

Aharon did so... as Hashem had commanded Moshe. (8:3)

Rashi writes: *L'hagid shevacho shel Aharon – she'lo shinah*, “To tell the praise of Aharon, in that he did not deviate.” This statement begs elucidation. Would it enter anyone’s imagination to suggest that Aharon might have deviated from Hashem's command? A number of expositions explain *Rashi's* statement. The *Sifrei Chassidus* have a twist on the definition of the word *shinah*, deviate. When we take into consideration that Aharon would prepare and light the *Menorah* twice daily, it might be appropriate to say that he never tired of his function. The same passion and love that he manifested in the morning, he repeated in the afternoon. This went on day in and day out. The “umpteenth” time was no different than the first time that he lit the *Menorah*. Thus, *lo shinah* is derived from *shoneh*, review, repeat, redundant. Every time Aharon stepped forward to light the candles was a new opportunity – not a repeat performance.

In his *hesped*, eulogy, for *Horav Aharon Kotler, zl*, the *Satmar Rav, zl*, offered his explanation of *Rashi's* comment. It is true that, for ordinary people, to follow the command to the letter of the law is acceptable. It is with regard to someone who is at the apex of spirituality, one who had an acute understanding of the *mitzvah*, its esoteric secrets, whose devotion to seeing the institution of the *mesorah* achieve even greater spiritual influence, that *she'lo shinah* plays a more crucial role. He has every reason to enhance the *mitzvah*. *Aharon HaKohen* had every reason to innovate the service ever so slightly. He might have been able to reach one whose affiliation had been, at best, modest. Aharon, however, understood that, regardless of his own understanding of the situation, Hashem had a deeper, more penetrating perspective. Thus, one does not deviate from the Divine decree. The *Satmar Rav* explained that *Rav Aharon* could have instituted changes that would make Torah more acceptable to those on the fringe. He did not, because one follows the *mesorah*, tradition, as indicated by Hashem. His spiritual integrity guaranteed that the Torah taught in *yeshivos* has remained pristine and pure.

Furthermore, *mesorah*, the tradition, must be transmitted from one generation to the next via a *rebbe* to a *talmid*. One does not just pick it up on his own. The Torah was given to *Moshe Rabbeinu*, who, in turn, gave it to *Yehoshua*, who was the vehicle that passed it along to the next generation – and the next. The *Haflaah (Panim Yafos Parashas Vayechi 48:15)* writes: It is impossible for one on his own, without the help of a *rebbe*, to perceive (and have somewhat of an understanding) of the Creator. One who did not learn from a *rebbe* is missing a vital component of the process perceiving Hashem.

Horav Moshe Shapiro, zl, taught that one can take a *Shas* (set of *Talmud*) with him to a far-off island and sit and learn day and night without interruption, to the point that he becomes an outstanding Torah scholar. Nonetheless, his entire demeanor and way of life are not much different than that of a gentile! Why? He did not learn from a *rebbe*. *Horav Yeruchem Levovitz, zl*, would say: “We do nothing significant for which we did not receive guidance from our *Rebbeim*.”