

לעילוי נשמת ר' אברהם יוסף שמואל אלתר בן ר' טובי ז"ל ורעייתו רישא רחל בת ר' אברהם שלמה ע"ה

בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו
תורה תבלין

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שבת קודש פרשת וישב - שבת חנוכה - מברכים חודש טבת
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כ"ה כסלו תשס"ז - December 16, 2006

הדלקת נרות שבת - 4:10	(Monsey, NY)	מנחה גדולה / שבת - 12:22
שקיעה של ערב שבת - 4:28	~~~~~	שקיעה של יום השבת - 4:29
זמן קריאת שמע / מ"א - 8:58	~~~~~	צאת הכוכבים / מעריב - 5:19
זמן קריאת שמע / הער"א - 9:34	~~~~	צאת"כ / לשיטת רבינו תם - 5:41

פתח לבי בתורתך

חושך זה גלות יון שהחשיכה עיניהם של ישראל (ב"ר פב)
הנה לא מצינו בשום מקום אחר נר מיוחד למצוה שא"א להנות

ממנו, מלבד נר חנוכה. ומדוע נתייחד הנר לחנוכה?
והאיר לנו לעינים מרן הגמ"ר שמשון דוד פינקוס זצ"ל, שידוע
בשם הרוקח שהקב"ה גנו את אור ששת ימי בראשית לצדיקים
לעתיד לבוא, כי הל"ו נרות דחנוכה הם כנגד הל"ו שעות שהאיר
אור הגנוז בששת ימי בראשית. ובכדי להוציא מהנרתיק
ומההסתר את האור הגנוז המאיר מסוף העולם עד סופו, ניתן
לעשות זאת רק בתוך החושך הנורא שהיה בימי יון - דהיינו בימי
חנוכה. כי דוקא בתוך החושך הנורא של מלכות יון, שגזרה גזירות
אחר גזירות על כלל ישראל, הבינו החשמונאים שהגיעו לפסגת
החושך עד שניתן היה לחזות באור, ואז הבינו שזה הזמן
למהפכה. אין זה למרות החושך, אלא בגלל החושך ממש! רק
האור שנראה מתוך החושך הוא שאפשר לשלש עשרה בני
חשמונאי לצאת למלחמה כנגד מליוני יוונים.

וזהו אחד מהיסודות שלומדים מנס חנוכה, כי כאשר מגיע
חושך לעולם, יכולים החשמונאים, ממש יחידים, לעמוד נגד כל
הנסיגות ונגד כל הרשעים, ולנצח במלחמות. רק במצב של חושך
אפשר להשיג זאת, כי הסייעתא דשמיא שבתוך החושך היתה
מעל ומעבר להשגה. וכדמצינו שבזמן של מלחמה וחושך ניתן
תוך זמן קצר לעלות מדרגה אחר מדרגה, הואיל וזהו הזמן
להראות את הכוח. וא"כ חנוכה הוא זמן להשיג גדלות!

וישב ראובן אל הבור והנה אין יוסף
בבור ויקרע את בגדיו וגו' (לז-כט)

פרש"י במכירתו (של יוסף) לא היה שם, שהגיע יומו לילך
ולשמש את אביו. דבר אחר, עסוק היה בשקו ובתעניתו על
שבלבל יצועי אביו עכ"ל. ומשמע מדברי רש"י שראובן היה עסוק
במצות תשובה על שבלבל יצועי אביו, ומש"ה היה לבוש בשקו
ובאמצע תעניתו, ולא היה שם בשעת מכירת יוסף. אמנם לפי"ז
צריך להבין, דהא בגמ' (בבא קמא צב.) איתא: מי גרם לראובן
שיודה? יהודה ע"כ. פירוש, מכיון שהודה יהודה ואמר "צדקה
ממני" לגבי המעשה עם תמר כלתו, מיד עמד ראובן ואמר אני
בלבתי יצועי אבי (עיי"ש ברש"י). והרי המעשה עם תמר היה
לאחר מכירת יוסף, וא"כ אם היה ראובן עסוק בתשובה מקודם,
איך שייך שיהודה גרם לראובן שיודה?

