

***This week's Parsha begins with the commandment "Behaaloshca es haneirot, when you light the candles of the menorah." The Torah then proceeds to give Aaron the specific details and exact particulars of this obligation, However, the third verse of a Parsha continues with a discussion of the fabrication of the Menorah, as the verse says, "And this was the work of the candlestick, beaten work of gold; unto the base thereof, and unto the flowers thereof, it was beaten work; according unto the pattern which G-D had shown Moses, so he made the candlestick."***

***The Gerrer Rebbe is puzzled the sequence of these verses. In a discussion of the lighting of the Menorah why should the Torah feel the need to discuss its construction, it seems completely out of place and irrelevant. In addition, this is not new information, the Menorah's complex construction is discussed at great length earlier in the Torah, why review it again?***

***The Gerrer Rebbe suggests that a better understanding of its construction might actually provide a beautiful message. The Midrash tells us that Moshe had some profound challenges understanding how exactly G-D expected the Menorah to be erected. He could not envision how he was to fashion this complex and intricate metal ornament out of just one sheet of gold. The Midrash tells us that after Moshe's initial fruitless mental exertion, G-D finally told him to just throw the gold in the fire and the completed Menorah would emerge from the flames.***

***Why did G-D let Moshe struggle for such a long time, if at the end all Moshe had to do was throw the Menorah into the fire? The lesson that G-D wanted to share with Moshe was that great achievements in life do not occur without great effort. The Gemara tells us that if a person tells you that he did not work, but he accomplished anyway, you cannot believe him. He is certainly lying to you, or worse – to himself. True and meaningful accomplishment can never be attained without maximum effort. Moshe had to first struggle with the Menorah's construction and only then would the miraculous construction be possible.***

***The Menorah's light is symbolic of our Torah study, our service to G-D, and our continued drive for religious and spiritual growth. These lofty goals could never be attained without hard work, tireless effort, and even temporary failure. This is why the Torah reiterates the Menorah's construction in the midst of discussing its light. It serves to remind us that although we may have immense struggles and challenges in our religious growth, it is both necessary and essential, as our own religious light cannot truly illuminate the world without first overcoming all of the many obstacles in our path.***

**Shabbat Shalom**

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