root of their plans, to unify all of them with their sources above. Through this he completed and rectified all of the intentions of Betzalel and Oholiav as well, because the main rectification of intention is to unify everything with their source whose unity is hidden, as written in *Hakdamas Tikunim*. As known, the erection and the organization of all its vessels were by Moshe *Rabbeinu*, *a”b*, and the *Shechinah* did not dwell on the work of their hands until the erection [of the *Mishkan*] by Moshe specifically. . . . (*Sefer HaKlallim*, *Klal* 18, *Anaf* 10, *Siman* 2, *Os* 5, *Ma'areches HaA”V*, *Se'if* 2)

### **Seudas Shlishis**

WHAT THIS MEANS is that had Moshe not assembled and ordered the *Mishkan*, the *Shechinah* would never have descended and dwelled within it. In a very distant sense, it was like building a radio and never plugging it in. The radio could represent the ultimate technology, but disconnected from its source of energy it just can't come to life. Without spiritually connecting everything in the *Mishkan* to its source

above, which only Moshe could do because of his level of prophecy, the *Mishkan* could not have functioned as the *Mishkan*.

This is not just true of the *Mishkan* and its elements, but of everything in the physical world. It's long been thought that what happens down here in the physical world is just the actualization of abstract concepts in an abstract realm. That is true, but it is more than this. There is a spiritual source for everything, and disconnected from its source means death for that thing. It may continue to exist somewhat, but that is only because just enough life still flows to it for minimal existence.

And the amazing thing is how it can look like something, or someone, is accomplishing so much in this world when in reality they are accomplishing nothing as far as God and history are concerned. They can seem so important and powerful to people, and yet be a shell of their true self in actual reality.

The same thing is true of things like *tefillah*. We use words to pray from down here, but the goal is, through intention, to reconnect them with their spiritual origins above. That is what gives soul to a prayer, and power to its words to alter a person's reality with additional blessing. Without the proper intention, prayers just remain ineffective words.

The *Mishkan* was a very precise reality, and it took very specific intentions to make it become what it had to in order to be a house of God. Only Moshe *Rabbeinu*, on his very high level of prophecy could do that. We don't have any prophecy, so how can we be expected to have the proper intention when doing anything?

Some of those intentions have been passed down to us through major *kabbalists* like the *Arizal*, and later, the *Rashash*. But even those can be too difficult for many to put into practice, so where does that leave them and their *mitzvos* and prayers?

### ***Ain Od Milvado, Part 52***

THERE ARE CHASSIDISHE stories of people who had tremendous yearning to pray to God, but not the ability to read to do so, or the *siddurim* to follow. So they did the only thing they knew how to do. They said the *Aleph-Bais* over and over again and told God, "Take my letters and arrange them into the proper words for prayer!"

Fortunately, that is far less a problem today than it was in the past, but the idea is still applicable. We have the *siddurim* and we know how to read. What we don't know so well is the specific intentions we're supposed to have when reading from our *siddurim* to pray to God. In a similar sense, we're basically telling God, "Here's my prayer! You infuse it with the correct intention!"

Does that work? Yes, if your intention for it to happen is very sincere. If you do the best you can to put yourself into your *mitzvos* and prayers, God will take care of the rest. As the *Gemora* says, “If someone sanctifies themselves a little, they (Heaven) will sanctify them a lot” (*Yoma* 38b).

The main thing we should think about when performing a *mitzvah* or offering up a prayer or *brochah*? *Ain od Milvado*. We should be real with the fact that everything we need and want in this world comes from one Source, and one Source only: God. He’s the only One that we need to believe in and impress. He’s the true Source of every last blessing in life. That much we can intend for, and when He sees that intention, then He takes care of the rest for us.