אלא מפרש מרן הגמ"ר אהרן לייב שטיינמאן שליט"א, שאף
שעשה ראובן תשובה שלימה והתענה כמה שנים וחגר שק
במתני, אעפ"כ עדיין שייך שיהיה השבר בלב יותר גדול, להרגיש
יותר את החטא. כי המציאות היא, שיותר קשה הוא לאדם
להודות ברבים, וקל יותר לצום שנים רבות מאשר להתגבר על
עצמו ולבייש את עצמו ברבים. ממילא, אף כמאחז"ל שכל האומר
ראובן חטא טועה, מ"מ אף על מה שנראה לנו כחטא הרבה בשק
ובתענית כמה שנים, ומעשה ההודאה של יהודה גרם לו לראובן
עומק חרטה והכרת החטא, עד שלא בוש להודות ברבים.

A SERIES IN HALACHAH
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

הלכה למעשה

Selected questions about Chanukah

Question: Does the oil used for lighting have to be certified
Kosher permitting it to be eaten?

Answer: No (1). Yet there is a slight preference that it should
be permitted to eat and thereby be similar to the oil used in
the *Bais Hamikdosh* with which the miracle was done (2). In
Israel there are additional concerns which might invalidate
the *mitzva*. These include: oil of *Shemitah* (the seventh
year), oil of *Tevel* (oil from which the tithes and *Terumos*
have not been separated), oil of *Terumos* (the portions
separated for the *Kohanim* from the oil of the farmers and
the tenth of the *Levi's* tenth) and oil of *Orlo* (oil from the
first 3 years of olives since the tree was planted or
replanted). These are complicated issues and therefore, oil
from Israel should not be used without consulting a *Rov* (3).

Question: Since it's better to light with oil than with candles,
can one fulfill this with the solidified oil being sold lately?

Answer: R' Shmuel Wosner Shlit'a rules (4) that since it
melts down to a liquid, it is just as good as oil.

Question: Does one fulfill the preference of lighting with oil
if he uses wax-coated wicks?

Answer: Since the wax is part of the wick (not part of the
fuel) and melts away quickly, it is as if he lit with oil (5).

Question: Does one fulfill the preference of lighting with a

(1) כף החיים אור"ח תרע"ג (2) הרה"ג שלום יוסף אלישיב שליט"א בפסקי שמועות דף ק"ק (3) פסקי
תשובות ו' דף תפא' (4) מבית לוי י' דף יג' (5) שם דף יד' (6) שבט הלוי תיקון (7) מבית לוי י' דף כב'
(8) הרה"ג שלום יוסף אלישיב שליט"א בשבות יצחק דף צ' (9) שבות יצחק דף עט'

silver *Menora* (באר היטב תרע"ג) if he uses glass inserts?

Answer: Yes (6).

Question: Must a lady waiting for her husband to come
home and light, refrain from eating until he arrives?

Answer: No (7).

Question: If one knows that only gentiles will actually see
his lit *Menorah*, should he still light by a window?

Answer: Yes (8).

Question: Is there any preference to have the *Chanukah*
lights burn longer than the minimal half hour?

Answer: Yes. Since people walk in the streets much later
than in earlier generations, the longer one's *Menorah* burns,
the more he is publicizing the miracle (9).

WEEKLY CHIZUK # 8

"You should remember the entire forty-year journey that
Hashem led you in the desert." (דברים ח-ב) According to
Rabbeinu Yonah and other *Poskim*, this *posuk* includes an
eternal *mitzvah* for every person to remember all the kindness
that *Hashem* does for him. During *Chanukah*, when we give
thanks to *Hashem* for His many miracles, a person should
train his eyes and heart to be open to any special acts of
kindness that come his way. He should thank *Hashem* for
these acts of kindness, tell others about them, and possibly
even write them down in order to remember them. This is
surely a merit to bring on oneself more such acts of kindness.

הוא היה אימר ...

R' Yosef Chaim of Baghdad ZT"L (Ben Ish Chai) would say:

"The *posuk* tells us that when the brothers saw Yosef approaching from afar, they decided right then and
there to kill him. But by the time he reached them, the plan had changed, and they ended up selling him. We
learn two things from this: First, never give up - when all seems lost, one never knows what might happen or
how things could change in an instant. Second, when one comes to a decision in haste, wait a few moments
and rethink the issue. You never know how the decision may be altered with a clearer mind."

R' Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai ZT"L (Chid"i) would say:

"The *pit* was empty, water was not in it." Yosef was thrown into a pit that had no
water, although it did contain snakes and scorpions (*Medrash*). How did *Chazal* know that the pit contained
snakes and scorpions? From the letters of the words 'אין בו' - 'not in it.' These five letters are the ראשי תבות for
the words, 'אבל נחשים ועקרבים יש בו' - 'but snakes and scorpions were in it.'"

