

מאת מו"ה ברוך הירשפלד שליט"א
ראש כולל עטרת חיים ברוך קליבלנד הייטס

or the *Taz*), a person should try to position the relevant *mitzvah* items (or not position the second at all till needed), or enter his house (or room) in such a way that he first comes upon the item that he plans to do first. For example - and this depends on the layout of the house - if one lights *Menorah* before *Havdala*, he should enter his home from a door that is near the *Menorah*, so that the first *mitzvah* he approaches is the *Chanukah* lights. If that is not possible, he should not set up the *Havdala* items until he has finished his *mitzvah* with the *Menorah*. If one makes *Havdala* first, he should arrange the necessary items in a way that he first reaches those items rather than passing by the *Menorah*.

Another Application. The *Shabbos* table should be set up so that the one who says *Kiddush* has the **wine and cup in front of him** and the *challos* further away. Otherwise, he is passing over the *challos* (which are fit for making *Kiddush*) while getting to the wine. Even though the *challos* are covered, which might justify bypassing them, it is not clear if this helps and one should keep out of the question by setting them up as mentioned (5).

Challenge. This *Shabbos*, with *Rosh Chodesh* and *Chanukah* together, yields the longest possible *bentching* of the year. What an accomplishment it would be if one can concentrate and say all the words with *kavana* and feeling, from beginning to end, in at least one of the three *Shabbos bentchings*. **עזר לעבוד:** Here are some helpful pointers: If one thinks for thirty seconds before *bentching* the following thoughts, it will help him properly concentrate on the words: **1)** How all this food got here, where it came from and how many people were involved; **2)** The Divine gift of *Shabbos*, with all its implications; **3)** The miracles of *Chanukah* and our religious survival; **4)** The atonement of *Rosh Chodesh* and opportunities of the new month.

(1) שלחן ערוך או"ח תרפ"ב (2) טורי זהב ש"א (3) משנה ברורה ש"סג (4) או"ח כ"ה א' (5) נראה לי

הוא היה אומר

A SERIES IN HALACHA
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

Selected Halachos for Shabbos Chanukah

Unique Application of an Old Halacha. This *Motzei Shabbos Chanukah*, when the men come home from *shul*, there are two customs pertaining to the order of events. One custom is to follow the pattern of the **Shulchan Aruch** ⁽¹⁾, which is to first light the *Chanukah* candles, before fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *Havdala*. The reason is in order to delay the departure and final good-bye of *Shabbos* as long as possible. Of course, one must say "ברוך המבדיל בין קודש לחול" in *Maariv* or "אתה חוננת" in order to be able to light the *Menorah*, or to do any work for that matter. The second custom is to follow the opinion of the **Taz** ⁽²⁾, who puts forth the Talmudic logic of "תדיר ושאינו תדיר קודם". In other words, one should first perform the more common *mitzvah* (תדיר) of *Havdala* (which he does every week on *Motzei Shabbos*) and then light the less common *mitzvah* of *Chanukah* (שאינו תדיר). The **Mishna Berura** rules ⁽³⁾ that whichever opinion one follows is correct, and one should attempt to do like his family *minhag* if there is one.

Not Passing Over a Mitzvah. Another well-known rule is "אין מעבירין על המצוה" which means a person should position himself, or a *mitzvah* item, in a way that he does not bypass a different *mitzvah* while fulfilling the first *mitzvah*. For this reason, we purposely position our *Talis* (in the *Talis zekel*) further out than the *Tefillin* so that when we put them on in the morning in the correct order as mentioned in **Shulchan Aruch** ⁽⁴⁾, we do not have to bypass the *Tefillin* in order to get to the *Talis*. Similarly, when lighting the *Menorah*, we stand to the left of the lights so that the first one we light is the first one in our reach, and from there we continue lighting - from left to right.

New Application. Based on the order one does (the *Mechaber*

R' Yisroel Friedman of Tchortkov ZT"l would say:

The nature of light is to illuminate a person's spirit and bring him joy and gladness. It follows, then, that the spiritual light of the *Chanukah Menorah* has the power to illuminate a Jew's heart and bring a special type of *simcha* to his soul. Therefore, one who suffers from depression should be vigilant in staring at the *Chanukah* candles, because they will bring *simcha* to his downtrodden spirit."

Sochatchover Rebbe, R' Shmuel Borenstein ZT"l (Shem M'Shmuel) would say:

"According to *halacha*, if one does not have enough money to buy lights for *Chanukah* or the *Arba Kosos* on *Pesach*, he must go begging from door to door to gather funds. Why is the *halacha* stringent especially on these mitzvos? Because with every other *mitzvah*, if one is prevented from fulfilling it, his *machshava*, his thought to do it, is considered as if he did the actual *mitzvah*. However, regarding *Chanukah* and *Pesach*, the main *mitzvah* is *Pirsumei Nisa*, publicizing the great miracle, and one cannot fulfill this *mitzvah* without concrete action."

A Wise Man would say:

"There are two kinds of people in the world: Givers and Takers. Takers may eat better, but givers sleep better."

