

**“Toward the faces of the Menorah shall the seven lamps cast light”**

## **The Purpose of Kindling the Menorah—which Alludes to the Light of the Torah-- Is to Draw upon the Seven Concealed Parts of the Torah**

In this week’s parsha, parshas Behaaloscha, it states (Bamidbar 8, 1): **“וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, דבר אל אהרן ואמרת אליו, בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות, ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרותיה כאשר צוה ה' את משה—Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, “Speak to Aharon and say to him: When you kindle the lamps, toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light. Aharon did so; toward the face of the menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe. Rashi comments: “יאירו שבעת הנרות, ששה שעל ששת הקנים, שלשה המזרחיים פונים למול האמצעי, הפתילות שבהן, וכן שלשה המערביים—concerning the six lamps that are on the six branches, the three eastern ones, their wicks should face the middle lamp, and similarly, the three western ones, the tops of their wicks should face the middle lamp.”**

Let us endeavor to understand and to explain why HKB”H commanded us to kindle a menorah with seven lamps specifically—no more and no less. Furthermore, why did He command that they be kindled in such a manner that the six lamps should face the middle lamp? This implies that the middle candle possesses some sort of innate, special importance, requiring that the other lamps should bend toward it. Let us endeavor to explain the unique significance and superiority of the middle lamp.

### **Your Role Is Greater than Theirs**

We shall begin to shed some light on the matter by referring to Rashi’s comment: **“למה נסמכה פרשת המנורה לפרשת הנשיאים, לפי שכשראה אהרן חנוכת הנשיאים, חלשה אז דעתו שלא היה עמהם בחנוכה, לא הוא ולא שבטו, אמר Rashi asks: “ה' הקב"ה, חייך שלך גדולה משלהם, שאתה מדליק ומיטיב את הנרות”**

**Why does the Torah juxtapose the passage of the menorah with the passage describing the contributions of the “nesiim” (the princes of the shevatim)? Because when Aharon saw the inauguration of the “nesiim,” he was disheartened, for he did not participate with them in the inauguration—neither he nor his tribe. HKBH said to him: “I swear by your life! Your**

**contribution is greater than theirs, for you will kindle and prepare the Menorah’s lamps.”**

Rashi’s comment is founded on the following Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 15, 6):

**“את מוצא למעלה י”א שבטים הקריבו, ושבת אפרים הקריב, וכל הנשיאים הקריבו, חוץ מנשיאו של לוי, ומי היה נשיאו של לוי, זה אהרן... והיה אומר, אוי לי שמא בשבילי אין הקב"ה מקבל שבטו של לוי. אמר לו הקב"ה למשה, לך אמור לו לאהרן אל תתיירא לגדולה מזו אתה מתוקן, לכך נאמר דבר אל אהרן ואמרת אליו בהעלותך את הנרות, הקרבנות כל זמן שבית המקדש קיים הם נוהגים, אבל הנרות לעולם אל מול פני המנורה יאירו, וכל הברכות שנתתי לך לברך את בני אינן בטלין לעולם.”**

You find in the passage above that eleven tribes offered sacrifices, and the tribe of Ephraim sacrificed, and all of the “nesiim” sacrificed, with the exception of the “nasi” of Levi. Who was the “nasi” of Levi? It was Aharon . . . He thought to himself: Woe is me! Perhaps, it is because of me that HKB”H is not accepting the tribe of Levi. HKB”H said to Moshe: **“Go tell Aharon not to despair; you are destined for something greater.” This is the significance of the statement: “Speak to Aharon and say to him: When you kindle the lamps . . .” While the Beis HaMikdash exists, the korbanos will be offered; the lamps, however, will face the center of the menorah forever. Furthermore, all of the berachot that I gave you to bless My children will never be annulled.**

The Ramban is perplexed by the statement in the Midrash: **“While the Beis HaMikdash exists, the korbanos will be offered; the lamps, however, will face the center of the menorah forever.”** He writes: **“והנה ידוע שכשאינן בית המקדש קיים—והקרבנות בטלין מפני חורבנו אף הנרות בטלות—it is known that when the Beis HaMikdash no longer exists, and the sacrificial service is abolished due to its destruction, even the service involving the lamps will be abolished. So, how can the Midrash claim that the lamps will illuminate the face of the menorah forever? Therefore, the Ramban explains that HKB”H’s statement refers to**

the Chanukah candles that HKB”H would establish in the future through the priestly Chashmonaim, the descendants of Aharon. They exist forever; for, even during times of galut, we fulfill the mitzvah of lighting the Chanukah candles.

