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On the Parsha

This week's Parsha begins with the words to be relayed to Aharon, "When you lift up the lamps adjacent to the face of the Menorah, the seven lamps will alight." (BaMidbar 8:2)

This Passuk (verse) is somewhat enigmatic. It appears to be saying that when Aharon lifts up the lamps to light them, the lamps will light. This would seem to be obvious, so what is the verse really telling us?

The Midrash Rabbah (BaMidbar 15:9) explains this Passuk with a quote from Tehillim (43:3), "Send Your light and Your truth, that they may lead me..." However, this too is perplexing. How does this quote explain the Passuk in this week's Parsha?

Rav Yissochor Dov Friedman (Rav Beryl) ZT"L, was a close Talmid (student) of Rav Yoel Teitelbaum ZT"L. In his work, "Yad Shalaim", he explains that the Passuk in this week's Parsha is coming to provide inspiration and direction to the righteous. He explains the Passuk in the following way: "**When you lift up,**" – meaning, when the righteous elevate; "**the lamps**" – which can refer to their Neshamos (souls) as lamps have been likened to Neshamos (see Mishlei 20:27); "**adjacent to the face of the Menorah**" – and look towards purity and perfection as represented by the Menorah; "**the seven lamps will alight**" – the seven lamps, which per the Alshich, can refer to the seventy years that man typically lives, will be well spent and when one dies, one will go straight to the World to Come without suffering in Gehenim (Hell).

The Midrash Rabbah then comes to explain, "**When you lift up,**" - how the righteous elevate themselves. They do so by using Hashem's light and truth, "Send Your light and Your truth, they shall lead me."

To explain how one should elevate themselves through truth, Rav Freidman cites the Dubno Maggid in his Ohel Yaakov (Parshas Naso) where he cites two verses in Tehillim (1:3-4) which explain the qualities

and nature of the righteous and the wicked: "He shall be as a tree planted beside rivulets of water, which brings forth its fruit in its season, and its leaves do not wilt; and whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked, but [they are] like chaff that the wind drives away." The Dubno Maggid explains that a righteous person is one who sticks to good and proper character traits. He is consistent as well, allowing nothing to fluster him. He is not prone to mood swings and is always even keeled. He does not get angry and is consistently pleasant-mannered. This is emblematic of a person of truth. He is likened to the unmovable, deeply rooted tree flourishing by the water that is referenced in Tehillim above.

Accordingly, the righteous should elevate themselves by being people of truth, which are people who are consistent in their good character traits, mood and temperament.

Halacha – Jewish Law

QUESTION:

My daughter is consistently late, and I do not know what to do. I found out that I can adjust the time on her smartphone and set her clock ten minutes ahead of the actual time by going to "Settings" and turning the "Automatic Date and Time" function off. I can then set the time manually and she will not know the difference. Then, when she thinks she is arriving ten minutes late, she will be on time. Is it Halachically permitted to set her clock ahead without her knowledge?

ANSWER: Unfortunately, we cannot provide you with a definitive answer. Rav Shimon Sofer ZT"L, a grandson of both Rabbi Akiva Eiger ZT"L and the Chasam Sofer ZT"L, discusses the matter in his Hisorerus Teshuvah (Siman 36) regarding moving someone's Zeiger (clock) ahead so they will not be late. Rav Shimon initially rules that it is permitted and cites as support, the Gemora in Shabbos where Rava saw people preparing vegetables on Friday afternoon in a manner that was prohibited on Shabbos. He felt that this should not be done after



Mincha on Friday afternoon as the activity may unintentionally extend into Shabbos and cause them to sin. Due to his concern, Rava lied and said that a letter arrived from Eretz Yisrael forbidding such a practice. Therefore, it appears from the Gemora, that one may lie to someone for their own benefit.

However, Rav Shimon questions if that is what the Gemora really means because it is possible to understand the Gemora to mean that Rava actually did ask that the letter be written to prohibit the practice and the letter was indeed written. Therefore, when Rava said that a letter came from Eretz Yisrael prohibiting the practice, that was indeed the truth.

Since we do not have a conclusive answer, it is best to move your daughter's phone ten minutes ahead and tell her that you moved it "several minutes ahead." Merriam-Webster defines "several" as "more than two but fewer than many." When your daughter hears the word "several" she probably thinks that you moved her phone ahead for fewer minutes than you actually did, but ten minutes would likely still fit into the word's definition so you have not told a lie.

Chizuk - Inspiration

Rav Aharon Kotler זי"ל was not just the Rosh Yeshiva of Bais Medrash Govoha in Lakewood ("BMG"), he was also the Rosh Yeshiva of the Etz Chaim Yeshiva in Israel. Concerned for the education of Jewish children in Israel, Rav Aharon also headed an organization called Chinuch Atzmai. On one occasion, he was fundraising for Chinuch Atzmai and approached a philanthropist on its behalf. This particular philanthropist did not agree with some of the thoughts and perspectives of a particular board member of Chinuch Atzmai. He did not wish to donate to Chinuch Atzmai, but offered instead, to write a generous check to BMG.

Rav Aharon was a man of great personal integrity. He responded, "I cannot accept your donation. I approached you to fundraise on behalf of Chinuch Atzmai. It would be a lack of Emes (honesty) to take a donation on behalf of BMG

instead. Please give to Chinuch Atzmai as it is a very worthy cause or let me leave empty-handed."

The philanthropist was so impressed with Rav Aharon's integrity that he agreed to donate to Chinuch Atzmai, and he ultimately became one of the biggest supporters of both BMG and Chinuch Atzmai.

Mussar – Introspection

We continue with our translation of the fifth chapter of the Chofetz Chaim's Sefas Tamim.

"It is true that the passionate drive for yet more money blinds people to rationalize leniencies for themselves. However, Chazal (the Sages) have said that a man's personality can be discerned by his attitude towards money, that one should elevate his intellect to overcome his desire, and sincerely resolve to avoid the sin. This is true even if in so doing, he would be forced to live a life of poverty in order not to be a Rasha (one who is evil) in the eyes of Hashem. In truth, however, "Those who seek Hashem will not lack any good (Tehillim 34:11)." and, "One who walks in pure innocence will walk securely (Mishlei 10:9)."

This is a fundamental rule in the realm of the materialism that man desires, and in particular to his pursuit of money, that the Yetzer Hara shows him 49 different ways of sanctioning it [a theft]. To combat this, the man who truly fears Hashem should abide by, "Do not rely on your own understanding (Mishlei 3:5)." Rather, he should go to a Chochom (scholar) who will teach him the correct path in life to follow and he should not deviate from that teaching right or left.

If he behaves as we have said, and stays away from these two primary reasons that were described above, namely, the drive to live an opulent lifestyle, which is nothing more than an expression of jealousy of his fellow Jew, and also sees to it to learn the details of the laws of interpersonal relations that are relevant to his business, then the sin of theft, which is the result of these two traits, will be removed from him."