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זמן קריאת שמע/המ"א - 8:55

זמן קריאת שמע/הגר"א - 9:31

סוף זמן תפילה/להגר"א - 10:17

שקיעת החמה שבת קודש - 4:28

מוצש"ק צאת הכוכבים - 5:18

צאת"ח / לריבנו תם - 5:40

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הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבינוביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים עיה"ק

רמזי חלום פרעה ופתרונו

נשאר מראהו רע כאשר בתחילה, ואז רואה האדם איך שהיצר רימה אותו וחוזר בו ממעשיו, אך את הנעשה אין להשיב, היצר אכן הצליח לראבוננו להפסידו נתן מימי עלומיו.

אך היצר עדיין שוקד על שמריו, ואם שוב אינו יכול לגרום 'אחיות עינים' ע"י תחבולה הראשונה מנסה הוא כעת לעשות תחבולה אחרת שעדיין לא עמד האדם על טיבה, ומנסה גם בואת את מזלו וזהו **וישן ויחלום שנית** שוב נסיון של אחיות עינים, אך אולי בצורה יותר קשה מקודמה, כדי שלא יהיה ביכולת האדם להתבונן מה עובר עליו, ומי הוא העומד תחת אלו המקרים, כאן מראה הוא לו **שכלים בריאות וטובות** ומפתה אותו להימשך אחר תענוגי עולם הזה, ושוב מנתב לו דרכים איך ומה לעשות כדי להשיג אלו החמדות, ואכן שוב נכנס הלה ראשו ורובו לתוך אותה קלחת המרחיקו רחוק רחוק מתכלית בואו לעולם, וכל כולו נתון הוא איך להשיג את מאוויו, אך לאחר זמן שוב רואה הוא כי כל עיניו עולם הזה אינם כלום, ואין בהם חפץ כלל, וזהו ענין השכלים הצנומות המבליעים את השכלים הבריאות והטובות, ושוב לא נשאר מהן שריד ופליט, וכל חלומו של הנאת עולם הזה נמוג והולך לו. כך מכלה האדם ימיו באימה ופחד מפני הבאות, ואינו שם על לב איך שהשקן במזימתיו גורם לו לאבד את ימיו שלא יחזור עוד, ובכך מגרע הוא את חלקו לעתיד.

זה מה שגילה הכתוב בפתרון החלום, כי יוסף שהוא הצדיק השיג כוונת היצר באלו התחבולות, והוא אשר גילה שכל המאורעות שורשם ותחילתם אחד הוא, הכל הוא מזימת היצר האורב לו לאדם לאבד ממנו את הטוב הנצחי, וזה כוונת הכתוב (מא. כו) **שבע פרות הטובות שבע שנים הנה, ושבע השכלים הטובות שבע שנים הנה חלום אחד הוא**, והיינו כי כל המאורעות הכל הם 'חלום' ואחיות עינים גרידא הבאים מאותו 'אחד' הוא היצר אשר במזימתיו מכוון ללכוד את אותן שבעים שנותיו של אדם אשר במספר קטן הם שבע. כי באלו הנסיונות חפץ הוא להטריד את האדם ולמנעו מלקיים את חובתו.

ובהמשך (פסוקים כט - לא) מזהיר הכתוב ואומר **הנה שבע שנים באות שבע גדול** והיינו כי על האדם לדעת כי באלו שבעים שנותיו עלי אדמות, (שבמ"ק הם שבע) הם בבחי' 'שבע גדול' כי יכול הוא לחטוף בהם מצוות כאוות נפשו, אבל אחרים יבואו **שבע שנות רעב** היינו כשעובר האדם לעולם הנצחי, הרי הוא בבחי' רעב, כי נעשה חפשי מן המצוות, ושוב אין ביכולתו לעשות מאומה, ורק מה שתפס בעודו בעולם תפס. ואותם שנות שבע רוצה היצר לאבד מן האדם וממיר אותם בטרדות של עולם הזה.

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טוב התבלין

רעיונות ופירושים לעורר את האדם לעבודת
הש"ת והתחזקות באמונה ובטחון מאת
והנה מן היאר עלת שבע פרות יפות מראה ובריאת בשר וגו' (מא-ב) - רמזי חלום פרעה ופתרונו

ר' יש פרשתו נרמז ענין תחבולות היצר איך משבש הוא את דעת האדם, ומראה לו פנים כאילו עולמו חרב בעדו, ובכך מטרידו מלקיים חובתו בעולמו, עד שעברים עליו שנותיו כצל, ואז רואה הוא איך שכל אלו הטרדות לא היה בהם כי אם אחיות עינים, והיה זה היתול מצד היצר כדי להעמידו בנסיון. והיא תוכחה לאדם להתנעד בעוד מועד מכל מצוקותיו, ולהתגבר על יצרו בעוד הוא בימי עלומיו, וידע מראש כי מה שמנבא לו היצר שחורות אינו כי אם מזימה מצידו, כדי לצודו לרשתו, ולמנעו מעשות טוב.