### One Who Wants to Become Wise Should Face South for the Menorah Is Located in the South

Seeing as it is the nature of Torah to be elucidated in seventy different ways, it appears that we can interpret the Midrash based on what we have learned in the Gemara (B.B. 25b): **הרוצה שיחכים ידרים [רש"י: "בתפלתו יחזיר פניו לדרום"] ושיעשיר יצפין, וסימניך שלחן בצפון—a person who wants to become wise should face south, while a person who wants to become wealthy should face north; and your mnemonic is: The "shulchan" stood in the north, while the "menorah" stood in the south.** Rashi comments that the Gemara means that he should face that particular direction when davening. The Gemara provides clarification. It doesn't mean that one should completely face south while davening; for, a person must face east—the direction of Yerushalayim and the location of the Mikdash. Rather, a person should deviate slightly to the south while davening, corresponding to the location of the menorah, which stood in the southern part of the Sanctuary.

This teaches us that by kindling the menorah, Aharon was privileged to extend the radiance and illumination of the Torah to Yisrael, as it is written (Mishlei 6, 23): **כי נר מצוה ותורה אור—for a mitzvah is a lamp and the Torah is light.** Let us suggest that that is the reason HKB”H chose Aharon HaKohen to kindle the menorah. Who better to provide Yisrael with the influence of the Torah! Attesting to Aharon's character, the navi states (Malachi 2, 6): **תורת אמת היתה בפייה ועולה לא נמצא בשפתיו, בשלום ובמישור הלך אתי: ורבים השיב מעון, כי שפתי כהן ישמרו דעת ותורה יבקשו מפייהו כי מלאך ה' צבאות הוא-- the Torah of truth was in his mouth, and injustice was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and with fairness, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of the Kohen should safeguard knowledge, and people should seek teaching from his mouth; for he is an agent of Hashem, Master of Legions.**

Upon careful scrutiny, we begin to appreciate the extent of Aharon HaKohen's kedushah. By kindling the menorah in the Mishkan, he endowed Yisrael with the illumination of the Torah. He did so not only during the times of the Beis HaMikdash—when the menorah was actually lit—but even after the “churban.” For, whenever a Jew wishes to become wise with Torah, he simply needs to follow Chazal's advice: **“הרוצה שיחכים ידרים”**—he should

face slightly to the south, corresponding to the location of the menorah in the Beis HaMikdash. By doing so, he will draw from the magnificent light that was kindled there and will attain the wisdom of the Torah.

Now, we have a very nice interpretation and better understanding of the Midrash. After not having participated in the korbanos of the “nesiim,” HKB”H consoled Aharon as follows: **“Do not despair; you are destined for something greater . . . While the Beis HaMikdash exists, the korbanos will be offered”**—but after the “churban,” it will no longer be possible to actually offer korbanot; **“the lamps, however, will face the center of the menorah forever”**—for, even after the “churban,” whenever a Jew prays and faces slightly to the south, he will successfully draw from the light of the Torah inherent in the lamps that were kindled during the times of the Beis HaMikdash.

### A Brilliant Idea from Rabbi Michel of Zlotchov, zy”a

Continuing onward and upward along this exalted path, let us endeavor to explain why HKB”H commanded us to light specifically seven lamps. Additionally, we will explain why HKB”H commanded us to kindle the six lamps in such a manner that they would all face the center of the menorah, the middle lamp. We will refer to a precious introduction presented by the Torei Zahav (Ki Tisa), authored by the great Rabbi Binyamin of Zalozce, citing Rabbi Michel of Zlotchov, zy”a. He addresses the passuk in our parsha: **“ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרותיה כאשר צוה ה' את משה—Aharon did so; toward the face of the menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe.** Citing the Sifrei, Rashi comments: **“להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה”**—**to tell the praise of Aharon--that he did not deviate.** Here is what he writes:

**“שמעתי אומרים משם הרב המובהק איש אלקי מזהר ר' יחיאל מיכל נר”ו על הפסוק בפרשת בהעלותך, ויעש כן אהרן כאשר צוה ד' את משה, וברש”י להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה, ומקשים היאך סלקא דעתך שישינה. ומפרש הוא נרו יאיר על פי דאיתא דאין הדיבור יכול להכיל כל השכל של אדם, אלא אחד מחלק השמיני שבשכל אדם, ולא אפשר לאדם לדבר כל השכל שלו.**

