

THE VAAD HAKOHOL

OHR ~ LIGHT

By: Moshe Rubashkin

A gut Yom Tov and a Freilichen Chanukah. Standing in the middle of Crown Heights on Chanukah, the theme is Ohr, Light. I look at the Mossad—the Vaad, the CHJCC, the Beis Din, as the light for the whole community. We know that the Rebbe



Moshe Rubashkin

emphasized that every thing that happens in Crown Heights affects the whole world and is reflected in what happens in the world. This Mossad is among many Mosdos in the community: Yeshivas, Chedarim, Seminaries, etc., but this Mossad has the responsibility to bring out the positive, loving, and simchadik atmosphere that is inherent in this great community. Dr. Lang, Rabbi Shmuel Plotkin, and myself with dedication, 24/7, are trying to bring out the light of this Mossad and give over this feeling to the community through positive activities. Baruch Hashem, we have gotten tremendous support and tremendous chizuk from a wide spectrum of Rabbonim, Mashpiim, and residents of the community as well as ANASH worldwide. People see and feel that great things are happening in our community. For example, this newspaper—I am getting phenomenal feedback and chizuk. If I had to sum up in one word what people are telling me about the paper it is: positive. Your writing and articles are positive. You are giving over positive energy. I hope it continues this way.

We would like to hear from the residents of the community where they would like us to direct additional efforts. We started to work on reducing alternative side of the street parking regulations to once a week. According to one estimate, this would save residents close to a million dollars a year in reduced parking tickets.

Crown Community Newspaper
heights

290 Kingston Avenue,
Brooklyn, NY 11225
718 771 9000

Published & edited weekly by the Vaad Hakohol of Crown Heights.

Moshe Rubashkin, Chairman
Dr. Tzvi (Harvey) Lang, Vice Chairman
Rabbi Plotkin, Secretary

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The mayor's office records that Crown Heights is dirtier than other neighborhoods, like Boro Park and Flatbush, and therefore, needs cleaning daily. I happen to disagree and feel that our streets are quite clean. We are really going to put forth a lot of effort into this to make it happen. If anybody has any suggestions regarding this issue or any others, please email me at mosher@chjcc.org.

The first Motzei Shabbos after I was elected, I went to Reb Heishka Dubrawsky to consult with him about something very disturbing that had come up. He welcomed me politely and explained to me that he couldn't get involved due to health reasons. I asked him to at least give me his advice about the situation. I discussed this sensitive issue with him, and he responded to me as with a story about Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin A'H, his uncle:

"Rabbi Zalman Shimon Dvorkin, A'H, didn't feel well, and we moved him into our house to provide care for him. After he passed away, I went over to Rabbi Marlow before Pesach and asked him to come into Rabbi Zalman Shimon's

house to sell Chometz. Rabbi Marlow responded by telling me that he would not do it alone, but if Rabbi Osdoba would come with him, he would consider it. I then went to Rabbi Osdoba and asked him if he would join Rabbi Marlow and come into the Rav's home to sell the Chometz. Rabbi Osdoba responded by telling me that he would sell the Chometz together with Rabbi Marlow. They ultimately did sell the Chometz in Rabbi Zalman Shimon's house. Upon hearing what I had done, an elter Chassid pulled me aside and screamed at me in private, 'How could you do this?'"

I don't want to explain all the details why the elter Chassid was screaming at Reb Heishka about Rabbi Zalman Shimon and the Rabbonim that went to Rabbi Zalman Shimon's home to sell the Chometz. Reb Heishka looked at me, gave me a warm smile, and concluded with these words:

"I did not answer the elter Chassid. Moshe, the same way I didn't answer the elter Chassid, don't look to the right; don't look to the left. Go straight ahead and do the right thing for the community,

and you will be successful."

It was very encouraging to hear such words, ones that came from the heart. I look at him as a true Chassid who was mehanech the younger generation how to conduct yourself when you're in a leadership position.

I conclude with a small Chanukah miracle. Today, a Yungerman in the community, came into the office out of the blue and honored me with the writing of the first letter of an Achdus Sefer Torah being written to unite the community, Shluchim worldwide, and ANASH worldwide. This Torah is unique in that the entire Torah will be written by individuals, something usually only done with an amud or two. They are outlining all the letters, except for Sheimos, and individuals will fill them in. This is a wonderful example of the beauty of our people and the great things that are going on to bring more light into our community and into the world. A Freilichen and Lichtigen Chanukah to all!

NIGHTLIFE

By Sarah Karmely



I had the privilege to speak two times for the program called NIGHTLIFE in Crown Heights. The basement of the renowned couple, Rabbi Moshe and Faygie Rubashkin, was transformed

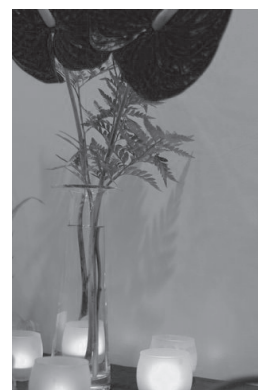
from a regular large room into a beautiful, cozy lounge, both inviting and majestic in the way it was set up. The furniture is arranged in a way that is conducive to conversation and yet offers peace and privacy. The energy is definitely exciting yet at the same time, extremely peaceful and serene.

Food that is popular for our young girls is set up so attractively – sushi, salads, and everything in between, delighting the participants of this program. Crown Heights feeds the world in more ways than one!

Both times that I went to speak, I felt immediately that the girls truly enjoyed being in the company of their fellow Lubavitcher colleagues. Some were the daughters of shluchim and from out of town, and some were Crown Heights residents. But all were, and indeed, are, in need of somewhere to go when they feel the need to connect to one another and to themselves.

Many of the girls from out of town told me that before Nightlife in the evenings, they felt that they would be too depressed

to go back to their homes, which were usually dark, cramped basements. Some of the places they would be staying were so cold and drafty, they would dread going "home". So they would wander around, sometimes aimlessly, until they could not stay awake and then reluctantly go to sleep. But when NIGHTLIFE was established in such an inviting environment, they went and checked it out. They felt very heimish in the ambiance and finally were able to truly feel both safe and yet stimulated. The



stimulation came from the dynamic speakers brought to the program, too many to mention, but basically gifted people such as Mrs Bronya Shaffer, Molly Resnik, Esther Piekarski, Rishe Deutsch, Rabbi

Shea Hecht, etc. In addition to these orators, fascinating workshops were offered – cake decorations, floral and fruit arrangements, make up demonstrations, music, arts and much more.

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE WE CAN GET FROM THIS? HELP IS OUT THERE! We need to reach out to our own youth, to our own daughters who are painfully in need of companionship. Loneliness is hard at the best of times, more so for our young ladies whose families are living in another town and sometimes in another Continent. Everyone is so busy, and unfortunately do not always have time for their children, as the work is intense and struggle for parnossos

is unfortunately commonplace - people tend to forget that more than financial help, our daughters need just plain, old fashioned, company to talk to. Large families are blessings, however, we do not always have time, so therefore we have to MAKE TIME for our youth. To whom can they go? Much better to keep them in our safe environments than for them to go to outside help.

Everyone is made to feel welcome at these programs, and there is something for everyone, for all interests.

I personally know of a girl who would regularly go to Manhattan in the evenings because she felt bored in Brooklyn, but BH as soon as NIGHTLIFE started she told me that the Rubashkin Lounge is so much more beautiful than all the places she would frequent "out there". Besides, she felt so much safer.



What caused these young ladies to feel at home in this place? Even more

than the elegant settings, even more than the delicious food, even more than the actual programs or speakers, the attraction was simply - A NON JUDGMENTAL ATMOSPHERE. The girls felt completely at home and were able to share their deepest questions. They were never made to feel that they were an "outsider" no matter what they looked like or which questions they had. They were able to feel accepted by their peers and by the guest speakers.

Continued on page 7

PERSPECTIVES

By Sarah Balkany

Chanukah is about the celebration of the Neshama; its triumph of light over darkness. Chanukah is about struggle and survival, salvation and miracles. Chanukah is about "Gaon Yaakov – asher ata ahev" – Jewish pride at its best and Jewish Mesorah – undiluted 100%. Chanukah is about salvation and miracles. Chanukah is about wonder and awe and love. No wonder everyone loves Chanukah.

We love its mystery. We love its message. We are attracted to its magnetic pull and amazed at the possibilities within the impossibilities. Pushing the frontiers within as well as without, engages a person totally. We go beyond the powers of reason and understanding. We go beyond the summoned attention and will of each one of our seven Middos. We

go beyond even the boundless powers of our will and delight, and the powers of the "Chaya" to our Neshamah core – The "Kohen Godol" within each one of us. With its pure cruse of oil, Neshamah signature intact, can breakthrough all obstacles and hindrance, remove all concealments, and transform the darkness we all struggle with into a cloak of wonderment meant for us to possess.