A Wise Man would say:

"There is something so unique that it has never existed in the past and will never be here again: Today!"

נתנדב לעי"נ הרבנית צביה בת ר' אברהם ע"ה - נפ' כ"ט כסלו - ד' דחנוכה - תנעב"ה

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many *gedolim* have admitted that her efforts to enlighten the darkened Jewish landscape may have been the most contributing factor in the restoration and continuation of *Torah-true Yiddishkeit*.

When World War I broke out on *Tisha B'av* 1914, Jewish communities throughout Europe were ravaged and destroyed. Many people fled their hometowns and congregated in bigger cities in the hope that their safety was more assured amongst larger numbers. One of these refugees was a thirty-year old woman by the name of Sarah Schenirer, who escaped Cracow, Poland, and frantically made her way west to Vienna, together with thousands of other refugees. She settled temporarily in Vienna and hoped to ride out the storm of war.

Sarah Schenirer was a headstrong and passionate person, who was committed to her *Torah-true* ideals. She would regularly attend *shiurim* and *tefilllos* but felt that something was missing, her fate was calling.

On *Shabbos Chanukah*, 1915, she heard the call. Early *Shabbos* morning, Sarah Schenirer attended the *Beis Haknesses* in Vienna where the local Rabbi, R' Fleisch ZT"L, was known for his powerful oratories. R' Fleisch was a pupil of the famed **R' Shamshon Raphael Hirsch ZT"L**, and he based much of his speaking abilities, as well as his content, on his *Rebbe's* teachings. That particular *Shabbos* morning *derasha* was in large part a testimony to the major impact of Jewish women on *Klal Yisroel*, throughout the generations.

“Look,” R' Fleisch thundered, “at the courageous acts of Jewish women during the terrible years leading up to the miracle of *Chanukah*. Look at what Yehudis accomplished, by killing the Greek king and the *Kiddush Hashem* that Chana and her seven sons performed, when they refused to bow down to the Greek idols. In every generation, we find courageous Jewish women, who take the initiative and effect tremendous salvation on behalf of their people. Who are the *Chashmonaim* of our generation? Where are those who will raise the banner of מ'י לה' אלי' to rally and inspire the young women to act in the name of *Hashem*?”

Sarah Schenirer was sitting in the ladies section, mesmerized. This was what she always believed in and what she felt was necessary for her Jewish sisters. R' Fleisch's words shook her to her very foundation and the import of his words hit her with tremendous force. She made up her mind right then and there, and became a student of R' Fleisch. She learned from him and studied the many writings of R' Shamshon Raphael Hirsch, including his renowned work known as the “Nineteen Letters.” Soon after the conclusion of the Great War, she returned to Cracow and began plans for her magnum opus; the greatest single contribution of a woman to the Jewish People in the modern era, the Bais Yaakov movement.

When **R' Sholom Schwadron ZT"L** would recount this story, he would add the following little aside: “Sarah Schenirer’s Bais Yaakov movement shook Heaven and Earth. Through her, girls all over the world, received a Jewish education and an appreciation of *Torah* values. But what about R’ Fleisch? Undoubtedly, when he reached the next world, he was greeted with a vision of worlds upon worlds of Jewish life existing in his merit. Little did he realize the power of his words that *Shabbos Chanukah*, and what it eventually led to!”

משל למח הדבר רומה

ולא זכר שר המשקים את יוסף ויטכחו וגו' (מ-כג)

משל: The students of the renowned Grodno Yeshiva decided to stage a walkout. They were protesting the abject lack of food and amenities being provided and they all went to learn one day in another *Beis Medrash*, leaving their own deserted.

The *Rosh Yeshivah*, **R' Shimon Shkop ZT"L** was informed of the strike early in the day, but said nothing, his reaction seen as a silent nod of assent. On the second morning, however, he sent a strongly worded message to the older students informing them to come back immediately. They did so hastily but wondered about R’ Shimon’s seeming change of heart. The *Rosh Yeshivah* explained his reaction.

“You’ve made your point! We understand the problem and we intend to fix it. But do not overstep your bounds. One day is a protest - anything more will simply nullify your original intentions, causing you to bear the blame of the entire *yeshivah*!”

במשל: *Chazal* tell us that Yosef was punished with two extra years of slavery because he twice asked the Royal Butler to remember him. Had he only asked once, he would not have been punished at all, because the first request was seen in Heaven as his *hesed* - *effort*, and he was well within his rights to try to effect his freedom. One request was all he needed - the second request was over and beyond necessity.