**ולפי זה כשאדם מדבר לחבירו שיעשה איזה שכל, אי אפשר לו להבין כל השכל של המדבר, רק הדיבור לבד שהוא חלק השמיני, אם כן אי אפשר לו לעשות כפי השכל של המדבר רק כפי השגת הדיבור, שהדיבור של ראובן נעשה שכל אצל שמעון, אבל אם שמעון הוא חכם גדול, אזי מבין מותר דיבורו של ראובן גם השכל של ראובן, ועושה בשכל שלו כמו שראובן מבין, עד כאן תורה דברי הספר הנ”ל.**

**והנה בודאי הקב”ה אמר למשה מעשה המנורה, וכוננתו כפי השגת משה רבינו עליו השלום, וכשאמר זה לאהרן לא היה באפשרי לדבר לו כל השכל רק אחד מחלק השמיני, ולא היה אפשר לאהרן לעשות כמו שצוה יתברך למשה, אבל מפני שאהרן**

היה חכם גדול היה מבין מתוך דיבורו השכל של משה כמו שצוה לו יתברך, וזהו שאמר ויעש כן אהרן כאשר צוה ד' את משה, רצונו לומר כמו שהיה הציווי למשה מיתברך כן עשה אהרן, וזה להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה, כי היה חכם גדול ומבין מתוך דיבורו של משה כמו שצוה לו יתברך.

The commentaries ask: How could one possibly imagine that Aharon would deviate from the command. He provides an explanation based on the concept that a person's speech cannot contain or transmit all of a person's intelligence; it can only convey one-eighth of his intelligence; and a person cannot convey all of his intelligence verbally.

So, when a person tells a colleague to perform a particular intelligent act, the colleague cannot fully comprehend the person's instruction fully; he can only grasp one-eighth of the intent, the spoken word. Therefore, he cannot fulfill the speaker's full intent but only the part he grasps from the spoken word. Reuven's verbal instruction becomes part of Shimon's intellect. If, however, Shimon is extremely wise, he can deduce from Reuven's spoken word his intelligence, as well. Thus, he can use his own intellect to act in accordance with Reuven's intent. This concludes Rabbi Michel's concept.

Now, HKB"H certainly explained to Moshe the construction and function of the menorah, to the best of Moshe's understanding. When he transmitted the information to Aharon, it was impossible to convey any more than one-eighth of the information. So, it was impossible for Aharon to do exactly as the Almighty commanded Moshe. Yet, since Aharon was extremely wise, he perceived from Moshe's words, the information the Almighty had commanded him. This is the meaning of the statement: "Aharon did so . . . as Hashem had commanded Moshe." The Torah wishes to teach us that Aharon acted in accordance with the command the Almighty gave to Moshe. This informs us of Aharon's greatness—he did not deviate. For, he was extremely wise, and understood from Moshe's verbal instruction, the intent of the Almighty's command.

We should note that this concept—that a person's speech can only convey one-eighth of his actual knowledge and intent—comes from a very early source; it comes from the Sefer HaKaneh attributed to the divine Tanna, Rabbi Nechunya ben HaKaneh. His concept is presented by the Bnei Yissaschar in his sefer Agra D'Kallah (Ki Savo) as follows: "כי כל דבר מושכל שיש לאדם במחשבה, אינו—any intelligence present in a person's mind can only be articulated in letters of speech to the extent of one-eighth."

## HKB"H Revealed in the Torah Only One-eighth of the Torah's Wisdom

Like a servant in the presence of his master, I would like to apply Rabbi Michel's concept to explain Chazal's statement above: "הרוצה שיחכים ידרים"—one who wishes to become wise should face south—because the menorah was located in the south. As explained, by kindling the menorah, Aharon extended the light of the Torah, in keeping with the passuk: "כי נר מצוה ותורה אור"—based on that which is written (Iyov 19, 26): "ומבשרי אחזה אלוך"—from my flesh I see G-d.