Chanukah is also about dreams. *Parshas Miketz* is read on Chanukah. The dreams we have when we are asleep, and the dreams we have when we are awake.

I'll never forget the Rebbe's remark to a Russian cousin at yehidus decades ago. The young man had grown up isolated from all Jewish life. When he came to visit his maternal uncle, our Zeida Getzel, he was in a state of shock to see how yidden were thriving. "I feel like I

just awoke from a dream." he told the Rebbe. The Rebbe suggested softly: "A wise person doesn't go back to sleep when he awakens."

My friend Leah Russel said it so eloquently describing her journey: "I can't pretend that I didn't see what I saw or didn't hear what I heard."

Dreams are often associated with the might. The darkness we cannot fully explore, the complexities we don't have a handle on. The obscurity as well as the absurdity is often side by side. Dreams are potent— what we do when we are conscious becomes part of our unconscious. Dreams are prophetic like the prophecy of the neviim: the good will come to be, but the negative aspects are there to spur us on to higher levels of *Teshuva*.

Yoseph Hatzadick, the master of dreams (*Baal Hachalomot*) as his brothers called him, understood the power of dreams. We, his children, *Benei Yosef*, can also

master our dreams. Like *Yaakov Avinu* we must guard them. We actualize and hasten their revelation, whether our dreams are of lack or plenty, of famine or abundance, of surrender or power. We must remember the difference lies in activity not in passivity.

When we spread the message of the Chanukah light with integrity of purpose and with the courage that accompanies selflessness, we stand tall like the *Shamash* - knowing as we kindle the lights of others we are realizing our mission of being *Neiros L'hair*.

A Freilichen Chanukah



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REFRESHMENTS ~ SPIT THE POT ~ PRIZES ~ RAFFLE ~

MUSINGS

By Penina Metal

L'Ulei Nishmas Imi Morasi, Moras Raizel Mirel Bas Elchanan Mordechai, OBM

OUR WAY!

The car service was late, and I was not pleased. I was prepped and anxious to get the medical test over with, and the anxiety mounted with each passing moment.

Gregory, the driver for "My Way" Car service, finally showed up. I was tempted to tell him that he'd better do things my way (be on time!), or he could take the highway without me. I felt better after informing the medical office, via my cell phone, that I was picked up and would be there without further delay.

Now, Gregory was a garrulous fellow, and I, not normally the shy and retiring sort, was in no mood to speak. Yet, as a shlucha of the Rebbe, does one ever have the reshut to vacate one's achrayus to mekareiv a fellow Yid?

He proceeded to tell me that he was not "a good Jew," but Chanukah was coming, and he wanted to know why the yom tov was not coming in at the same time

as the other holiday. The first thought that I came up with was that perhaps Hashem wanted the Yidden to have their own, separate holiday, without undue non-Jewish influence. I was fasting, very tired, etc., but Gregory was not initially impressed with what I had to say.

Then, he gave me the catalyst I needed to segue into an extemporaneous D'var Torah. He mentioned the necessity of buying his 21-month old, grandson, a piano prodigy, no less, a nice present.

Ah, I thought, here is a good response for good old Gregory:

I related to him the miracle of Chanukah. How the Yidden were getting way too comfortable with the Hellenistic life-style. That slowly, but surely, Greek philosophy insinuated itself into what had been a pure, Torah lifestyle; that a cadre of brave Yidden, the Maccabim, retook the holy Beis Hamikdosh and found only one cruse of oil that burned miraculously for eight days.

Then I related to him, something that



my youngest daughter recalled.

When her older brothers were out on mivtzayim, she and my youngest son would "go shopping" to Shloime's grocery store each night to buy treats. They were so excited. They would enjoy a Jewish musical video as well as "cozy time" with us.

In addition, she recalled the joy with which my dear mother, obm, would make home-made chocolate candies and her yummy sugar cookies in the shapes of dreidels and chanukiot. Little gifts lovingly wrapped in Chanukah wrapping paper, completed the wonderful Chanukah tableau, representing "Gramma" Raizel's style of holiday celebration.

I continued that today I am the Bubby, and many of my children and grandchildren live all over the globe. Even so, taking a page out of Mommie's book, I put together little Yiddish-themed packages which I get to them somehow, because I want them to feel my love.

Quoting my daughter, I told Gregory that it is the love that counts, not elaborate

gifts. If we focus on the gifts, I continued, than the Greeks have won--but we know better, don't we?

Work on making wonderful memories, I implored him.

Gregory was attentive and silent throughout my recitation. I would venture to say that I not only gave him food for thought but cheered myself up in the process.

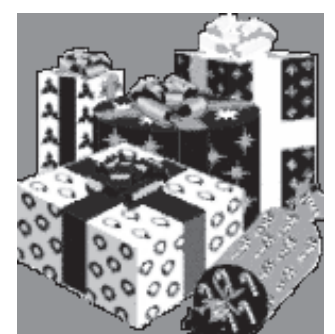
Baruch Hashem, with a bounce in my step, I completed the medical tests with flying colors!

Another Chanuka Miracle!

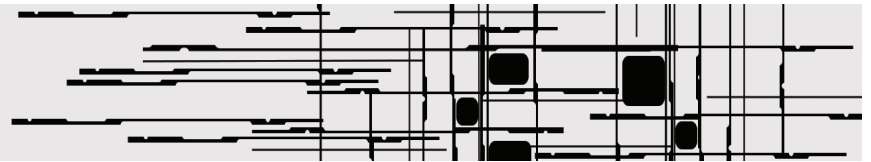
A Freilichen Chanuka to you all!

©Penina Metal 25 Kislev 5768

Comments more than welcome: Email: penny6539@gmail.com



CHJCC



HEAP

The HEAP Program Outreach Workers

will once again start to process Heap applications at our office this year.

The scheduled appointments will start on

TUESDAY, December 18, 2007

at the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, 387 Kingston Avenue (corner Crown St.), 9:15 AM--3:30 PM.

Please come early -- First come, first served

GREAT NEWS. The outreach workers will accept BOTH regular and emergency applications. (To apply for emergency heap you must have a shut-off notice.)

Those families on Food Stamps with a child under 8 need not apply unless you pay your own heating bill. You will receive it automatically. All other families must apply. Persons 60 and over can apply with DFTA 212-442-1000. Households on Section 8 are only eligible if they pay their own heating bill.

Please bring in the following documentation:

- 1) Proof of income, Soc. Sec., or support letter for the past two months
- 2) Rent, mortgage or tax papers
- 3) Birth certificates and social security cards for family members
- 4) Fuel or utility bills
- 5) Proof of Citizenship (Citizenship paper).
- 6) Letter for child 18 and over that he/she is in School.

There is another heating assistance program called the Neighborhood Fuel Fund (also known as) HeartShare that is also available for anyone who has a gas heating bill. This is separate from the HEAP program, and you may apply for both programs. Our office will be accepting HeartShare applications on Tuesdays all day and Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. For more info about HeartShare call 718-778-8808 X 21. The documents needed are the same as the Heap plus the Heap application receipt (if you applied for it).

Thank you

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You just had a new baby and need some extra help in the house. Or you have a large family and due to some unforeseen situation, such as an illness l'a, you need some extra help. The CHJCC has a Mother's Helper program which can help you in your time of need. For more information call Rivka Shur at 718-778-8808 X 24.

VOCATIONAL INFORMATION

The One Stop Employment Center at the CHJCC.

ATTENTION EMPLOYERS!

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TO ALL JOB SEEKERS:

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- ☛ We will help you create or upgrade your resume.
- ☛ Career counseling is also provided.

Women-- do you need help starting the business of your dreams? We can refer you to organizations for startup funding and mentoring.

Come in and discuss your interests and concerns with the employment counselor, Bella Vilenkin at (718)778-8808 ext. 23.

CALL THE CHJCC

718~778~8808

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ENTITLEMENT SERVICES

Rivka Shur.....ext. 24

Eliezer Yarmush.....ext. 30

VOCATIONAL COUNSELING & SERVICES

Rivka Shur.....ext 24

Bela Vilenkin.....ext. 23

FOOD STAMPS

Eliezer Yarmush.....ext. 30

FAMILY SERVICES

Phyllis Mintz.....ext. 28

APARTMENT LISTINGS

Penina Metal.....ext. 21

CRIME VICTIMS

Batia Brandel.....ext. 22

batia@chjcc.org

(c) 917~618~0279

Galina Pindrick.....ext. 31

718~771~9000

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Fruma Junik ext. 10

718~774~3999

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THE PATH TO INNER PEACE AND HAPPINESS

By Miriam Yerushalmi

Part One

All of us want to be happy. The questions we confront are twofold: What is true happiness? And, once we know what true happiness is, how do we achieve it?

