

# THE SHORT AND THE LONG OF IT

by Rabbi Raymond Beyda

*Aharon and his sons shall arrange it [the Menorah] from evening until morning ,before Hashem.... And you, Bring near to yourself Aharon your brother, and his sons with him... [Shemot 27:21]*

Rav Moshe Feinstein a'h explains that Aharon was chosen to light the Menorah in the Tabernacle even before he was selected to serve as the Kohen. The reason is because the character of Aharon was most suitable for this task. Because of his sterling character, not lineage, he was given the honor to serve in his capacities in the Holy Temple.

The Menorah symbolized the "light" of knowledge and Aharon was pure in character, which meant that he was the one who could best fill the job of teacher to the masses.

>From the Menorah we also see that the efforts put into education of our children must be with all of our effort and ability regardless of the innate abilities of the student. First, the oil used for sacrifices had to be pure olive oil but the oil used for the Menorah had to be from the special first oil that is 100% free of any impurities. The teacher must teach in a clear manner so that the student will understand perfectly and not be lead to make any error.

It is important to note that in the short nights of summer and the long nights of winter exactly 1 log of oil was put in each cup of the Menorah and was expected to burn until morning. Rav Moshe says this teaches that one must put as much effort into teaching a student who is sharp and learns quickly as one puts into a student who might have difficulty in understanding and retaining the teacher's lessons. In the case of the hi iq student one must not take for granted that his ability will make him successful. In regard to the slower learner one must not give up because one feels perhaps all the time and energy spent will be futile at the end of the day.

The Torah therefore commands that the amount of oil put into the Menorah in a short summer night must be the same as the amount of oil used for a long winter evening. In both cases the purity must be 100%. May we all pray for the Heavenly assistance and the human patience to successfully educate our beloved little ones in the ways of our fathers.

## TABLE TALK --QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

The names of the Jewish holidays represent the significant lesson of the celebration. Pesah is called the holiday of our freedom and Shabuot is called the time of the giving of the Torah. Why is the holiday of Mordechai and Esther called Purim --Lottery?

Derash Moshe answers: The lesson of Purim is that one should not err and think that if one prayed to Hashem and felt blessed with a positive answer that there is no further need for prayer. Rather one must feel that he or she must pray before one has what one needs or desires and also must still pray with the same fervor even after one has been granted one's wish because one doesn't know his "lot". Haman felt after the date for annihilation of the Jews was fixed by his lottery and the King had granted him permission to carry out his wicked plans that his "lot" was good and secure. He did not realize that the "lot" was drawn for his downfall not his success. Therefore, one must keep on turning to the Master of All Fate and pray that the good that has been granted is really good at the end of the day. Since this is a key message of the day the name Purim--"lots" was chosen.

### **DID YOU KNOW THAT**

On the Shabbat preceding Purim we read from 2 Sifre Torah, in the first we read the regular Parashah for that week and in the second we read the portion "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way". The Shulhan Arukh says this reading is a positive commandment from the Torah [D'Orayta] Therefore it is recommended that the congregation use the most kosher and most beautiful Torah for this occasion. The reader has to be extra careful with the clear pronunciation and correct cantillation [ta-amim]. One should watch the children as to not stamp feet during this reading as it might make noise and prevent an adult from hearing every letter that is read. It is proper for women to come to the synagogue to hear this special reading. [Source Torat Hamoadim, Siman 2].

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