Our holy sources provide the following explanation. We have an explicit passuk stating (Bereishis 1, 26): "ונעשה אדם בצלמנו"—and G-d said, "Let us make man in our image, as our likeness." HKB"H wanted man to perceive with his own intellect how HKB"H manifests Himself in creation—His "midot" and how He runs the world. The great Rabbi Tzaddok HaKohen, zy"ta, writes the following in Machashavos Charutz (1): "וידוע דכל מה שלמעלה כן הוא למטה בנפש האדם שהוא בצלמינו כדמותינו, וכל השגות בני אדם. הוא בדמות אדם כי מבשרי אחזה אלוך כנודע." Know that everything up above also exists down below in man's being; for he was created "in our image, as our likeness." And all that human beings perceive, is contained in man's likeness, because "from my flesh I see G-d," as we know.

In a similar vein, the Sefas Emes writes (Vayeira): "ומבשרי אחזה אלקי. כי הגה כתיב נעשה אדם בצלמינו, אם כן יוכל האדם להכיר את בוראו מעצמותו, וכן כתבו המפרשים במאמר (אבות ב"ב מ"א) דע מה למעלה ממך." "From my flesh I see G-d." For, it is written: "Let us make man in our image." That being the case, man can know his Creator from his own self. The commentaries provide a similar explanation regarding the statement (Avos 2, 1): "Know what is above you." In other words, you can perceive how HKB"H runs the world from above ("דע מה למעלה") by examining your own self ("ממך"). After all, HKB"H created you in His image and likeness.

Now, if HKB"H created man in this manner—such that he is only capable of expressing one-eighth of his intellectual comprehension through his speech—then it stands to reason—based on the notion of "דע מה למעלה ממך"—that HKB"H also only revealed to us via the words of the Torah one-eighth of what he intended to reveal. Without a doubt, there is no limit or measure to HKB"H's intelligence. Yet, we are saying that He only revealed to us verbally, so to speak, one-eighth of what He thought to convey to us. He did so, so that we would labor to ascertain the other seven parts that were not revealed by the words of the Torah.

## Seven Lamps corresponding to the Seven Concealed Parts of the Torah

Now, let us address HKB”H’s command to Aharon: **“בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות-- When you kindle the lamps, toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light.** First, however, let us explain the Gemara’s statement: **“הרוצה שיחכים –a person who wishes to become wise should face the south--symbolized by the fact that “מנורה בדרום”—the menorah was located in the southern part of the Heichal. This indicates that the menorah alludes to the light of the Torah. We can challenge this statement based on an elucidation in the Midrash (S.R. 34, 2): “ועשו ארון, מפני מה בכל הכלים האלה כתיב ‘ועשית’ ובארון כתיב ‘ועשו ארון’, אמר לו ארון, כתיב ‘ועשית’—why does the Torah employ the term ‘ועשית’—“and you shall make”—with regards to all of the vessels; yet, with regards to the Aron, it employs the term ‘ועשו’—“and they shall make”? HKB”H said to him: Let everyone come and occupy themselves with the Aron, so that they may all have access to the Torah.** According to the Midrash, the making of the Aron already alludes to the Torah. So, for what purpose did HKB”H command the kindling of the menorah, which also alludes to the light of Torah?

It appears that we can propose an answer. The Aron, which housed the two “Luchos HaBris,” alludes to Torah she’b’chsav—the written Torah. For, the Aseres HaDibros inscribed on the two Luchos are an integral part of Torah she’b’chsav; they are written down both in parshas Yitro and parshas Vaetchanan. In contrast, the kindling of the menorah alludes to Torah she’b’al peh—the oral Torah. In fact, the Chatam Sofer writes in Toras Moshe (Behaaloscha) that the six branches which emerge from the two sides of the menorah correspond to the six orders of the Mishnah, which comprise Torah she’b’al peh. The six orders of the Mishnah are enumerated in the Gemara (Shabbas 31a): **זרעים, מועד, נשים, נזיקין, קדשים, טהרות.**

This explains very nicely why HKB”H commanded the kindling of seven lamps on the menorah. The Aron containing the two “Luchos HaBris” represent Torah she’b’chsav, which HKB”H gave us word for word on Har Sinai. It constitutes the one part out of eight that HKB”H revealed to us via Torah she’b’chsav. Thus, it turns out that it is incumbent upon us to reveal the other seven parts that were not revealed openly in Torah she’b’chsav. Therefore, HKB”H commanded the kindling of the seven lamps of the menorah. By performing this service, Aharon HaKohen accessed the seven parts that were not revealed explicitly in Torah she’b’chsav but were only accessible via Torah she’b’al peh.

