

Speak to Aharon...When you kindle the lamps, towards the face of the Menorah shall the seven lamps light. (8:2)

Rashi addresses the relationship between Aharon's lighting the *Menorah* and the previous *parsha*, which recounts the offerings of *nesiim*, princes, for the dedication of the *Mizbayach*. He says that Aharon was upset that neither he, nor any member of *shevet Levi*, was included in the dedication. Hashem comforted Aharon saying that his service, preparing and kindling the *Menorah*, was more significant than theirs. We wonder at Aharon's chagrin. Obviously, his reaction must have had some validity, as Hashem responded by comforting him. We must also endeavor to understand the meaning of the phrase, "*Yours is greater/more significant than theirs.*" This comment seems to belittle the *nesiim*.

Horav Dov Eliezerov, Shlita, offers a number of approaches towards understanding Aharon's reaction and Hashem's response. He contends that the significance of the *nesiim's korbanos* lay in the fact that all of the *nesiim* participated together to determine the most propitious way to dedicate the *Mizbayach*. Nesanel ben Tzuar, of the tribe of Yissachar, spoke up at the meeting and advised them concerning the appropriate manner of dedicating the *Mizbayach*. When Aharon took note of the fact that the *nesiim* were working in unison, and he had been excluded, he was distressed. Perhaps he was doing something wrong. Was he suitable to be *Kohen Gadol*? If yes, why had he been excluded from their meeting?

Hashem told Aharon, "Do not concern yourself, for your service is greater than theirs. Do not think that your exclusion was an expression of a negative opinion of you. On the contrary, specifically because the *nesiim* held you in such esteem they omitted you from the *Chanukas Hamizbayach*." In the eyes of the *nesiim*, Aharon's tasks were in a unique class. They included: being *Kohen Gadol*; offering *korbanos* on behalf of the entire Jewish people; preparing and kindling the *Menorah* whose light emanated outward towards *Am Yisrael*. Consequently, they did not invite Aharon to join with them. Aharon's emotions were justified. The *nesiim's* action, in turn, also had validity. Hence, Hashem intervened, offering comfort to Aharon.

In his second answer, *Horav Eliezerov* distinguishes the two disparate approaches towards serving Hashem which were represented by the *nesiim* and Aharon *Hakohen*. By his very nature, Aharon was *ohev shalom v'rodef shalom*; he loved and pursued peace. He reached out to all Jews, seeking to bring them closer to *Torah*. The *nesiim*, however, felt that a man is responsible to elevate himself, to demand of himself that he attain the level required to bring a *korban* to Hashem. Aharon brought himself down to the level of the people. In contrast, the *nesiim* ascended above them. When the *nesiim* decided to convene a meeting to discuss the correct protocol for dedicating the *Mizbayach*, Aharon thought they were telling him that his *derech*, approach, for *avodas Hashem* was not acceptable. Is it any wonder that he became distraught?

Hashem responded to Aharon that, indeed, the *nesiim's* form of *avodas Hashem* was correct for

the *dor hamidbar*, the generation that had sojourned in the desert and received the *Torah*. Would it be equally appropriate for the ensuing generations that would not attain such spiritual ascendance? Who would reach out to them and bring them closer to the *Torah*? Aharon's kindling of the *Menorah* symbolized bringing the light of *Torah* into all homes. Carrying the message of *Torah* to the dark recesses of all Jewish hearts and minds was an endeavor that was not limited to that particular time. It was everlasting. "*Shelcha gedolah m'shelahem*," "*Yours is truly greater than theirs*," because its need traverses the generations.