Most of us would probably define happiness as tied to our external reality – our physical world. Thus, we seek to find happiness in our relationships, our jobs, our health, and our wealth. Don't misunderstand, these are all important elements of our lives, but the truth is that real lasting happiness supercedes even these most important aspects of our lives. While Chassidus values these elements of physical happiness, the happiness Chassidus focuses on is connected to the inner peace within each and every one of us that enables us to cope with life events.

Once we have learned how to achieve this inner peace, we will find that our happiness is no longer dependent upon our physical reality but rather transcends that reality and in the end actually changes it and brings about a more peaceful and benevolent reality. This happiness is then manifest in the way we behave, in our connection to others and to G-d Himself.

“The three letters of the Hebrew word Samach shares the same three letters of the Hebrew word for Moshiach. We know that Simcha breaks through (poreitz) all barriers. This also is nature of Moshiach”

In this lecture we will work on achieving this kind of inner peace so that our happiness can blossom. We desire this inner peace and happiness, so that we can lead the most beautiful and productive lives while being totally one with Hashem. At the end of our journey, however, we will transcend even our quest for happiness from the perspective of “self” and we will touch upon a level of happiness that extends beyond reason and self-interest. Thus, before we approach the how, let us examine what the Lubavitcher Rebbe has to say on Simcha.

In the book, *The Chassidic Approach to Joy*, Rabbi Majeski discusses a Sicha (or talk) on Parasha [weekly Torah reading] Ki Seitse of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. In 1988, on Shabbos Ki Seitse in the year Tav Shin Mem Ches (5748), which spells out to the word Samach, the Lubavitcher Rebbe delivered this Sicha explaining the importance of having more Simcha

in our lives to bring Moshiach and the future Redemption. The concept of Simcha shares a connection to the future Redemption for it is in the era of Redemption that we will experience the ultimate level of Simcha. At that time “G-d will wipe away tears from every face.”



The three letters of the Hebrew word Samach shares the same three letters of the Hebrew word for Moshiach. We know that Simcha breaks through (poreitz) all barriers. This also is nature of Moshiach who is a descendant of Poretz and is referred to as HaPoretz. For Moshiach will break through all barriers and limitations. The Rebbe was telling us that we should therefore increase our Simcha with the intent of actually bringing Moshiach and the true ultimate Redemption. In fact he was saying that all our efforts in our divine service must be permeated with Simcha.

The Previous Rebbe, the Rebbe Rayatz stated more than 40 years ago, “LeAlter LeTeshuva LeAlter LeGeula,” which means, “Immediately to Teshuva, (repentance) Immediately to Redemption.” He stated many times that all the service to bring Moshiach has been completed and all that is necessary is to polish the buttons. For several generations prior to the Previous Rebbe, special efforts were made to bring about Moshiach's arrival including the revelation of the teachings of Chassidus. Many decades have passed since the time of the Previous Rebbe and so many have done Teshuva and so much has been done to spread Chassidus. So the Rebbe asks rhetorically: “Then what is left for us to do now to bring Moshiach? Tehillim we have said in abundance, farbrengens have been held on numerous occasions.” The Rebbe answers that the Divine service necessary for the sake of bringing Moshiach is the expression of joy. The Rebbe explains that this essential joy can be aroused by the Simcha experienced in connection to a Mitzvah. In fact, it is explained that the Simcha reaches higher than the Mitzvah itself. He further explains that before the emphasis was on Simcha for the purpose of the Divine service itself. Now, the emphasis is in using Simcha as a catalyst to bring Moshiach. The question was asked why this was not emphasized before. The resolution of this question requires a deeper appreciation of our times.

While the Jewish people and the Shechina are found in the darkness of exile, the pain of exile prevents a pure and consummate expression of Simcha. But since we are at that time of “Eikvos d'Moshiach” (footsteps of Moshiach), we are now in a position to more fully and completely meditate on the imminence of Moshiach's coming and this knowledge that at that time, perfect Simcha will spread throughout the world, allows our generation to experience a foretaste of this Simcha even while still in exile.

The Rebbe concludes that now more than ever announcements must be made about the importance of increasing Simcha with the intent of bringing Moshiach and this Simcha will surely lead to the ultimate Simcha, when our mouths will be filled with joy. Therefore our goal is to have Simcha penetrate us when involved in every Mitzvah as well as making a goal to being in a state of overall joy. The question remains: how do we achieve this level of happiness? How do we experience the kind of Simcha that remains with us day in and day out? How do we imbue our Avodah with Simcha; especially when we are confronted by so many obstacles day after day?

Our first step in our quest for Simcha is to recognize and indeed to internalize the lesson that the obstacles in our lives that prevent or inhibit Simcha are more often than not, self-created. The second step is to learn how to avoid these obstacles so that we can focus on obtaining and maintaining our Simcha. The next step is to learn how to deal with these obstacles and overcome them if in fact they arise despite our efforts to avoid them. The final step in our learning process is to acquire the habits and routines that will guarantee us an overflow of true Simcha in our daily lives.



Today, now more than ever, as we are approaching the coming of Moshiach, we need to make a solid commitment to ourselves to let no obstacles get in our way in the effort to live and experience G-dliness through Simcha. In many respects, our true Avodah is not simply to achieve Simcha, for most of us experience Simcha in our lives from time to time, but to maintain it in our daily lives. We learn that it is a big Mitzvah to achieve this goal, as we say: “Mitzvah Gedola L'hiyos b'Simcha Tamid.”

We can find valid and tested instructions from our Rebbeim in our effort to live with Simcha. Many of these instructions come by way of Chassidic stories – stories that have been passed down from generation to generation and even committed to writing in an effort to preserve every detail. Such stories are not merely anecdotes to make a point; they are in fact the continuation of Torah m'Sinai, illustrating a living truth that expresses itself in our daily lives. Thus,

“Our first step in our quest for Simcha is to recognize and indeed to internalize the lesson that the obstacles in our lives that prevent or inhibit Simcha are more often than not, self-created.”

we can learn from a six-year old how one's obstacles are in many respects self-created, or put another way, how one man's obstacle is another man's challenge, in an interesting story told by Rebbitzin Chana, the Rebbe's mother. When the Rebbe was just a young boy of about six years old, he was playing with a group of children and they were all trying to climb to the top of a tall tree. All the children were older and stronger than the Rebbe, but he was the only one who succeeded in reaching the top. His mother, who was watching nearby, asked how he had managed to succeed while the others had failed. He answered that as he climbed he always looked up, while the other boys constantly looked down and allowed their fear of the great height to cause them to fall or back down.

We too can reach the top. If we focus on looking up, looking toward our goal, to Hashem, the One ultimately in charge, then nothing can get in our way – neither in our Avodah simply or in our effort to serve Hashem b'Simcha Tamid.

To Be Continued.

CHANUKAH

IN THE LIGHT OF CHASSIDUS

By Rabbi Michoel Seligson

The Yom Tov of Chanukah is a joyous Yom Tov for people of all ages. It is a time when families gather, celebrate, and spend time together. We prepare special foods on Chanuka especially oily foods which symbolize the miracle of the pint of oil that burnt for eight days. We eat dairy foods to commemorate the miracle in which Yehudit killed the Greek general after giving him salty dairy foods and subsequently, intoxicating wine to wash it down. We also distribute Chanukah "Gelt" to children and adults. It's a very happy Yom Tov, full of light.

These aspects of Chanuka are present in revealed part of Torah and established as Jewish customs. Chassidus brings out some deeper insights into the Yom Tov of Chanukah.

The name of Chanukah means dedication: a renewed dedication of the Bais Hamikdosh and the Mizbeach (Alter) took place after the Maccabees defeated the Greeks.

The Rebbe in his preface to "The Story of Chanuka" teaches us about the power of light over darkness:

"The Chanukah Lights which are kindled in the darkness of night recall to our minds memories of the past: the war that the Hasmoneans waged against huge Syrian armies, their victory, the dedication of the Temple, the rekindling of the Menorah, the small quantity of oil that lasted for many days, and so on.

Let's picture ourselves members of the little band of Hasmoneans in those days. We are under the domination of a powerful Syrian king. Many of our brethren have left us and accepted the idolatry and way of life of the enemy. But our leaders, the Hasmoneans, do not weigh our chances of victory before taking action, comparing numbers and weapons. The Holy Temple has been invaded by a cruel enemy. The Torah and our faith are in grave danger. The enemy has trampled upon everything holy to us and is trying to force us to accept its way of life which is one of idol worship, injustice, and similar approaches altogether foreign to us. There is only one thing for us to do--adhere even more closely to our religion and its precepts and fight against the enemy even if we have to die in this fight. And wonder of wonders! The huge Syrian armies are beaten, the vast Syrian Empire is defeated, our victory is complete.