## By Lighting the Menorah Aharon Drew upon the “Ohr HaGanuz”

This idea agrees beautifully with a familiar notion from the sphere of “drush”—interpretations of Scriptures based on elucidation and homiletics. In Chanukas HaTorah (Behaaloscha), an explanation is presented in the name of the great Rabbi Heschel of Cracow, ztz”l, regarding Rashi’s comment in the name of the Sifri on the passuk: **“ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה גרותיה כאשר צוה ה’ את משה - להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה.”** Aharon is praised for not deviating from Hashem’s command. There is an obvious difficulty with this comment. For, it is unimaginable that Aharon HaKohen would deviate one iota from a directive issued by Hashem.

He explains the matter based on a question posed in the Zohar hakadosh (Part 1, 264a). In the depiction of creation, the phrase **“and it was so”**--appears after every stage of creation. Yet, regarding the creation of the light, it merely states (Bereishis 1, 3): **“ויאמר אלקים יהי אור ויהי אור”**—G-d said, **“Let there be light”; and there was light.** The phrase **“ויהי כן”** is noticeably absent. The Zohar explains that the magnificent light that was created on the first day was stored away by HKB”H for the tzaddikim le’asid la’vo. So, when HKB”H proclaimed **“יהי אור”**—“let there be light”—He was referring to the magnificent light He originally created. Therefore, the phrase **“ויהי כן”** does not appear, because, in truth, it was not so. The magnificent light was subsequently stored away. Therefore, the Torah simply states: **“ויהי אור”**. In other words, there was light, but it was not the magnificent light that was created originally.

The kabbalistic texts, however, posit that Aharon HaKohen succeeded in drawing from the “ohr haganuz”—the concealed light—that was created during the six days of creation by means of the kindling of the menorah. It turns out, therefore, that by lighting the menorah, it was as if Aharon returned the term **“כן”** that is absent from text regarding the creation of the light. After all, he drew the “ohr haganuz” back down to earth. As a result, Hashem’s will was fulfilled with regards to the proclamation of **“יהי אור”**; the original, magnificent light was once again part of creation. This then is the deeper significance inherent in the statement: **“ויעש כן אהרן”**. Aharon rectified the word **“כן”** that was absent with regards to the creation of the light by drawing upon the magnificent light that had been concealed away.

The message of the Sifrei is now quite clear: **“להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה.”** In other words, due to his actions, the creation of the light no longer deviated from the rest of creation. The phrase **“ויהי כן”** is mentioned regarding every other phase of creation, indicating that that part of creation was completed in accordance with Hashem’s will. Now that Aharon successfully drew the “ohr

haganuz” from above back down to earth, it was as if the phrase “ויהי כן” applied to the light, as well.

Now, the words of the Degel Machaneh Ephraim (Bereishis) presented in the name of his elder, the holy Baal Shem, zy”a, are well known. He states that HKB”H stored the light in the Torah. Here are his precise words: “ושמעתי מאדוני אבי זקיני נשמתו עדן זללה”ה, היכן נגנז האור ההוא, ואמר שהשי”ת גנזו בתורה, ולכן משתמשין צדיקים בכל דור ודור באור ההוא, היינו על ידי התורה שיש בה אותו האור שיכולין להסתכל בו מסוף העולם.” **Where is that light stored? He said that the Blessed One stored it in the Torah. Therefore, the tzaddikim of every generation utilize that light. They do so by means of the Torah which contains that light, which allows them to see from one end of the world to the other-- just as my eyes have actually seen on numerous occasions.**

Let us provide an explanation based on what we have learned. The seven parts of the Torah that were not revealed in Torah she’b’chsav are in fact the magnificent light that HKB”H concealed within the Torah for the tzaddikim le’asid la’vo. For, le’asid la’vo, HKB”H will reveal all the parts of the Torah which were not revealed in Olam HaZeh, as it states in sefer Yeshayah (51, 4): “כי” “**for Torah will come forth from Me.** We find the following elucidation in the Midrash concerning this passuk (V.R. 13, 3): “אמר הקב”ה תורה חדשה מאתי תצא, חידוש תורה מאתי תצא” —HKB”H said: **“A new Torah will come forth from Me”—novel aspects of the Torah will come forth from Me.**