ואמר הכתוב ויהי לשון צער, ומזה הצער **מקץ שנתים** מזה שהאדם עומד בקץ שנותיו, כלומר שכבר עברו עליו רוב שנותיו, ורואה שמכל זה לא נשאר כי אם **ימים** כי על אף שהיה ביכולתו לחטוף הרבה מצוות בשנותיו שהעניק לו הבורא, והיה ביכולתו לנצל את כל אותן שנים שיהיו קודש להשם, בכל זאת מחמת רוב טרדותיו במשך כל אלו השנים, לא היה שם לב לכך, ועכשיו שמתבונן רואה הוא שמכל אלו השנים אין לו מהם כי אם מעט שבמעט, כי כל המצוות שעשה בהם אינם מצטרפים כי אם לימים מועטים, וכעת אחד כל אלו השנים **ופרעה** - הוא מלשון גלוי, כלומר אז מתגלה לו שכל אלו הנסיונות שעמדו בדרך, והטרידו את שלוותו, לא היו כי אם בחינת **חלם**, והיינו, שלא היו כי אם מזימת היצר שדרכו לנסות את האדם ע"י אחיות עינים, שמכניסו לתוך דמיון כאילו נתון הוא לתוך איזה צרה קשה, ושעליו להרבות בכמה וכמה מיני השתדלויות כדי להוציא את עצמו מן הסכר, ואכן נראה לו כי נאלץ הוא להקדיש כל עתותיו עבור זה הענין, וכך מכלה הוא את ימיו לריק, ורק כעבור הכל רואה הוא כי לאמיתו של דבר לא היתה צרתו כל כך צרה, ולא היה לו כל כך צורך בכל השתדלויותיו.

ומתאר הכתוב מהו דרכו של היצר להטעות את האדם, כי מצייר לפני האדם דמיון **שוהנה עומד על היאר**, ורואה הוא, **והנה מן היאר עלת שבע פרות יפות מראה ובריאת בשר וגו'** - היינו שהיצר מראה לו טעם להפחידו, באמרו, ראה מה עלול לבוא עליך באם לא תראה להתעשית ולעשות דבר מה למנוע הגבורות החזקות הדומים לאותן פרות החזקות בריאות הבשר, והלה אכן שומע לו, ומקדש את מיטב ימיו הם ימי עלומיו, ועושה בהם כמה מיני השתדלויות לבל יבוא לאותו מצב עליו דיבר יצרו, אך בסופו של דבר רואה הוא שכל זה הוא רק דמיון שוא, ואחר שניצל היצר אותה תחבולה **עלות פרות רעות מראה ודקות בשר**, והנה **ותאכלנה הפרות רעות המראה וגו' את שבע הפרות הטובות**, ולא נשאר מהם מאומה, וניכר שלא היה זה כי אם אחיות עינים כי הפרות הרעות

והעצה לזה הוא (פסוקים לג - לו) כי מוטל על האדם להתאזר נגד יצרן, **ויפקד פקידים** - שיתדבק אל צדיקי הדור שהם כפקידים המשגיחים על האדם לבל יסחף אחר עניני עולם הזה, אלא יקדישו את ימיהם לעבודת השי"ת ואף אם נדמה להם שע"ז לא יהיה להם כי אם להם צד ומים לחץ בעוה"ז, מכל המקום ע"ז **ויקבצו את כל אוכל השנים הטובות האלה ויצברו בר** דהיינו

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

בימי מתתיהו בן יוחנן כהן גדול חשמונאי ובניו - האור גדול המגיע בחנוכה

להניחה על פתח ביתו מבחוץ", וכתבו התוס' שם ד"ה מצוה להניחה וכו', "מצוה להניחה על פתח ביתו מבחוץ - ומיידר דליכא חצר אלא בית העומד סמוך לרשות הרבים, אבל אם יש חצר לפני הבית מצוה להניח על פתח החצר, דאמר לקמן חצר שיש לה ב' פתחים צריכה ב' נרות וכו'".

הרביעית, מדוע בלילה (כנ"ל), החמישית, מדוע עד שתכלה רגל מן השוק (כנ"ל). ותרין, דקורם נס חנוכה היתה ירידה גדולה כביכול להשכינה, ש'נכנסו יוונים להיכל, ושמאו כל השמנים שבהיכל' (גמרא שם), ועל כן הוצרך לירד מלמעלה אור גדול כל כך, שיאיר אפילו במקומות הנמוכים, ולכך הוא דווקא בסוף החורש (וכן כתב שם, "שמעתי בשמו של הרב, שהפליא בשבח של חג החנוכה, ואמר: כי אין בכל המועדים של כל השנה שהיו עליות בחצי השני של החורש"), ודווקא למטה מעשרה טפחים, ד"מעיולם לא ירדה השכינה למטה מעשרה טפחים וכו', שנאמר "והארץ נתן לבני אדם" (סוכה ה), ודווקא ברשות הרבים במקום הקליפות הטמאות, ודווקא בלילה שהוא זמן התגברות הדינים, והגיע האור אפילו לבחינת 'רגלין' (הנמוכה ביותר), וזה 'עד שתכלה רגל (בחנית 'רגלין') מן השוק, ולכך הוא רק קצת יום טוב'.

והוסיף, "ולכך בחנוכה שהיתה התגברות הקליפות מאוד, נעשה הנס בשמן שהוא אור, ונמשך אור גדול מאוד וכו', וזה נעשה בכל חנוכה - 'ביטול הקליפות, ומתנוכה נשאר הרשימו לכל השנה" (ש"כל דבר שבקדושה עושה רושם לעולם, ולכך בכל מקום ששרתה בו שכינה נשאר בו רושם, כמו בכותל המערבי וכו').