This chapter of our history has repeated itself frequently. We, as Jews, have always been outnumbered. Many tyrants have attempted to destroy us because of our faith. Sometimes they aimed their poi-

soned arrows at our bodies; sometimes at our souls, and sad to say, many of our brethren have for one reason or another turned away from G-d and His Torah and tried to make life easier by accepting the rule of the conqueror.

In such times of distress, we must always be like that faithful band of Hasmoneans, and remember that there is always a drop of 'pure olive oil' hidden deep in the heart of every Jew which, if kindled, bursts into a big flame. This drop of 'pure olive oil' is the 'Perpetual Light' that must and will

"Adding a new Chanukah candle every night teaches us that every day we must increase our endeavors to spread light throughout the world. Though we lit up our environment on the previous night, even at the level of mehadrin min hamehadrin, we cannot rest content."

pierce the darkness of our present night, until every one of us will behold the fulfillment of the prophet's promise of our ultimate redemption and triumph. And as in the days of the Hasmoneans, 'the wicked will once again be conquered by the righteous, and the arrogant by those who follow G-d's laws, and our people Israel will have a great salvation.'

The war with the Greeks was not solely an all-out physical war. Rather it was primarily challenge against the connection of the Jewish nation with HaShem.

"The campaign of the Greeks was aimed to 'make them forget Your Torah and violate the decrees of Your will' (Sidur p. 59), as the Midrash (Bereishit Raba 16) puts it, (the Greeks demanded) 'Write...that you have no share in the G-d of Israel.' It was a war against G-d. 'Let them study Torah,' the Greeks implied. 'Let them practice the rational mitzvot (Mishpatim) and the commemorative observances (Eidus), but they must not mention that the Torah is G-d's Torah and that mitzvot are the decrees of His will. Torah and mitzvot must be severed from G-dliness.'" (Hayom Yom- Teves 2)

The Rebbe taught on many occasions that we can derive several lessons from the Chanuka Licht for the whole year (adapted from "Timeless Patterns" by Sichos In English):

To Make the Darkness Glow

The unique power of the Chanukah lights is linked to the nature of the miracle they commemorate. The miracle of Chanukah took place in a time of darkness, when the Greeks, who had conquered the Land of Israel, sought to impose their culture upon its inhabitants. Despite the assimilatory influence of Jewish Hellenists, the Maccabees were able to instill in the Jewish people a spirit of mesirus nefesh (self-sacrifice) and teshuvah (return to G-d). This inspired them to fight the Greeks, defeat them, and rededicate the Bais Hamikdosh. Since the Jewish victory involved the transformation of darkness into light, the Chanukah lights which commemorate it also have this power.

And they teach us that when confronted with darkness, we must not resign ourselves to it. Nor may we remain content with lighting up our own homes. Instead, we must reach out and spread light as far as we possibly can, until the public domain too is illuminated.

To Continually Increase Light

Adding a new Chanukah candle every night teaches us that every day we must increase our endeavors to spread light throughout the world. Though we lit up our environment on the previous night, even at the level of mehadrin min hamehadrin, we cannot rest content. As our Sages explain, lighting the Chanukah candles exemplifies the principle, "Always advance higher in holy matters."

Beginning with the second night of Chanukah (the first time we add a candle), we express this principle for an entire week, increasing the number of candles every night. A week is a complete time cycle which contains in potential form all the possible situations a person might encounter. Adding a new light on every night of Chanukah demonstrates, and reinforces, a commitment to progress continuously come what may.

The lessons we learn from the Chanukah lights should be applied in every aspect of our lives. Every day should



lead us to further growth and create new opportunities for spreading G-dly light in our homes and in the world. Thus understood, the kindling of the Chanukah lights will serve as a catalyst to bring about the ultimate light that will illuminate the world in the Era of the Redemption.

The Pint of Oil

As mentioned earlier, Chassidus explains that the challenge from the Greeks to the Torah was from the spiritual perspective. Torah as a philosophy was considered by them to be deep, unique and high-minded, but they challenged the connection of Torah with spirituality and G-dliness. Therefore, they profaned the oil. The oil represents wisdom as our sages tell us. The Menorah is the symbol of light and wisdom. The spiritual challenge of the Greeks against the wisdom

"regarding spirituality and good deeds, every Jewish child, without exception could be rich and even very rich. This is completely in his hands."

of Torah was reflected in a physical sense--their aim was to contaminate the pure oil and the purity of the Jewish nation.

As a result of this challenge, there was a need to find the pure and sealed pint of oil. The seal was that of the Kohen Godol who draws down from a higher level and Divine attribute. This accomplished that the wisdom of Torah was victorious in both the spiritual and the physical war.

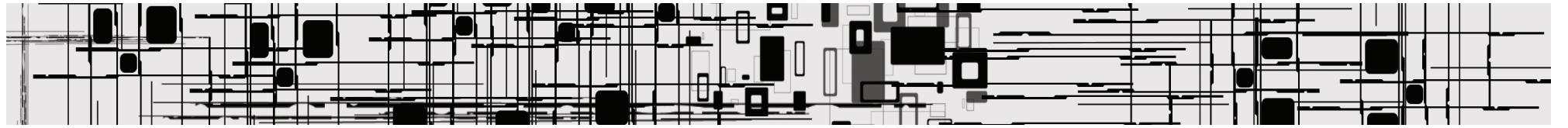
Chanuka Gelt

The Rebbe explains the reason of giving Chanuka Gelt to children with an interesting insight:

Money is considered as something very vital, important, and in demand. In reality, the word money in Hebrew comes from the expression Nishsof Nishsafto, something that is appealing and desirous. Money makes a person rich, but why is money so important and demanded? We cannot benefit from the physical money itself as we do from food, clothing, or materials for building a house. It is what we do with money that makes money into something important and unique, because with money we can buy anything. More importantly, with money we can do many Mitzvos such as Tzedoko, helping other people, helping children with tuition, etc. A person without money is helpless.

There is another form of riches--the great treasure of potential, talents, and characteristics that Hashem has imbued in every child: intellect, emotions, and the potential to solidify them through action, practical deed. Hashem wants to see how we utilize this potential in a positive way and to the utmost degree. A Jewish child should use his mind to learn and understand the G-dly Torah with all his might. He needs to express his emotions through love to Hashem.

It's wonderful to see how every Jewish child, boy and girl, without exception, can really become rich. We are not



referring to riches in a monetary sense, because in this area, he almost has no choice. Rather, we are referring to richness in spirituality and good deeds. In this area, every Jewish child can become rich, and even very rich. This is completely in his hands.

The same idea applies when Jewish boys and girls receive "Chanuka Gelt". There is a message attached to it: Just like that don't put away the money but utilize it completely to buy something good and beneficial; equally and in greater measure, utilize the "Chanuka Gelt" (personal character traits and talents) that Hashem has given you and use them in the spirit of Chanuka – causing that the your Bais Hamikdash should remain pure and holy.

Chanukah is connected to the Era of Redemption. The number eight is both the number of nights we light Chanukah candles and a number intimately associated with that ultimate age. Our kindling of Chanukah candles both anticipates and precipitates the Era when "a priest will appear in Zion" and light the Menorah in the Bais HaMikdash. May this take place in the immediate future.



The Rebbe's directives for Chanuka

Mivtza Chanuka – Distribute Chanuka menorahs to every Jew in order that every Jew should be able to light the candles every evening.

Young Children (boys) should light at the entrance to their room, under adult supervision.

Chanuka Gelt- Give Chanuka Gelt at least two times during the Chanuka days. It is even better to give every day with an increase in the first, fifth and last days of Chanuka.



We conclude with a story about Mivtza Chanuka in which the spark of light in an individual Jew challenged and dispelled the darkness within him:

The story "Spark on a Park Bench" was written by Chaim Drizin and was posted on Chabad.Org:

The car was magnificent. As we stood back to admire our handiwork amidst the gently swirling snowflakes, I had to admit that it was the finest Menorah Car

“There are images that stick with you. Events that transpire that leave an indelible imprint on the psyche, that even thirty years later one can see them clearly.”

that I had ever seen.

The '78 Bonneville, with the huge wooden Menorah on its roof would definitely make people sit up and take notice – and that was our goal.

We planned to visit shopping malls and old age homes – anywhere that we could spread the joy and message of the festival of Chanukah.

Seven or eight of us were crammed into the smallish vehicle; the trunk was filled with tin menorahs and colored candles which we hoped to distribute. As the more technologically advanced kids discussed the intricacies of the electronic apparatus that powered the flickering lights of our menorah (was it an alternator?), I tuned out and stared out at the blackness of the winter-night outside.