Similarly, we find in another Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Yeshayah 26, 429): “עתיד הקב”ה להיות יושב בגן עדן ודורש, וכל הצדיקים יושבים לפניו, וכל פמליא של מעלה עומדים על רגליהם, וחמה ומזלות מימינו של הקב”ה, ולבנה וכוכבים משמאלו, והקב”ה יושב ודורש תורה חדשה שעתידי ליתן על ידי משיח.” **In the future, HKB”H will sit in Gan Eden and expound; all of the tzaddikim will sit down before Him; the entire heavenly family will stand on their feet; the sun and constellations will be to the right of HKB”H; the moon and the stars will be to His left; HKB”H will sit and elucidate a new Torah that will be delivered by Mashiach in the future.**

### The Six Lamps Correspond to Six of the Seven Parts of the Torah

I was struck by a wonderful idea concerning HKB”H’s directive to Aharon: “בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות”. Rashi explains that this passuk indicates that all six of the side lamps must face the central, middle lamp. Thus, it behooves us to explain the unique significance of the middle lamp.

Based on what we have discussed, we can propose a tremendous chiddush—with the utmost reverence and affection.

Out of the seven portions concealed within Torah she’b’chsav, which HKB”H is destined to reveal to us le’asid la’vo, six have already been revealed to us by our blessed sages in Torah she’b’al peh. For, Torah she’b’al peh consists entirely of clarifications of all the issues that are unclear and obscure in Torah she’b’chsav. Due to their immense kedushah and painstaking efforts in the study of the Torah they succeeded in accessing the “ohr haganuz,” which is destined to be revealed le’asid la’vo. Therefore, Torah she’b’al peh—the Oral Law—is divided up specifically into six orders. This division alludes to the fact that six out of the seven missing portions have been revealed to us in Torah she’b’al peh.

It appears that we can substantiate this chiddush based on a Midrash Tanchuma (Noach 3). It states there that HKB”H reveals portions from the “ohr haganuz”—the concealed light—to those who labor and extend themselves in the study of Torah she’b’al peh. Here is an excerpt from the Midrash:

“לפי שלא כרת הקב”ה ברית עם ישראל אלא על התורה שבעל פה, שנאמר (שמות לד-כז) כי על פי הדברים האלה כרתי אתך ברית... וזו היא תורה שבעל פה שהיא קשה ללמוד, ויש בה צער גדול שהוא משולה לחשך, שנאמר (ישעיה ט-א) העם ההולכים בחושך ראו אור גדול, אלו בעלי התלמוד שראו אור גדול, שהקב”ה מאיר עיניהם באיסור והיתר בטמא ובטהור... לפיכך מתן שכרה לעולם הבא, שנאמר העם ההולכים בחושך ראו אור גדול, אור גדול - אור שנברא ביום ראשון, שגנזו הקב”ה לעמלי תורה שבעל פה ביום ובלילה.”

**Because HKB”H only established a covenant with Yisrael regarding Torah she’b’al peh . . . Torah she’b’al peh is difficult to learn and involves much distress, making it analogous to darkness, as it states (Yeshayah 9, 1): “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.” This refers to the scholars of the Talmud who saw a magnificent light; for HKB”H illuminated their eyes regarding what is prohibited and what is permissible, what is tamei and what is tahor . . . Therefore, its reward is in Olam HaBa . . . for the magnificent light they saw is the light that was created on the first day that HKB”H stored for those who labor in the study of Torah she’b’al peh day and night.**

Thus, we have an explicit source describing those who are devoted to the study of the Talmud: **“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.”** As the Midrash explains, HKB”H enlightens them in matters of “issur and heter, tamei and tahor.” Immediately afterwards, the Midrash addresses the passuk: **“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.”** It explains that this is a reference to the magnificent light that was created on the first day of creation. Based on what we have learned, these two things serve the same purpose. HKB”H extends light from the “ohr haganuz” to those who labor in the study of

Torah she'b'al peh; this enlightens them as to what is prohibited and what is permissible, what is tamei and what is tahor.

### The Middle Lamp Represents: “A new Torah will come forth from Me”

We can now rejoice that we have gained a deeper appreciation of the great importance of the middle lamp—which all the other lamps face. For, the middle lamp represents the seventh part; the seventh part is more exalted and obscure than all of the other parts of the Torah. It is the essence of the light that HKB”H stored within the Torah she'b'chsav. It is in relation to this exalted portion especially that HKB”H says: “תורה חדשה מאתי תצא”—a new portion of the Torah with tremendous chiddushim will be revealed.