בני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים

ויזן יוסף את פרעה לאמר בלעדי אלהים יענה את שלום פרעה

Parshas Miketz tells of Pharaoh's unusual dreams and his quest to find a satisfying interpretation. The wine steward recalls the successful interpretation that the young Hebrew slave had suggested to his own dream while in prison, and in response, Pharaoh calls for Yosef to come interpret his dream. Yosef appears before him and the king says to him, "I have dreamed a dream, but there is nobody who can interpret it, and I have heard about you that you can hear a dream and interpret it." In reply, Yosef says, "It is not me; G-d shall answer to Pharaoh's satisfaction." The **Medrash Tanchuma** views Yosef's response as reflecting his extraordinary humility: *"He attributed the greatness to its Master. The Almighty said: You did not want to boast about yourself; I swear that for this you will rise to greatness and kingship!"*

Yosef here attributed his talents to *Hashem*, to the "Master." He resists the instinctive tendency to take full credit for his achievement, announcing to Pharaoh, "It is not me." And for this self-effacing humility he is rewarded

FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

מחשבת הלב

יהי מקץ שנתים ימים ופרעה חלם והנה עמד על היאר וגו' (מא-א)

שר המשקים *Chazal* tell us that *Yosef HaTzaddik* was sentenced to an additional two years in prison when he asked the famous dreams of Pharaoh. One might wonder about the language of the *posuk*. It doesn't say, "ופרעה חלם", and Pharaoh was dreaming, in a present tense.

There is a great lesson in *Hashkafas HaTorah* to be learned here. There is a well-known conundrum in the world: What came first - the chicken or the egg? In Talmudic terms, one would ask; What came first - the "סיבה" or the "מסובב"? The cause or the effect? My *machshava* on this is that a secular person who views the world through a prism of nature, would look at the story of Yosef and think, "So what? He spent two years in jail, Pharaoh had a dream, heard about an intelligent man who interpreted his wine steward's dream perfectly, and summoned the man to see how he would interpret his own dream. If not for Pharaoh's own dream, Yosef would have never been called and never been released!" This is the view through the lense of a skeptic.

But a true *ben Torah* understands that every event is orchestrated with precision from on high. *Yosef HaTzaddik* was scheduled to come out of jail on that specific day (the *meforshim* say it was *erev Rosh Hashana*). Therefore, when the two years of his prison term were up - at that exact moment, the "Master Plan" that *Hashem* had created for Yosef to become the viceroy of Egypt and second-in-command to Pharaoh, was activated and immediately came into play. It is clear, then, that Pharaoh did not dream on his own. He was only dreaming because the two years in prison were over. In other words, it was not "ופרעה חלם" - "ופרעה dreamt (past tense) and therefore Yosef was released (past tense), but (סיבה), Pharaoh began dreaming (מסבב).

The lesson we take from this is eternal: while we are living life we think we are driving the bus but soon we get to realize that we are only passengers in the back seat!

על הניסים ועל הפורקן ועל הנבורות ועל התשועות (ברכת המזון)

The *Gemara* in *Shabbos* (דף כד.) asks: *"Is Chanukah mentioned (על הניסים) in Birchas Hamazon (bentching)? Since it is a Rabbinical ordinance, (perhaps) we do not mention it; or (perhaps) it is mentioned to give publicity to the miracle (Pirumei Nisa)? Rava said in the name of Rav Sechora, in the name of Rav Huna, 'It need not be mentioned; yet if one wants to mention it, he should do so in the blessing of thanks' (נודה לך)".*

There are two issues to be raised with this *Gemara*. First, why don't we find the same question with regard to saying "על הניסים" on *Purim* in *bentching*? Second, why does the *Gemara* finally decide that if one says it, he only does so in "ונודה לך" and not in "ובנה ירושלים" where most of the *hazkaros* are mentioned (ויעלה ויבוא, רצה והחליצנו ...)?

My *machshava* here is as follows: On *Purim* we thank the רבש"ע for saving our lives from extinction (הצלת הגוף). Haman wished to kill the Jewish people and *Hashem* brought about our salvation - therefore we celebrate with joyous feasts. On *Chanukah*, however, our lives were not in danger; our souls were in danger. Our enemies wanted to eradicate the *Torah* and all it stands for and *Hashem* miraculously protected it (הצלה רוחני) and brought us a resounding victory. As a result, we celebrate this *Yom Tov* with הלל והודאה - praising and thanking *Hashem* with *Hallel* and lighting the *Menorah*. It is clear now why the *Gemara* doesn't ask if we say *"Al HaNissim"* in *bentching* by *Purim*. Of course we say *"Al HaNissim"* in *bentching* by *Purim* - because it is the perfect time to celebrate a celebration of our physical salvation. The *Gemara* only asks this question by *Chanukah* because if you think about it, what does *bentching* have to do with the miracle of our *Ruchnius* being saved?