We presently arrived at our targeted destination for the evening, a huge residential complex in Brooklyn, situated in close proximity to our yeshivah.

In the 1970's the Russian floodgates had opened, and Trump Village was the destination of choice for thousands of newly-arrived immigrants.



Often elderly, these feisty Jews had survived decades of communist rule with their Jewish identity intact; yet, they knew very little about the particulars of the Torah and mitzvot, and we were hoping to kindle a spark or two.

I saw him sitting there. An elderly man of about seventy or seventy-five years of age, seated on one of those park-like benches that New Yorkers know so well. The base was concrete and the seat was wood, painted green, facing a concrete chess-table. He just sat there and watched the cars go by on that frigid night.

“Ah freilichen Chanukah! Would you like to light the menorah?” I asked him, hoping that he would help me accomplish my personal goal of ten people that I had hoped to inspire that night.

“Please go away.” he replied in Yiddish. “I am not interested,” he said, perhaps a bit more softly.

I tried to change his mind. I cajoled, I explained the powerful story of Chanukah, perhaps I even pleaded a bit, yet he was pretty firm in his decision. “No thank you. Now please have a good night.”

Sensing an opportunity slipping away, yet not quite ready to throw in the towel completely, I took the little tin menorah, placed it on the concrete chess-table, inserted four colorful candles in the little slots that always seem as they were designed for candles much slimmer than mine, lit them, and turned to the old man and said: “Here is the menorah. If you want, it is yours – if you don't want it, then it is not.”

The man said nothing and I walked away.

We continued our rounds of the massive complex, and thank G-d, we were extremely successful that night.

It was getting late and it was time to go home.

My mind kept on going back to the old Russian Jew sitting outside on that lonely park bench.

“Let's drive past the place where we saw the old man.” I was curious. What had he done with the menorah? Did he throw it away, or perhaps had he just left it, a lonely menorah in a forlorn spot?

There are images that stick with you. Events that transpire that leave an indelible imprint on the psyche, that even thirty years later one can see them clearly.

This is one of them.

I see an old man sitting on a bench. His eyes filling up with tears, as one large tear courses down his left cheek.

The candles are burning low and he is staring at them. Staring and crying. Flame meets flame and a soul ignites.

I don't know where he is now, or even his name. However, I know that I was privy to something powerful that night.

NIGHTLIFE

Continued From 2

The Rubashkins, in their typical way, offered their inimitable hachnossas orchim with no thought of reward. I think most of the times when Faigy would join the girls for the programs, no one would even suspect that the pretty young woman in their midst was really their gracious hostess! She simply extended her hospitality like she did everything else – unselfconsciously and modestly. Her heimishe values represent the heimishe values of Crown Heights and indeed of the Rebbe himself. When the girls realized that Faigy was, indeed, the Baalas Habayis, they were in awe because of her regal yet modest demeanor.

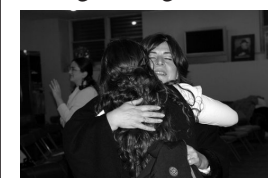


THESE YOUNG WOMEN ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF THE REBBE! We

have to make a conscious effort to guide them, gently and kindly, yet firmly, on their path. Maybe some get a little lost on their way and need help – genuine, non judgemental help. When one is in the dark, one needs light to see where to go on the path of life. NIGHTLIFE OFFERS LIGHT FOR THEM TO GUIDE THEM ON THEIR JOURNEY. Being in this heimishe environment is conducive to them realizing that there is no place is like home, in the Rebbe's shchuna. True chassidische values are absorbed in a natural, peaceful, non- confrontational way. Girls get a chance to befriend one another, as many are too shy to find new friends, and/or do not have enough time during the day due to their jobs, studies, etc.



We in Lubavitch are doing a phenomenal job in reaching out to the Jews in the world, a mission given to us by our Rebbe. He would always quote “CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME”. What could be more important than reaching out and guiding our future Mothers and



Grandmothers, our dear daughters of Chabad. Countless times the Rebbe would urge us to teach

young women, so they would not feel the need to go to outside, non-kosher influences, r”l. These programs do exactly that — they teach Torah values in a frank, honest yet holy way.

May we be zoche to fulfill the Rebbe's dream and bring Moshiach mamash now by helping and guiding our own youth.

SHLEIMUS HA'ARETZ

ANNAPOLIS UPDATE

By Tamar Adelstein, coordinator

Crown Hts. Women for the Safety and Integrity of Israel
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As reported in last week's community newspaper, the Israeli government signed an agreement in Annapolis that obligates them to meet bi-weekly with the "Palestinians" beginning December 12 (Zos Chanuka!) where they will work together to start implementing the April 2003 Road Map.

Despite well-publicized statements from the "Palestinians" and their Arab colleagues that they have no intention of stopping terrorism against Israel or recognizing her "right to exist", Israel's inner cabinet readily approved to participate in the above-mentioned negotiations as well as the details following. Below is a summary of what is known about the Annapolis Statement that President Bush read following the summit (This information was culled from reports written by and discussion with journalists David Bedein, Caroline Glick, and Arlene Kushner in Israel).

Israel gave up all protection afforded by the April 2003 Road Map including:

a) Agreeing to discuss final status issues (core issues) before Arab compliance with Stage I of Roadmap.

b) Agreeing to accept US rulings as to performance by Israel and the PA.

Olmert retreated from his promise that

he would never agree to any document that would not recognize Israel, first and foremost, as a Jewish state as well as agreeing to negotiate despite the "Palestinians" demand for the "right of return".

Israel compromised its fight against terror by agreeing to additional "gestures" such as prisoner releases.

Olmert consented to a dialogue and a target date for the establishment of a Palestinian state contrary to his former position.

Israel has committed itself to a freeze on expanding Jewish communities in Yehuda and the Shomron while gaining no assurance that Palestinians will live up to their end of the bargain

The Israel-PLO joint statement at Annapolis contains a joint pledge "to propagate a culture of peace and nonviolence; to confront terrorism and incitement, whether committed by Palestinians or Israelis." This is moral equivalence where there is none.

Because there is very little information being released about other agreements or promises that may have been behind closed doors during the Annapolis Summit, the following concerns remain very real and troubling.

US Ambassador Richard Jones held an unprecedented meeting this week with Supreme Court President Dorit Beinisch. Because it's a well-known fact that the Supreme Court is a leftist, Jones' visit

could very easily be interpreted to mean that the US expects Israeli courts to rule prejudicially against Israeli opponents of Palestinian statehood or G-d Forbid, against a disengagement from Yehuda and the Shomron.

Their meeting may have also signaled that the US expects Israel to treat lawful building activities by Jews in Yehuda and the Shomron and even in sections of Jerusalem as criminal acts.

Olmert may have agreed that the Americans will set the timetable for expulsions of Jews from Judea and Samaria or the division of Yerushalayim—especially since he had to

Dry Bones TRICK OR TREAT?



publicly deny it this past week.

As the guarantors of progress in the peace process, the Americans may very well begin to pressure Israel where it can - or more precisely where it cannot - erect roadblocks, what to do with terror fugitives, when and how many terrorists to release from its prisons. There has already been pressure to transfer armoured vehicles to Abbas this week which the IDF adamantly refused to agree to. However, it's clear that the Israeli government is not following through on its promise before the summit to begin an anti-terror operation in Gaza upon returning from Annapolis. S'derot and surrounding communities still face a daily onslaught of kassams and other disruptions to their daily lives.

Rabbi Shalom Ber Kalmanson, an outspoken and well-respected leader in the work for Shleimus HaAretz reiterated his belief that Lubavitcher Chassidim have a special obligation to be involved in the battle for Shleimus HaAretz noting the Rebbe's frequent cry against "Land for Peace" beginning more than forty years ago when Israeli politicians began to speak of returning the territories won miraculously in the Six-Day War.

Rabbi Yaakov Lazarus, who followed Rabbi Kalmanson on the last Shleimus HaAretz Talk Show, further highlighted the imperative to take a stand and speak out rather than remain silent, even if some may find the issue of Shleimus HaAretz, which is now one of absolute Pikuach Nefesh, too politically sensitive.

Thus, Crown Hts. Women for the Safety and Integrity of Israel calls on the community to take the following immediate initiatives:

Call in or fax a letter to President Bush and Congress. The main message you want to send is that this agreement endangers Jewish lives, is contrary to Jewish Law and the Torah which clearly says that all of Eretz Yisroel was bequeathed to the Jewish People by HaShem and cannot be divided or given away to any one else, and, finally, it will eventually backfire on the US by creating a new terrorist niche.

For those of you who have relatives on Shlichus in the US: ask them to take out an ad in their local Jewish or secular paper (and offer to help cover the cost) that publicizes the above and showcases the Rebbe's stance, preferably before the first meeting between Israel and the "Palestinians" next

Wednesday. Now is the time to act before complacency and overwhelm set in as happened in Gush Katif, r"l.