ואמר ישראל אל יוסף הלא אחך
רעים בשכם לכה ואשלחך וכו' (ל-יג)

When Yaakov called to his beloved son Yosef, to travel to Shechem and check on the whereabouts of his other sons who were tending to the sheep, the *Torah* refers to him as “Yisroel.” This seems to be a bit out of sorts, since we find the name “Yaakov” being used with greater frequency in the *parsha*: “אלה תולדות יעקב” - “*And Yaakov settled*,” “וישב יעקב” - “*These are the descendants of Yaakov*,” “ויקרא יעקב” - “*And Yaakov tore his garments*.” Why, suddenly, does the *Torah* switch the manner in which it refers to Yaakov, by addressing him as “ישראל”?

The *Torah* is teaching us a tremendous lesson in the art of “היי דן את כל אדם לכף זכות” - “*Always judge every person in a positive light*,” declaims **R' Avrohom Ben HaRambam ZT"L**. One may stop and wonder: If the entire *Golus Mitzrayim* came about as a result of the mass emigration of *Bnei Yisroel* to Egypt; Yaakov and his family only moved there because Yosef was the viceroy in Egypt; he only rose to his lofty stature after being freed from slavery; the slavery was a product of Yosef’s brothers’ hatred for him and their opportunistic encounter with him in the fields; he only went out to the fields to check on them in Shechem to fulfill his father’s request. Hence, based on this logical sequence of events, it would appear as if Yaakov, himself, was the source of the bitter Egyptian exile!

Thus, precisely at this juncture in the storyline, the *Torah* employs the name “Yisroel” which implies a lofty stature, an ascetic piety, and a sanctified, if not blameless, sense of purpose. For it was not Yaakov that catalyzed the series of events leading up to the *golus*, but rather, the express will of *Hashem*!

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

כדי להודות להלל לשמך הגדול על נסיון ועל נפלאותיך ועל ישועתך (תפילה של הדלקת נרות)

One of the most important themes in the *Chanukah* story is the heroism of Jewish women and the preservation of their modesty. The *Medrash* relates the famous story of a widow named Yehudis who volunteered to go to the king and rescue the city of Jerusalem when it was besieged by the Syrian-Greek army. She gained an audience with him and he fell for her charms. He made a lavish feast in her honor during which much wine and old cheese was consumed. He became drunk and fell into a deep sleep. That night as he slept, she took his sword and decapitated him. She put his head in her pouch and brought it back to the city with her, whereupon the Jews hung it on the city walls. When the Greeks realized they had lost their leader they panicked and fled. This story, as well as other similar stories of Jewish heroines, was what inspired one of our modern-day Jewish heroines to shift into action and begin a movement so wide and so successful, that

TORAH GEMS

והדליק נרות בחצרות קטן וקבע
שמעתי ימי חנוכה אלו וכו' (על הגמרא)

The *gemara* (שבת כא) describes the main facet of our celebration during the *Yom Tov* of *Chanukah*: “*When the Kingdom of the House of the Chashmonaim overpowered the enemy, they searched and only found one flask of oil, enough for one day’s lighting. A miracle occurred and they lit from it a full eight days.*” In commemoration of this incredible miracle, we, too, light the *menorah* for eight straight days.

But there is an underlying current to the words of *Chazal*, one that in itself should make us celebrate our Jewish heritage. The **Satmar Rebbe, R’ Yoel Teitelbaum ZT"L** illuminates our eyes with the following thought: The special flask of oil which was sealed with the signet of the *Kohen Gadol*, remained hidden for many, many years; not just from the Greek invaders, but also from the Jewish protectors. All the years that the Syrian-Greek Hellenists decreed against the Jewish People, forcing them away from the *Torah*, and making their lives difficult, this flask of oil remained hidden. For *Hashem* was preparing the seeds of redemption. *Hashem* saw what was happening to His people, and kept a watchful eye; albeit from a hidden, distant perspective. In the end, when the time was ripe, *Hashem* revealed, in all His Glory, the true light of His love and guidance, and brought about the salvation of *Klal Yisroel*.

There are times when a person thinks that no one is there for them, no one is watching over them, life has become unmanageable, impossible. The lesson of the *Chanukah licht* is that even when things are tough, *Hashem* is there, watching, waiting and, of course, protecting. Until the time when He will reveal His true intentions, bringing *simcha* and joy to His children.