"נודה לך ה' אלקינו ועל בריתך שחתמת בבשרנו ועל תורתך, The **Rambam** rules that if a person does not say the words, "מרו להזכיר של חנוכה בברכת המזון?": *"We thank You, Hashem, our G-d for the circumcision You sealed into our flesh, and for the Torah You taught us) in bentching*, he is not *yotze*. Why? Why is it necessary to mention *Limud HaTorah* in *bentching* if we recite *Birchas HaTorah* every morning before davening? The answer is that even though in *bentching* we are thanking *Hashem* for food which is a **דבר גשמי** - an object that serves our physical well-being, a *ben Torah* must always realize that his objective in life is to make every **דבר גשמי** into a **דבר רוחני** - a holy and spiritual concern. A *Torah Yid* must always recognize that he doesn't live to eat - he eats to live! Therefore, if someone doesn't mention "ברית ותורה" in *bentching* he is not *yotze* - because after all is said and done, he is missing the point!

We thank *Hashem* for the *Nes Chanukah* in *bentching* because we are thanking Him for the *Gashmius* that helps our *Ruchnius*. This is also the reason why *"Al HaNissim"* comes right after the *beracha* of "נודה לך" - the *beracha* in which we just mentioned "ברית ותורה" - to demonstrate that our *Gashmius* is really our *Ruchnius*.

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV

They, like Yosef, refused to pride themselves for their accomplishments, and instead recognized Hashem’s intervention through which their success was achieved.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים מִרְגְּלִים אַתֶּם לִרְאוֹת אֶת עֲרֹת הָאָרֶץ וְכוּ' (מג-ב)
When the famine struck the land of Canaan, it forced the sons of Yaakov to come to Egypt to purchase grain at the behest of their father. Unbeknownst to them, their brother Yosef, whom they had sold into slavery years earlier, had risen to the position of Egyptian Viceroy and oversaw the collection and distribution of grain during the drought. When the brothers came before Yosef to purchase grain, they did not recognize him, and Yosef - who recognized them - accused them of coming to Egypt to spy. His words of indictment were: “*You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land* (ערות הארץ).”
On a basic straightforward level, the term “ערות הארץ” refers to the country’s defense secrets. Yosef speaks here of the aspects of the country that are not meant for the public eye, such as classified military information, hidden escape routes and secret weapons. Indeed, Rashi explains that Yosef accosted his brothers for entering Egypt through ten different gates. According to the *Medrash*, the brothers did this in the hope of finding their long lost brother, whom they had sold as an Egyptian slave. Yosef, however, points to this unusual arrangement as evidence that they were searching for “ערות הארץ” - hidden, classified information about the country.
The **Vilna Gaon** in *Sefer Mishlei* (7:16) describes Yosef’s remark as support for his description of ancient Egypt as “a place where all the pleasures of this world were found, where there was the essence of desire and root of all impurities.” The Gaon translates “*ervas ha’aretz*” to mean “the nakedness of the earth,” the world’s center of promiscuity, pleasure and indulgence. In response to the brothers’ claim that they had come for the innocent purpose of purchasing grain, Yosef charges that they in fact visited Egypt to indulge in the delights and pleasures the country had to offer.
The **Zera Kodesh** cites the *Mekubal*, **R’ Nosson Nota Shapiro ZT”L**, author of *Megaleh Amukos*. He writes that the purity and holiness of *Yosef Hatzaddik* nullifies the *klipah*, the negative forces, of Yavan/Greece. How so? Because the numerical value of “ויסף” (156) is equal to the value of both “מלך ניר” and “אנטיוכוס” (156). The wicked king of the Hellenist Greek nation, Antiochus, who reigned at the time of the *Chanukah* saga, was the symbol of the “*klipah*” of the Greek regime, embodying a culture that stood diametrically opposite Yosef’s attribute of

kedushah. It was for precisely this reason that the Greeks outlawed, among other things, the *mitzvah* of *Bris Milah*, which represents Yosef’s sanctity. Their goal was to intensify and enhance the *klipah* of immorality - ערות” “ערות - whereas Yosef accomplished just the opposite. He personally avoided immorality, even though he found himself in *Mitzrayim*, “*ervas ha’aretz*,” the hotbed of corruption and depravity.
Every year, when the holiday of *Chanukah* comes around, conventional wisdom tells us that the *minhag* (custom) to eat *latkes* on *Chanukah* is based on the fact that *latkes* are made with oil. Who can resist a whiff of the frying pan that was doused in cooking oil, as the *latkes* simmer to their greasy perfection? This makes sense as oil was part of the great miracle, when one day’s worth of oil burned for eight days. However, little do people know, this is not the reason for the *minhag* of *latkes* on *Chanukah*.
Rabbi Baruch Lederman Shlit’a (*Kehillas Torah, Denver*) relates in the name of **R’ Dovid Feinstein Shlit’a**, *Rosh Yeshivah of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem*, that in truth, *latkes* have nothing to do with oil. Years ago, in Eastern Europe, they did not have cooking oil as we do now. In fact, they barely had any oil at all. If they wished to fry food, they used either chicken *schmaltz* or butter.
Latkes were fried with butter. Indeed, R’ Dovid recalled, that when he would come home and smell *latkes*, he knew it was going to be a dairy meal. A typical combination was *latkes* and sour cream. Having grown up in Eastern Europe, R’ Dovid was surprised when he came to America and saw *latkes* in meat delicatessens. Somehow in America, *latkes* got switched from a dairy food fried in butter, to a *pareve* food fried in oil. That is why you will often see *latkes* and applesauce with brisket of beef.
R’ Dovid explained that the whole reason for the *minhag* of *latkes* on *Chanukah* is because they were fried in butter and there is a *minhag* to eat dairy foods on *Chanukah*. Why is there a *minhag* to eat dairy on *Chanukah*? To quote the **Sefer HaToda’ah**, the daughter of *Yochanan Kohen Gadol* was especially beautiful and the tyrant-king desired her. She seemingly acquiesced, came before him and fed him heavy cheese and other dairy foods which made him thirsty. She then plied him with wine to drink until he passed out, whereupon she severed his head and brought it to Jerusalem. When the Syrian soldiers saw that the king had perished, they fled.
Since part of the *Chanukah* miracle was brought about through dairy, it is customary to eat dairy foods, like *latkes* fried with butter, on *Chanukah*.