In Eretz Yisroel, pressure must be put on Olmert's coalition partners to leave the government. This includes Shas and Avigdor Lieberman. New elections could cancel out both known and hidden deals made in Annapolis. There is also a new piece of legislation that was introduced in the Knesset this week that forbids the Prime Minister from having unilateral power to make agreements on Israel's behalf. There is also an effort to legislate a law against the army being used against Israeli citizens. If passed this would make it impossible for any disengagement to happen since the police force is not big enough to carry out such an action.

Join us on the next Shleimus HaAretz Talk Show: Tuesday, December 11th from Noon to 1:15pm. To listen in live: 712-451-6000, Access Code: 505946#. To retrieve via phone: 641-715-3486, Access Code: 505946# or via web: www.sansesite.org, click classes, click Shleimus HaAretz.



Dry Bones IT JUST KEEPS GETTING WORSE



HUMAN INTEREST

DO WE APPRECIATE OUR GIFTS



Rabbi Shea Hecht:

Rabbi Hecht, is chairman of the board of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education (NCFJE), continuing the tradition of social services management and outreach that began with his father, the Rabbi Jacob J. Hecht A'H. He is a Rabbi and activist in the Jewish community, focusing on family crisis intervention, guiding and advising troubled youth and their families, marriage counseling, and drugs and cults counseling and consultations. He can be reached at rabbishea@aol.com. ❁

I was sitting in the dining room of my friend's house waiting for his imminent arrival home from work. He came through the door shlepping a couple of shopping bags with him. With great joy he called his teenage daughter to the room and said, "Look what I brought you home from the store today." This loving father had carefully chosen some clothing that came into his extremely popular and successful store and put it aside for his daughter.

I don't claim to be any major *maven* on woman's fashion, but from what I could see the pile of clothing looked great. Any girl would dream to be given so many new skirts, shirts, jackets and suits.

So you could imagine my shock when I

heard this sweet little teenager's response to her fathers loving and generous gesture.

"Abba, what?! You're expecting me to wear this? This is probably from the end of the season. This is the stuff you couldn't sell. I need money so I can go out and buy something 'normal.'"

I was so affected by the ingratitude that I saw. I was really upset for my friend, for his honor and his relationship with his daughter.

Later that evening, while sitting at the dinner table, one of my children mentioned an issue they were having at school. Being the good father, and being that my occupation calls for me to give advice

to all those who step into my office and ask for it, I gave my child sound advice, identical to what I would tell anyone else in the same situation. Lo and behold, my child said to me, "Totty, how could you even SAY that to me. You're giving me the same advice as everyone else. What do you think? I'm one of your clients?"

The sense of dé-jà vu was real and strong.

Here I sit in my office many hours a day listening to people and giving them advice on many different subjects – sound advice from the comments and reactions that come back to me – and like my friend the clothing store proprietor, my own child kindly gave my 'merchandise' back at me.

These two incidents, one following on the heels of the other, opened my eyes to the idea that many people don't appreciate the gifts that their parents, spouses and children have. In fact, there's an old Yiddish saying: "Der Shister's kinder gayin un sich." "The shoemaker's children walk around without shoes." The popular interpretation of this saying is that the shoemaker is so busy creating and making shoes for everyone else he doesn't have time to sew a pair of shoes together for his children. I would like to offer a different interpreta-

tion for this saying. The shoemaker DID in fact make shoes for his children and he did bring them home for his children to wear, but when they saw the shoes that their father brought home the children said, "This is what you brought for ME? Your child? You're giving these to me probably because you couldn't sell it. I'm not wearing these shoes."

After opening my eyes to this phenomenon of people not appreciating the gifts and skills of those nearest and dearest to them, I saw so many instances of it that my head began to spin.

I watched the wife who hired a plumber because she didn't trust her husband – a highly skilled much in demand plumber. The husband who bought the cake because he didn't think his wife could make something nice enough for his needs – and her cakes are sought all over the city. I heard the parents hire an expert to give them advice on which house to buy – when their own son was a multi-millionaire real estate mogul. In each of these cases the experienced person was willing to give of themselves to their loved ones, but somehow their expertise and advice wasn't good enough.

Which leaves us with the question: Do we appreciate the gifts our parents, spouse and children have?

B"H

ZOS CHANNUKA CELEBRATION

With the Rambam Foundation

December 11th 2007 the second of Tevet 5768
Frankels Shul 1699 President St. Brooklyn New York
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EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Presenting Dr. Stanley Bass with over 50 years of nutritional healing experience. **Topic:** Healing the body with sequential eating as taught by Maimonides: The Rambam.

* Refreshments * Live Music * Farbrengen * Special Guest from Israel * Exciting Auction of Precious Old Seforim

All proceeds are tax deductible and will support the educational outreach work of the Rambam Foundation in Israel

Itinerary

6:30
Welcome and free freshly squeezed vegetable juice

7:00
Presentation of Dr. Stanley Bass a nutritionist with over 50 years of nutritional healing

8:30
Candle lighting-live music-dancing followed by Maariv

9:15
Lechayim followed by Rare Seforim Auction followed by Farbrengen-singing - dancing etc.

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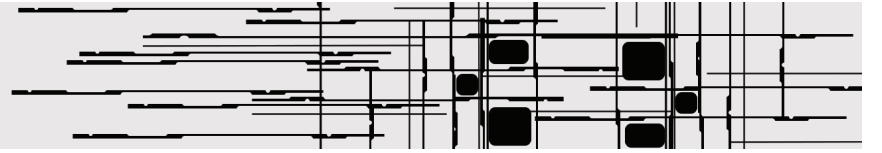
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PARSHAS VAYISHLACH



VEDIBARTA BAM ~ VAYEISHEV

By Rabbi Bogomilsky



“ויתן לו את אסנת בת פוטי פרע כהן אן לאשה”

“He gave him Asenat daughter of Potiphera the priest of On as a wife.” (41:45)

QUESTION: Why would a tzaddik like Yosef marry the daughter of a priest?

ANSWER: When Dinah the daughter of Yaakov married Shechem, she gave birth to Asenat. Fearing that his sons would kill her, Yaakov sent her away. Before sending her off, he made her a necklace on which he wrote that she was his granddaughter and that whoever married her would become part of his family. She later ended up in Egypt and was raised in the home of Potiphera and was considered as his daughter.



When Yosef was appointed the viceroy of Egypt, he traveled throughout the country. All the girls heard of his handsome appearance and came out to catch a glimpse of him. They threw presents at him, hoping that he would marry them. Asenat threw her necklace. When Yosef read its contents, he decided to marry her.

“רבינו בחיי, ויש סוברים שהיא היתה נירת - עי ילקוט שמעוני, יהושע רמז ט, ומדרש שמואל, שמואל ב' פ' כ"א”

“ותכלינה שבע שני השבע... ותכלינה שבע שני הרעב לבוא”

כאשר אמר יוסף

“The seven years of abundance ended...and the seven years of famine began to come as Yosef had said.” (41:53-54)

QUESTION: Why does it state “as Yosef said” regarding the seven years of famine, but not in relation to the seven years of abundance?

ANSWER: The non-Jewish world hates the Jew and envies his success. Thanks to Yosef, the people in Egypt experienced great affluence, but they did not want to give credit to a Jew. When the troubles started, suddenly everyone began accusing the Jews of causing the Egyptians’ suffering. Alas, this is a recurrent pattern in Jewish history.

(פון אונזער אלטען אוצר)

“ויכר יוסף את אחיו והם לא הכירו”

“Yosef recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.” (42:8)

QUESTION: How is it possible that none of the brothers recognized him?

ANSWER: Yosef’s brothers were shepherds by profession. They were out in the fields with their cattle and had very little to do with the world at large. This was the most suitable profession for one who wanted to remain religious and avoid endangering his Torah observance.

When the brothers came to Egypt, they met Yosef, who looked like one of them;

beard, peiyot, and religious garb. They were sure that it would be impossible for a truly religious person like themselves to live in Egypt and rise to glory.

Positive that Yosef remained strong in his faith, they assumed that this man was not religious, but rather someone who merely chose to dress religiously — therefore, not their brother Yosef.

(לקוטי שיחות ח"א)



VEDIBARTA BAM ~ CHANUKAH

“הנרות הללו קדש הם”

“These candles are holy.” (Siddur, Haneirot Halalu)

QUESTION: What lesson can we learn from the Chanukah candles?

ANSWER: 1) Candles represent Torah and mitzvot, “נר מצוה ותורה אר” — “A mitzvah is a candle and Torah is light (Proverbs 6:23). The additions of a candle to the Chanukah menorah each day teaches that in Torah and mitzvot, one should never be content with what was done yesterday. Each day one must strive to do more and improve in the observance of mitzvot and the study of Torah.