It was precisely for this reason that HKB”H commanded Aharon: “בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות”—that the other six lamps should face the middle lamp. This detail teaches us that all the wisdom attained from the study of Torah she'b'al peh—which is comprised of six orders, alluded to by the light of the six peripheral lamps of the menorah—receive their essence from the middle lamp, representing the novel Torah that HKB”H is destined to reveal le'asid la'vo.

With this understanding, we can better appreciate the Gemara's statement: “הרוצה שיחכים ידרים” symbolized by the physical location of the menorah in the south--“מנורה בדרום”. As explained, a person should face slightly southward when davening, toward the direction of the kindling of the menorah. Doing so enables a person to draw from the illumination of the Torah of the middle lamp—corresponding to the “ohr haganuz.” For, it is our intent and desire to draw illumination from there to the other six lamps facing it—which represent the six orders of Torah she'b'al peh that we study extensively and laboriously in Olam HaZeh.

How nicely this explains what we have learned in the Gemara (Arachin 13b): “כנור של מוקדש של שבעת נימוין היה, שנאמר (תהלים טז-יא) שובע שמחות את פניך, אל תיקרי שובע אלא שבע, ושל ימות המשיח שמונה, שנאמר (שם יב-א) **The harp in the Mikdash had seven strings, as it states (Tehillim 16, 11): “The fullness of joys is in your presence.” Do not read this as “sova” (fullness; satisfaction) but rather as “sheva” (seven).** [Translator's note: This alternate reading is possible because the word “sova” in the passuk appears without a letter “vav” between the “sin” and the “vet.”] **And the harp of the days of the Mashiach will have eight strings, as it states (ibid. 12, 1): “For the conductor upon the eighth”—indicating that the music of the days of the Mashiach will be played on the eighth string.** Based on what we have discussed, we can suggest an

interpretation. In reality, HKB”H gave us a Torah composed of eight parts. Torah she'b'chsav represents but one part out of the eight; it represents one-eighth of what HKB”H, in His wisdom, thought to give us on Har Sinai. It is our obligation to reveal the other seven parts through our study of Torah she'b'al peh.

Now, we learned that the harp in the Beis HaMikdash had seven strings. This corresponded to the seven parts of the Torah that were revealed to us—the Aron, representing Torah she'b'chsav, constituted one part, and the six branches of the menorah, representing the six parts revealed to us by Chazal, constituted the other six parts. The harp of the days of the Mashiach, however, will have eight strings. For, then HKB”H will reveal a novel Torah to us corresponding to the middle lamp—the eighth and most exalted part of them all.

It is with great pleasure that we conclude this essay with an explanation of Chazal's statement that the future geulah is dependent on the merit of engaging in the study of Torah she'b'al peh. The Midrash teaches us (V.R. 7, 3): “אין כל הגלויות הללו מתכנסות — אלא בזכות משניות, מאי טעמא (הושע ח — י) גם כי יתנו בגוים עתה אקבצם” — the end to all of the exiles depends on the merit of learning Mishnayot, because the passuk (Hoshea 8, 10) states: **“Although they pay tribute amongst the goyim, now I will gather them in.”** The Matnot Kehunah explains that the word “יתנו” in the passuk (translated as “pay tribute”) refers to the study of Mishnah — based on the Aramaic translation of the word (they will learn).

Let us recall an amazing allusion regarding this subject presented by the great Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, ztz”l. The passuk in Yeshayah reads (1, 27): “ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה” — **Tziyon will be redeemed through justice, and those who return to her through tzedakah.** The words “ציון במשפט תפדה” possess the same numerical value as “תלמוד ירושלמי”; the conclusion of the passuk, “ושביה בצדקה” possesses the same numerical value as “תלמוד”. Thus, in the merit of the Talmud Yerushalmi and the Talmud Bavli, the redemption will come and we will return to Tziyon.

According to what we have discussed, we can propose an explanation. All the revelations in the six orders of Torah she'b'al peh—corresponding to the six branches of the menorah—draw from the middle lamp. That lamp represents the incredible revelation that HKB”H is destined to reveal to us le'asid la'vo: “תורה חדשה מאתי תצא”. Therefore, by engaging in the study of Torah she'b'al peh to draw evermore illumination from the middle lamp, we will succeed in hastening the future, complete geulah. At that time, HKB”H will complete the revelation to us of all the parts of the Torah we presently lack, as indicated by the promise: “תורה חדשה מאתי תצא”—swiftly in our times. Amen.

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