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of *Chanuka*, which is eight days long, is connected to the eighth *Sefira* known as “הוד”. The holy **Ariza’I** goes on to say that in the blessing of “יוצר המאורות” before *Krias Shema* of *Shachris*, it says as follows: (3) וקדוש, (2) מרום, (1) מלכות, (4) עושה חדשות, (5) בעל מלחמות, (6) זורע צדקות, (7) מצמיח ישועות, (8) בורא רפואות, (9) נורא תהלות, (10) אדון הנפלאות. Each one of these praises of *Hashem* corresponds to another *Sefira*, and the eighth praise - “בורא רפואות” - “*Creator of cures*,” corresponds to *Hod*. This makes the eight days of *Chanuka* an auspicious time for bringing about healing.
It is told that when the eldest son of the **Sanzer Rav, R’ Chaim Halberstam ZT”L**, was a child, he was involved in a terrible accident that threatened his life. Yechezkel Shraga, who went on to become the renowned **Shinover Rebbe**, was once walking in the marketplace of his town of birth, Rudnik, when a wagon loaded high with daily supplies came charging down the dirt path where he was walking. The boy did not have enough time to get out of the way, and he was literally run over by the careening cart. He was knocked unconscious and hovered between life and death for some time.
R’ Chaim came running when he heard what had happened to his oldest son, and he began a program of devout and constant prayer, moving heaven and earth to effect a cure for his son. He even traveled to many great *Rabbanim* and *Torah* scholars, begging them to pray on his son’s behalf, and gathering *berachos* for the boy’s well-being.
When the **Rebbe** of **Ropshitz, R’ Naftali Tzvi Horowitz ZT”L** heard about the accident, he sent a messenger to Rudnik, armed with a flask of leftover olive oil that he had used for the *Chanukah* lights. He told the messenger to give it to the boy’s family and instructed them to rub this oil all over the young boy’s body as a *segulah* for a *refuah shleimah*. The family did as they were told and immediately after this was done, the child saw improvement, eventually healing entirely, and living for many long, righteous years as the *Rebbe* of Shinov, one of the greatest *Admorim* of Poland.
Many years later, when **R’ Yechezkel Shraga ZT”L** was becoming weak from old age, he would recall the wonderful oil, the שמן זית of the *Ropshitzer Rav* that saved his life, and how he felt his entire body strengthening and healing inside even as the *Chanukah* oil was being applied. The great *Shinover Rebbe* would turn to his attendants and with a wry smile he would sigh and say, “*Where can one get such olive oil in today’s day?*”
EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO
דרגה יתירה * הסתפקות *
ואתם לבו הביאו שבר רעבון בתיכם (מג-ב)
How much should a person eat? Wow! That is a “loaded question” if I ever heard one! But in all seriousness, do we really know how to eat? How much? How little? When is too much - when is not enough?
Well, we can gain insight into this matter from none other than *Yosef HaTzaddik*. As the Viceroy in Egypt, he told his brothers to take food with them to their homes. But the expression he used - “*go bring grain for the hunger of your households*” - also teaches us an important lesson about the proper way to eat. The **Shla”h Hakadosh** uses these very same words to describe exactly how much a person should eat. It should be “שבר רעבון” - enough food to break your hunger. Not more and not less! In today’s world there is such a stress on food and many, if not most, people have some sort of eating disorder - either they eat too much or they eat too little! Either way it is a “disorder” for it disrupts a natural, healthy lifestyle.
In *bentching*, we mention the three keys to successful eating. We say: “ואכלת ושבעת וברכת” - You shall eat. You shall be satisfied (in other words, “Stop eating!”). Last, but certainly not least, you should thank *Hashem*! The Hebrew word for satisfied is “שָׂבַע” which is the same letters as טבע - the number seven. Seven represents טבע - the natural order of the world. Since the world was created in seven days, the number seven also represents completion. Thus, “seven” and “satisfied” have the same connotation, as a person feels complete when he has eaten his fill.
Now, the word for FAT (let’s use “overweight” for the overly-sensitive) is “שָׁמֵן”, which, not coincidentally, is the same root as the word “שְׁמֹנֶה” which is the number eight. The *Seforim Hakedoshim* tell us that the number eight represents “למעלה מן הטבע” - going beyond nature, which in the case of **FAT** ... pardon me, overweight people, means eating beyond what is necessary and healthy in the physical world. And wouldn’t you know? The word for oil is “שָׁמֵן”. During the eight days of *Chanukah*, we use lots of *shemen* for our *Menorahs*. Why? Because it reminds us of the philosophy of “Greece” which is to stress the physical without proper boundaries. Even the word “נין” which is Greece, is spelled in a Greek manner: first a small *yud*, then a bigger *vav*, followed by an even bigger *nun*! The philosophy of Yavan was based on it’s own three keys to life: Eat a little, then a little more, and then ... GO CRAZY and INDULGE! (Sounds Greek to me!)
It is especially during *Chanukah*, when we must fight the Greek mentality and not fall prey to too many *latkes* and jelly donuts! It is a time to truly eat, be satisfied (STOP) and THANK HASHEM! *Lehodos U’Lehallel!*