2) The Chanukah lights commemorate the Menorah of the Beit Hamikdash. Yet there are major differences between them. In the Beit Hamikdash the Menorah was lit in the afternoon and on the inside, whereas the Chanukah candles are lit by the entrance facing the street and after dark.

This teaches that a Jew must not only light up his house, as with the Shabbat candles, but he has the additional responsibility to illuminate the “outside” — his social and business environment.

When times are “hard” spiritually, when it is “dark” outside and the Jews are in exile, it is not sufficient to light a candle alone and maintain it; it is necessary to increase the lights steadily. Constant growing efforts to spread the light of Torah and mitzvot will dispel the darkness of exile and illuminate the world.

(לקוטי שיחות ח"א)

ה' חנוכה

Fifth Day of Chanukah

QUESTION: Why do many synagogues hold festivities on the fifth day of Chanukah?

ANSWER: The fifth day of Chanukah can never occur on a Shabbat. When Chanukah occurs on days that are even only potentially Shabbat days, the light of Chanukah combines with the light of Shabbat for a powerful illumination. So the fifth night, which can never be Shabbat, represents great darkness relative to the other nights. Thus, the fifth light of Chanukah has the unique task and power to illuminate and instill spirituality even in such a time of darkness.

Similarly, it is the duty of every Jew,

wherever he may find himself, be it in Warsaw, England, the United States or Canada, to illuminate the darkness.

(כ"ק אדמו"ר - ווארשא תרפ"ט)

In Chabad circles this day is of special significance because the Alter Rebbe, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidut, was released from his second imprisonment on the fifth day of Chanukah, in the year 5561 — תקס"א

He was imprisoned because the government scholars thought that some of the topics accentuated and expanded in his Chassidic philosophy might cause insubordination to the government and refusal to engage in practical matters, which are necessary for the existence of the state. Upon articulately clarifying his teaching and dispelling their fears, he gained his release.

סיפורי חסידים - מועדים וסה"ש תורה שלום ע' 84, ובהיום יום כ"ז כסלו כ' שיצא לחירות נר ג' דתנוכה

Dreidel

QUESTION: Why on Chanukah do we play with a dreidel and on Purim we use a gragger?

ANSWER: The miracle of Chanukah was above the laws of nature. The Jewish people were the minority and the Greeks were the majority; we were the weak and they were the strong. Nevertheless, thanks to heavenly intervention, the miracle took place and the Jews were the victors.

On Purim, the miracle was clothed entirely within the laws of nature. The Jewish people gathered in prayer and fasting. Esther pleaded their case before the king. Out of love for his Queen, he killed Haman — her arch enemy.

Since the miracle of Chanukah came down from above (אתערותא דלעילא), we spin the dreidel with the handle on top. The miracle of Purim was through an awakening from below (אתערותא דלתתא) — consequently we turn the gragger with the handle below.

(קרוב העני)



SHIDUCHIM

VEDIBARTA BAM ~ MARRIAGE

By Rabbi Bogomilky:



In this week's parshah we read about Yosef's rise to glory in the land of Egypt and we also learn about his marriage and family. He was privileged to marry Asenat (who incidentally, according to most opinions, was the daughter of his half sister Dinah [according to Yalkut Shimoni, Joshua, remez 9, she was a convert]), and he was blessed with two sons, Menasheh and Ephraim.

The Torah relates that "Yosef called the name of the firstborn Menasheh: for G-d has made me forget all my toil and my entire father's house. The second one he called Ephraim: for G-d has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering" (41:51-52).

Now, we can easily understand the reasoning for naming a son "Ephraim," but that the righteous Yosef should express happiness and gratefulness for forgetting his father's house is very puzzling. Why would Yosef be happy to forget the home of Yaakov and its spiritual atmosphere?

A visitor once entered a presumably kosher restaurant. Unimpressed with the religiosity of the personnel, he

"Why would Yosef be happy to forget the home of Yaakov and its spiritual atmosphere?"

began to inquire about the kashrut standards. The proprietor confidently pointed to a picture on the wall of a Jew with a long beard and peiyot. He said to the visitor: "You see that man up there? He was my father!" The visitor replied: "If you were hanging on the wall, and

your father was behind the counter, I would not ask any questions. But since your father is hanging on the wall, and you are behind the counter, I have good reason to question the kashrut."

How many people do you and I know whose only attachment to Yiddishkeit is



through nostalgia? They remember their mothers' lighting candles before Shabbat, they recall the long beards and peiyot of their fathers', and they reminisce about their parents' Shabbat table. They proudly tell their children about it, but unfortunately, they do not emulate or practice this way of life themselves.

Living among the Egyptians, Yosef was in danger of becoming totally assimilated into the society of the upper class. Fortunately, he remained tenacious in his Torah observance. Thus, it was unnecessary for him to tell his children about his parents' observance. He conducted his home exactly the same way as his father had done and was able to "forget" his father's house. When Yosef spoke to his children about Torah and Yiddishkeit, he did not have to suffice with reminiscing nostalgically about what went on in his father's house. Rather he was able to show his family his own home as a living example. It was a place where Torah study was in full vibrancy and doing mitzvot was a daily way of life.

Dear Chatan and Kallah, I bless you that the home you will build, please G-d, should emulate Yosef's home. May it be a place where Judaism is alive and not just nostalgia. May your lifestyle be such where studying and observing Torah is in mode and performing mitzvot is the way of life. ❀

(שמעתי מזקני הרב צבי ז"ל הכהן קאפלמן)

FINDING A NEEDLE IN A HAYSTACK

By: Sarah Junik

Continued from last week:

In our circles, boys and girls usually marry when they are in their early 20s. This age has fluctuated little. There were always some girls and boys who did not find their besherte until they were older, but nowadays it seems like there are so many more older boys and girls still unmatched. All are great kids. Why are they not married yet?

There are a lot of complaints about shadchonim.: there are not enough; they do not do enough, and other typical gripes. Whatever our perception of the shadchonim is, should not really be an impediment to finding the right shidduch for your S/D. Sure, a shadchan that takes you from the first moment until the kinyan would be great. On the other hand, how many things in this life are handed to us on a platter?

When we look for a job or an apartment, we exert ourselves, go to interviews, talk to everyone we meet, and, in general, leave no stone unturned. If we put our energies and minds to the task of shidduchim as we do with other tasks, the chances of success, with or without a shadchan, will be very good.

After all, do we not say in the 12 Pesukim: If someone says, "I have toiled, and I have not succeeded," don't believe him. If someone says, "I have not worked hard and I have succeeded," don't believe him. If someone says, "I have worked hard, and I have been successful," believe him!

(Megilla, 6b):

Here it bears repeating that we must do our best and put our best efforts forward without forgetting that our "partner", the Aibishter, is really doing the lion share of the work and when He deems that it is the right time it will happen.

In my particular case, only one out of three shidduchim, went through a professional shadchan. Family and close friends were the shliach HKB" H sent for the other two. Our family, friends and neighbors are de facto shadchonim.

Let us not wring our hands and say that there are no professional shadchonim who can help us.

What you will see in the following chapters are common sense practical advice. It may be something that makes you exclaim: "duh" (to use current slang), but even if it is obvious to you it may be news to someone else. Bear with me.

The First Step: Evaluate Your Child

We need to look at our child and assess their readiness to form a family of their own. How to decide if your child is ready?

Each case and each child is different. We know that intellectually; Let us apply it practically. Just because one child went in one direction and the other one has paid lip service to our belief that they are exactly like their brother or sister, now is the time to listen to their voices, to hear

what they think they want.

We are not just stating the obvious. Many times parents do not realize that even if two children may seem to be very similar, they are still individuals with individual wants and needs.

Just as each labor and delivery is unique, so too, each child's needs are unique, and their shidduchim are unique. When our Chachomim tell us "*Chanoch L'Naar al pi Darko*" (teach the child according to his needs,) they are directing us to be specific in dealing with each of our children.

In those cases where there is a close relationship between parent and child, the parent can see the signs that the child has reached the maturity necessary for marriage.

In other cases the child will openly tell the parents he/she is ready to be married.

In still other cases, the child might be mature enough to marry, but not secure enough of his/her feelings to believe himself or herself ready for such a commitment. They might even feel so insecure that they won't broach the subject with their parents.

It is up to the parents to talk to their children and to encourage them. Some kids believe they have to be perfect themselves before trying to raise a family. As we all know, perfection is a chimera. Until Moshiach comes we live in an

imperfect world. Explain to them that no one is perfect, and no one gets married knowing all that there is to know. Marriage means maturing, growing and learning together. If you believe your S/D is ready for a shidduch, say so, and encourage your child to go ahead.

