



A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER

An Enlightening Thought

WE FIND A UNIQUE CRITERION IN REGARD TO the making of the Menorah:

This is how the Menorah must be made: hammered-out gold—from its base to its [ornamentation of] flower; it must be hammered out. (8:4)

"Hammered-out." ...It was fashioned from a *kikar* [about 26kg or 57lb] of gold. [The craftsman] beat it with a hammer and cut it with a chisel to extend its parts properly; it wasn't made piece by piece and fastened together. (Rashi's commentary, quoting Midrash and Talmud)

This was no small feat. In fact, Rashi, quoting Midrash Tanchuma, says that this was so difficult to do, even after Hashem had shown Moshe an image of the finished

product, that Hashem told him to throw the block of gold into a fire, from which the Menorah emerged complete.

The question is: What is the purpose of this commandment? Why was it necessary for the Menorah to be made entirely from one block of gold?

The *Chasam Sofer* explains that the Menorah symbolizes the influence of Torah, spreading to the entire world. It also represents the Torah itself. The Torah is telling us that everything stems from the Torah, from the big things to the small things, just as the entire Menorah emerged from one block of metal—it's all there.

It is well known that the *Chazon Ish*, who never went to medical school, was frequently consulted by leading doctors about difficult and complex surgeries, and he always guided them unfailingly. Similarly, we find many rabbis, now and throughout the generations, who have drawn upon their all-encompassing knowledge of the Torah to render *halachic* rulings which would seem in many respects to require "worldly knowledge."

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A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

TOWARD THE FACE OF THE MENORAH SHALL THE SEVEN LAMPS CAST LIGHT. (8:2)

There is a Biblical prohibition against reproducing any of the vessels that were used in the *Mishkan* (the Tabernacle). (*Tosafos*, Avoda Zarah 43b, based on Sh'mos 20:20) Based on this, the Talmud (Rosh Hashanah 24a) forbids manufacturing (or owning—see *Bi'ur haGra* Y.D. 141:21) a seven-branched candelabrum.

There are several views among *Rishonim* (the early authorities) as to the extent of this prohibition. Some (such as *Me'iri*) suggest that only an exact, perfect replica is forbidden, because any deviation from spec it makes unfit for ideal use in the *Mishkan*. Others hold that a less-than-ideal menorah, which would have been acceptable *b'di'avad* (in a pinch) in the *Mishkan*, would also be prohibited. (*Tosafos*, according to some) Yet other authorities are even more stringent. They hold that any seven-branched menorah made out of metal, regardless of shape or form, is prohibited. (*B'chor Shor*)

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THIS WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On 16 Sivan, 5701 (1941), Vichy France bombed Tel Aviv. The Axis countries of Italy, Germany, and Vichy France conducted almost thirty air raids against Israel during World War II. Most of these attacks were carried out on Haifa and Tel Aviv because of British naval bases and oil refineries in their environs. The first bombing occurred on July 15, 1940 when the Italians bombed Haifa, starting a period known afterwards as the "Haifa Blitz." The most damaging of all the bombings was when the Italians bombed Tel Aviv on September 9, 1940, dropping nearly four tons of bombs over residential areas and killing 137 people. In 2013, near Tel Aviv's Sde Dov airfield, the IDF unearthed an unexploded bomb, presumably left over from the bombings of WWII. These bombings had no significant impact on the war. 🕒

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A HALACHA FROM THE PARASHA

CONTINUED

Shulchan Aruch (as explained by *Shach*, Y.D. 141:8) goes with the middle opinion. Therefore, a menorah which is made of metals other than gold, or without the decorative cups, knobs, and flowers, or which is shorter than 18 handbreadths (54–72"), is still prohibited, since it would pass, if necessary, in the *Mishkan*. However, a menorah made of wood, or made to hold candles (instead of oil) could not be used in the *Mishkan*, so its private use would be permitted. Several *Acharonim* (later authorities) follow this view. (See *Darkei Teshuva* 141:56.)

There is, however, a minority opinion (brought in *Pischei T'shuva* Y.D. 141:14 and *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 168:5) which follows the stringent interpretation above, that any menorah, no matter its shape and form, would be forbidden, providing that it has seven branches.

Ig'ros Moshe (Y.D. 3:31) rules like *Shulchan Aruch*, that only a kosher Menorah may not be replicated. Others suggest that, since we are potentially dealing with a Biblical prohibition, one should be stringent. (*Halichos Shlomo*, Vol. 2, 15, note 3).

In practice, everyone should turn to a competent rabbi for guidance.

However, everybody agrees that:

- A menorah with six, eight, or nine branches poses no problem.
- A seven-branched menorah made of wood or porcelain is permitted.
- Someone who owns a seven-branched candelabrum can "fix" it, by either removing or adding a branch. 🕒

the Bostoner Rebbe visits the Kollel

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Enlightening... CONTINUED

Someone who plumbs the depths of the Torah will find everything there. This is what the Torah means when it says "to [the Menorah's ornamentation of] flower." Even a little flower, a seemingly trivial thing, can be found in the Torah. This idea complements the words of the Midrash (B'reishis 1:1) and Zohar (T'ruma 161:1), which say that Hashem "looked into the Torah and created the world." Everything has its source in the Torah.

Following on the heels of the *Yom Tov* of Shavu'os, let us renew our appreciation for the Torah, and let us remember that everything we do—even the mundane—should only be done according to the *derech hatorah*, with a Torah outlook. 🕒

A RIDDLE FOR YOU

Where in *davening* do we say a prayer that uses the *aleph-bais* backwards?

The answer will appear next week..

LAST WEEK'S RIDDLE:

Q What verse in Parashas Nasso contains four words in a row with the same *shoresh* (root)?

A B'midbar 4:47. Describing the Levites' service, the Torah says, "*la'avod avodas avodah va'avodas massa*, to serve the service of Service and the service of burden..." (In more normal English, that would be "To perform the labor of [the Tabernacle] Service and the labor of carrying.") 🕒



MAZAL TOV!

- To Rabbi Chaim Heinemann and Dr David Bienenfeld, who have completed their study of Mishnayos Seder N'zikin.