of his “*chizuk sedarim*,” similar to his special learning sessions on Friday and *Motzei Shabbos*. During those reserved hours, the *Rav* learned *Torah* with unmatched excitement, singing a distinctive tune and fully absorbed in the *sugya* to the exclusion of all else. During those two hours, the entire world, save for his *gemara*, ceased to exist.

Rav Elyashiv’s schedule was a sight to behold, and many, many people would come from all over to ... behold it. Outside of his small home on *Rechov Chanan*, pandemonium reigned as people crowded into the narrow alley to catch a glimpse of the *Gadol Hador* performing the *mitzvah* of *Ner Chanukah*. Half-an-hour before sunset, the entire alleyway was already jam-packed with eager spectators, but the *Rav* remained totally oblivious to the turmoil outside his window, immersed as he was in his *gemara*. Every single moment was precisely calculated according to the will of *Hashem* and when the time for lighting the *Menorah* arrived, he closed his *gemara* and rose to perform the special *mitzvah* of *Chanukah*. Opening an antique, worn-out *siddur*, he recited the special *tefillah* before lighting, walked over to his *Menorah*, recited the *berachos* and lit the candles - as the massive crowd below collectively held their breaths and watched his every move. Then, Rav Elyashiv, accompanied by family and friends, sang *Maoz Tzur* in a rousing traditional tune. The instant the song was over, the *Rav* immediately sat down and returned to his *gemara* with redoubled fervor for two hours of intense learning to fill the missing gap in the world....

When someone would ask about this unique “*chizuk seder*” he was told that Rav Elyashiv was able to perceive that the two hours after lighting the *Menorah* are considered by most to be relaxing family time. Few people spend those hours in the *beis medrash*, causing a deficiency of *Torah* learning in the world at that time. Rav Elyashiv, who shouldered the responsibility of the generation’s *Torah* learning, felt obliged to strengthen his own learning during this weak hour and even refused to participate in any of the normal *Chanukah* customs during those two hours. Fearing that people would exploit this “off-time” to bother him with unwanted visits, he disconnected himself totally from his surroundings during these hours and dove, with unmatched fervor, into the deep sea of *Torah*. A special, otherworldly atmosphere pervaded the *Rav*’s home while the lights of the *Menorah* danced in his window.

There is a legend that is told about Rav Elyashiv’s unparalleled *hasmadah*, his diligence in learning. A number of years ago, an older tourist traveled to Jerusalem from abroad, but as soon as he opened his mouth it became clear that he was, in fact, born-and-bred in the holy city and had returned for a nostalgic trip to his childhood home in *Meah Shearim*. For hours, the gentleman wandered the familiar streets and alleyways of his youth with his American family, reminiscing, “This was the shop of ... here is the *shuk* ... the *shteiblach* ... everything in *Meah Shearim* is the same as it was when I left forty-six years ago! Only the people have changed; generations have come and gone!”

The man continued walking with his children and grandchildren, taking it all in with nostalgic pride. At one point, he stopped and pointed. “I remember this place. This is the *Ohel Sarah beis medrash*. It looks exactly the same as I remember it from my childhood.” The man walked inside. “You know, many years ago, when I was a kid, there was a young *avreich*, a really special person, who sat in the *beis medrash* here and learned with an incredibly sweet tune. We children used to love listening to the sound of his learning. *Halevai*, there should be such *masmidim* nowadays! I wonder where that *masmid* is today; I wonder where he lives and what he is doing now.”

The tourist entered the *beis medrash* and beheld an elderly man with a white beard, learning out loud with a pleasant tune. He walked over and said, “Excuse me, *Reb Yid*, I’m trying to remember ... over forty years ago there was a young *avreich* who sat here and learned in exactly the same spot you’re sitting. He was really special, always sitting and learning. Nothing disturbed him. Perhaps you remember him? I’m very curious to find out where he is today.”

The old man raised his hand dismissively and continued learning. The tourist stood on the side, listening to him learn as old memories washed over him. Suddenly, the truth dawned on him. “*Oiy gevald! Ehr iz doch dos! Der zelber niggun, der zelber lernen!*” (“It’s him! It’s the same tune, the same learning!”) He couldn’t contain his amazement and ran outside, exclaiming, “Nothing has changed at all in *Meah Shearim* in the past forty-six years - even the *masmid* who sits and learns in *Ohel Sarah*, is the same one - exactly as he did then!”