On the other hand, do not push a child who is not ready. It will only backfire.

If you are not good at reading your children or even if you are, get advice with a Mashpia, with someone who knows your family and your child well and can advise you. Age alone is no indication of readiness. Some kids are more ready at a young age than others who are much years older.

Generally, I believe that it is a good thing to start looking earlier rather than later. First of all, if the couple is younger when they marry, they are more flexible about each other's foibles, and they are not so set in their ways that compromise is difficult. ❀

A Needle in a Haystack is a book of advice for parents starting to look at shidduchim. It was written on the occasion of Mrs Junik's daughter's wedding.

Any constructive comment is welcomed by the editor.

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A CHANUKAH STORY

MOSHE'S CANDLE

Taken with kind permission from the Moshiach Times (From the days before cell phones)

It was 7 o'clock in the morning and still dark outside when the bus pulled out of its bay at the Port Authority. From his seat, Moshe waved good-bye to his parents and then watched as the buildings of Manhattan glided by his window.

This was the first time ever that Moshe was going to travel alone. Chanukah vacation was starting, and his parents had agreed that he was old enough to travel to visit his grandparents in Topeka, Kansas. It would be a long trip. The bus wasn't expected to arrive until 3 o'clock in the afternoon, the next day. His parents had put his suitcase with the luggage underneath, but a big bag full of sandwiches, fruit, and a thermos of hot soup took up the entire seat next to him. Moshe had also insisted on keeping his menorah with him on the bus as well some books to read.

At that early hour in the morning, the bus was far from full. The lady sitting across the aisle began munching away on a carrot and told Moshe that almost the only thing she ate was salad. "I'm pretty careful about what I eat too," he replied, without going into details.

Moshe felt a few people staring at him. Maybe they wondered why he was traveling alone. Maybe his yarmulke and tzitzis caught their attention. Probably there weren't any other Jews on the bus. After all, who else would be going to Topeka, Kansas for Chanukah? Moshe's great-grandparents had settled there almost 80 years ago when they first came to America. Their little store had grown into a whole chain of department stores, but his parents had left the business and moved east. "There weren't enough Jews in Topeka," they said. So it didn't surprise Moshe when people looked twice.

Soon the bus left New York behind, climbing swiftly and steadily into the hill-county, passing farms with small fields and groups of horses and cows grazing. It was a clear, crisp winter day. The sky was bright blue, and the sun did its best to warm the land. As of yet there was no snow. 'How large the country is,' thought Moshe, remembering what his father would say, 'How great is Your Creation, Hashem.'

Towards evening it began to get a little cloudy. Moshe tried to count the stars. Their far-off light made him think of how he'd kindle the menorah at his grandmother's tomorrow. He loved to watch the bright little flames flickering in the window. The stars flickered too in the night sky. It was late. Moshe took out his siddur, said Shema, and fell asleep.

When Moshe woke up it was still night time, or so it seemed. In fact, it was already morning, but the sky was covered thickly with clouds. Not even a hint of sunlight could break through.

The driver announced that some snow was expected, but they should be arriving in Topeka on schedule. Sure enough, not long after the announcement, Moshe began to see the first flakes drifting down and then zipping by his window. Moshe loved the snow, but now it made him a little nervous. It was so dark out. Soon the snow began falling more heavily. The wind picked up too, driving the snow in sheets. Moshe felt very alone. He wished he was at his grandparents' already. "Don't worry," said the lady across the aisle. "This big bus won't be stopped by a little snow. We'll get there on time."

"With G-d's help" thought Moshe.



Outside the storm got worse. Moshe could feel that the bus has slowed down. He walked up to the driver and looked out the big window. He could hardly see a thing. The wind was blowing the snow like a white curtain. "I'm sorry, lad," the bus driver said. "Looks like we're going to be a few hours late with this weather." Then he said the same thing

over the loudspeaker. Moshe hoped his grandparents wouldn't worry.

Slowly, slowly the bus crept on. The storm was very bad. After noon, it began to get even darker. There was hardly another car on the road.

"My apologies, ladies and gentlemen, but we're going to have to stop at the next bus depot until the weather eases up," the driver said.

Moshe began to recite the Torah passages he knew by heart V'Ahavta L'Rayacha KaMocha "And you shall love your fellow Jew as yourself." Suddenly the bus swerved. The rear began slide, fishtailing from side to side. Then all at once they left the road, skidding over a low bank, and coming to rest in a ditch full of snow. The luggage flew all over. Some people fell off their seats. Moshe held on to his arm rest in terror until the bus came to a halt. "Okay, ladies and gentlemen," the bus driver said over the mike. "Seems like we hit a patch of ice, and skidded off the road. I'm going to come round now to check that everyone is all right. Thank G-d, we didn't turn over, and in a short while we'll get you all back on your journey. So don't you worry--we'll have

you on another bus soon enough."

"Yes, son, we mustn't worry," said the lady next to Moshe. "You'll be with your family soon."

"It's not the accident that I'm upset about," said Moshe. "It's the time. Soon it'll be dark, and I don't have my candles." "Oh you don't need candles," the lady said. "There's light enough in here." "No, I need candles to light my Chanukah Menorah, Tonight is the first night of Chanukah."

"What's a menorah?" asked the lady. "It's for lighting candles," said Moshe. "See. Here's mine. This is where we put the candles. I use regular candles, but my father uses oil."

"Oh, what kind of oil?" said the lady sympathetically. "Pure olive oil," said Moshe.

"Well you can have my olive oil," said the lady. "I don't have very much, just enough for my salad dressing. But if it will help you, please feel free. Here, is this all right?"

She handed him a tiny jar of olive oil. It was the same brand his father used! "Please let me pay you for it," Moshe insisted. He wanted to be sure it was his own oil. Then he took some cotton batten from a jar of pills his mother had packed along with the fruit. Carefully he rolled it into 2 thin wicks, just like his father did, one for the candle and one for the Shamash. Then he asked the driver's permission to place his menorah on a ledge just below the front window. By now it was late enough to light. And so little Moshe found himself at the front of the bus with a match in his hand ready to light the menorah. All of a sudden, the bus got very silent as Moshe's thin voice sang out the three blessings on the lights with the very same tune he had heard his father use year after year: "Le Hadlik Nair Chanukah; to kindle the Chanukah lights." As he finished the last blessing, "Shechechyanu," to thank G-d for "having kept us alive, and sustained us, and brought us to this season," Moshe thought he heard someone crying. He fit the first candle and then took another match to light the wick that was in the place for the shamash.

Moshe looked at his candles with great feeling. Outside the storm was raging. There was someone weeping. He looked around to see who it could be. Why, it was one

of the people who had been staring at him the whole trip. Moshe walked over and looked at her. "I don't know why I'm crying like this," she said, wiping away a tear. "I guess it made me think of my grandparents. I used to go to their home in the Bronx every Chanukah. My grandmother made everyone latkes and sour cream." Moshe was surprised. He was glad he wasn't the only Jew on the bus after all.

"I had a little dreidel " someone sang with a gruff laugh. "Do you know that song, my boy?" the man said. "Do you have a dreidel?"

"You should sing "Ma-Oz Tzur," someone else corrected him. "I forget the words. How does it go? Da - da - dee - da - dee - da - dee."

"You know, I'll have to get out our Menorah when we get home," said another man. "I forgot that tonight was Chanukah. Come here, son. Thank you for lighting for us. Can I give you some Chanukah gelt? My own grandfather always used to give us Chanukah gelt. What's your name? My grandfather used to say, 'Wemmens bist du?' You know what that means? 'Whose are you?' Kain Ayin Hara, we were a lot of kids. I used to have payus and tzitzis too, just like you do."

Moshe couldn't believe there were so many other Jews on the bus. He looked at the small flame flickering on his menorah. It had lit aflame in a lot of hearts.

Suddenly there was a click, and the lights went out, like a hand passing in front of your eyes. "Don't worry," the driver shouted quickly. "Looks like our battery's dead. I'll just rig up the auxiliary power. Keep calm, folks. Someone'll find us soon."

"How?" someone screamed. "In this storm, off the road, in a ditch with no lights for anyone to see us? We'll freeze to death!"

Moshe began to sing "Ma-Oz Tzur Yeshuasi." Other voices joined in. All the Jews on the bus were singing. Tears rolled down their faces. Louder and louder they sang. So loud that no one even heard the rescue mobile pulling up beside them. "Just in time," the driver said. "How'd you find us?"

"Tell you the truth, we were about to call off the search till tomorrow," said the man, "when someone noticed this small light flickering in the dark. We followed it straight to your bus." "That was this boy's oil flame," the driver said. "I guess it was a kind of a miracle."

