



Weekly Chizzuk by Rabbi Zev Reichman

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The Importance of Service Without Inspiration

This week's Parsha contains a famous question. The Parsha begins with the command to Aharon to light the candles of the menorah. On the verse, Vayas kein Aharon - And Aharon did so - Rashi comments, "lihagid shevacho shel Aharon shelo shinah" - "(this verse was needed) to tell us of Aharon's praise that he did not change." Rashi seems to be saying that the praise of Aharon was that he did as God told him, and he did not deviate from the Divine decree. This is a difficult verse. Why would Aharon deviate from the Divine decree? If God told you or me to do something would we dare do it in a different manner than the one commanded? Rav Moshe Wolfson offered the following answer to this question. Many times we serve God and fulfill a particular Mitzvah before we know of its full import. We may not feel a special lift from the Mitzvah yet we fulfill it because it is an obligation. Usually, when we perform these obligations we fulfill them without any great excitement, and we view them as needed activities that are performed half heartedly. If we later merit to learn the reason for the Mitzvah and the inspiration it might provide we might then fulfill the Mitzvah with great joy and excitement. The meaning of the statement of Rashi was that Aharon was different. For the first twelve days of Nissan he lit the Menorah as an obligation. On the thirteenth day of Nissan God told him that the Menorah lighting was to be his special task. Apparently, on the thirteenth of Nissan God revealed the secret meanings of the Mitzvah to Aharon. Rashi writes though that Aharon did not change. When Aharon did not know the meaning of the Mitzvah he performed it with great joy. His joy at fulfilling the Mitzvah from the very beginning was so great that it was impossible for him to have more joy as he understood the Mitzvah more. This was his greatness - consistency. Aharon realized that to fulfill a Mitzvah is the greatest joy and one should feel that joy even if one does not know all the spiritual meanings of the Mitzvah. Rabbi Zhisha of Anipoli would say that he preferred the mitzvos he performed when he was not feeling inspired to the ones he fulfilled when he felt close to the Almighty. A

mitzvah performed when one is inspired is easy and therefore will not earn much credit. Yet a Mitzvah performed when one is not inspired is truly meaningful to the Almighty. Aharon had internalized that lesson, even before he was inspired and enlightened he fulfilled Mitzvos with the highest level of excitement, and this is the meaning of the praise that he did not change. May we all merit to realize the importance of all Mitzvos and to fulfill all - those we understand and those we do not understand - with the highest levels of excitement and joy.

Gut Shabbes

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