Rav Elyashiv didn’t even bother to look up from his *gemara* (It is unclear if this is truth or legend)

ומנותר קנקנים נקשה גם לשושנים בני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים (מקו צור)

Our Sages tell us that the holiday of *Chanukah* is a time that is unique, not only for spiritual enlightenment, but for physical healing as well. In Kabbalistic terms, everything that happens in the spiritual worlds take place through the medium of *Sefiros*. There are ten *Sefiros*, ten modes or attributes through which *Hashem* manifests Himself. The holiday

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

ויהי מקץ שנתיים ימים ופרעה חלם והנה עמד על היר וכו' (מא-א)

The *Medrash Raba* famously cites the *posuk* from *Tehillim* (40:5): “*Praiseworthy is the man who placed his trust in Hashem, and did not turn to the arrogant.*” The *Medrash* comments as follows: “*Praiseworthy is the man who placed his trust in Hashem*” - this refers to Yosef; “*and did not turn to the arrogant*” - because Yosef said to Pharaoh’s chief butler (at the end of last week’s *parsha*), “*If only you would think of me ... and mention me,*” Yosef had to remain in prison an additional two years. At times, a person may be put in a situation where he clearly sees that *Hashem* is his only true provider. He must face that reality with pure faith and then he will be rewarded with salvation.

Rabbi Peretz Eichler glanced at his watch one rainy spring night. It was 11:00 p.m., the ideal time for a surprise inspection. Peretz was a part-time *mashgiach* for United Kosher supervision, and part of his job was supervising a bakery in a local supermarket. Though the bakery would be closed by now, the supermarket itself was still open, and he would be able to get inside to check on the ingredients used in the baking.

Peretz threw on his trenchcoat and drove through the drizzle to the supermarket. The parking lot was nearly empty; when he entered the store, he could see only one cashier and a couple of customers at the front of the supermarket.

Peretz made his way through the aisles to the bakery section. That area of the store was completely deserted. It was likely that no one would come back to that section until four o’clock in the morning, when the bakers arrived to begin work. Peretz looked around at the supplies on the shelves, which appeared to be in order. Then he entered the walk-in freezer and started checking the supplies. It wasn’t long before he started to feel the cold, despite the coat he was wearing. He wasted no time in checking the food on the shelves and then heading back to the door of the freezer.

However, when he pushed on the inside handle of the freezer door, nothing happened. He frowned and pushed a little harder. Still nothing. He leaned back and jammed at the door with his shoulder, thinking the door was stuck and just needed a good solid jolt. But it still didn’t budge. “What’s going on here?” he grumbled in frustration. This time, instead of pushing the handle, he gave it a yank and the handle came off in his hand!

Now he became nervous. He was stuck in the freezer with no way out, and no one was due to arrive for four more hours. It would be impossible for him to survive that long! He began banging on the door, all the while knowing that there was no one around to hear him. Then he noticed a small crack on the bottom of the door. He leaned down, took a deep breath of the fresh air, and began screaming for help.

Peretz had no idea how long he had been lying there, yelling for help. Had it been one minute? Five? Ten? Every second felt like a lifetime. The frosty chill had invaded his body and he was beginning to feel the first effects of hypothermia. He started taking another breath to call again when the freezer door suddenly opened. Peretz stared upwards in shock. He quickly scrambled to his feet to face two young men, who were looking equally surprised.

“How did you get in here?” one of them exclaimed.

“I’m Rabbi Eichler from United Kosher supervision,” Peretz’s teeth were chattering but he managed to explain. “I went into the freezer to inspect the food, and somehow I got locked in. Thank you so much for coming to help me out! I would have frozen to death if not for you! Tell me, where are you coming from?”

“Actually, we’re from Kentucky,” one of the young men said. “We were just driving through New Jersey, and we stopped off to get something to eat. We decided to get something from the bakery. When we got here, we saw the bakery was closed, but as we started to leave we heard some screaming coming from the freezer, so we opened the door.”

“I can’t thank you enough,” Peretz said gratefully. “You literally saved my life.”

“Do you know why you were saved?” the young man said to Peretz. “It’s because you are working for G-d and it says in Psalms, ‘*The one who trusts in G-d will be surrounded by kindness.*’” Peretz breathed a deep sigh. All he could manage to say was a whispered, “*Boruch Hashem!*” (Adapted from **Visions of Greatness, Rabbi Yosef Weiss**)

מאי חנוכה דתנו רבנן בב'ה' כבסליו יומי דחנוכה תמניא אינון דלא למספר בהון (שבת כא)

The *Gemara* in *Shabbos* states: “מאי חנוכה? דתנו רבנן....” - which, when translated literally, means: “*What is Chanukah? As our Rabbis have learned*” In other words, what is the main point of *Chanukah*? What is *Chanukah* all about; what is its purpose? To learn *Torah*, to listen to our rabbi’s teachings, to reinforce *Limud HaTorah*!

R’ Yosef Shalom Elyashiv ZT”L had a special two-hour learning *seder* during *Chanukah* which began immediately after lighting the candles and lasted until it was time for his *shiur* in *Yeshivas Tiferes Bachurim*. This *seder* was also one