



THE RABBI BINYAMIN KAMENETZKY  
TORAH LEGACY FOUNDATION  
לזכרון של הרב בנימין קמנצקי זצ"ל

אמרי בנימן

דברי תורה, מחשבה וסיפורים מאת צדו של  
הגאון רב בנימן קמנצקי זצ"ל

*A Dvar Torah from the writings of Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l,  
transcribed by his grandson, Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky*

## **5779 - Parshas Bha'aloscha - Opportunity Zone**

Parshas Bha'aloscha begins with a commandment from Hashem to Ahron to prepare and light the menorah daily. Rashi tells us the backstory. In the previous parsha, parshas Nasso, the nesi'im, the twelve heads of the tribes, sacrificed all of their karbanos for the inauguration of the mishkan, one nasi each day. Aharon saw the grand jubilation, celebrated with fanfare and public rejoicing, yet he was left out. He felt bad. Hashem told him, "I swear by your life, that your lot is greater than theirs, for you will prepare and light the menorah every day."

The question is. Why did Aharon feel bad? The nesi'im had their commandment to fulfill, and Aharon had his. Each Jew has a different purpose, which comes along with varied responsibilities, goals, challenges and achievements. Why did Aharon feel inferior to the nesi'im?

***Rabbi Avraham Birnbaum tells this story, printed in "Inspiring Lives and their Lessons" (Artscroll, 2011)***

***Rabbi Menachem Savitz, a close talmid of Rav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz zt"l Rosh Yeshivas Ponovezh L'Tzeirim, once asked his rebbe if he merited seeing the saintly Chofetz Chaim, the great tzaddik and leader of the Jewish nation in the past century. Rav Lefkowitz answered him with a sigh, "I could have seen him, but I didn't."***

***He then went on to explain. "When I was learning in Vilna, someone came into the beis medrash with the news that the Chofetz Chaim was just a few blocks away. All of the talmidim ran out to get a glimpse of the great tzaddik. I was in middle of learning a difficult tosfos, so I stayed behind a few minutes. When I looked up, I realized that I was the only one left in the beis medrash! I thought to myself, 'How can I be the one to close up the beis medrash and leave it empty in middle of the day?' So I stayed behind, and continued learning. Because I stayed behind in the beis medrash, I did not merit to see the Chofetz Chaim."***

***Rabbi Savitz tried to comfort the gadol hador, and told him, "The others only saw the great tzaddik, but you have followed his instructions!" When Rav Lefkowitz heard that, he rose from his chair, kissed his talmid, and exclaimed, "Nichamtani -You have comforted me!"***

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l explains. Our sages teach us that although each and every Nasi brought the same exact karbanos, they each had their own intention. They did not bring their karbanos as a fulfillment of G-d's specific command, but it was on their own initiative, rooted in prophesy, and stemming from an overflowing passion and desire to inaugurate the Holy Mishkan with sacrifices. In turn, Hashem honored their dedication.

For this, Ahron felt bad. He was sad that he too did not feel this passion of the nesi'im. His heart did not tell him to serve Hashem with these sacrifices. If only he would have also thought of this opportunity to serve Hashem with these karbanos, he could have also been part of the great celebration as well.

Hashem then consoled him that he need not worry. His service was not with the karbanos, but with the consistent kindling and preparing the menorah every single day.

There are many opportunities which others take initiative, and grab them. Instead of feeling bad that we missed them, one should make every effort to initiate and follow through on every opportunity to serve Hashem.

**Good Shabbos!**

*Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky is the Director of Advancement at Yeshiva of South Shore - ישיבה תורת חיים - בית בנימן. He is currently compiling the vast storehouse of all the Torah thoughts from his grandfather. If you have any stories to share from his grandfather, you can email him at [skamenetzky@yooss.org](mailto:skamenetzky@yooss.org).*