

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

הלכה למעשה

why it cannot be left outside, in order to permit taking them inside? The **Machatzis HaShekel** ⁽²⁾ holds that he may indeed bring his *Tefillin* into a bathroom if it is properly covered, even without a real need. The **Shulchan Aruch Harav** ⁽³⁾ disagrees and rules that this is not permitted. Other *Poskim* ⁽⁴⁾ agree with the *Machatzis HaShekel* and rule that one may be lenient. Therefore, if one is in an airport and wants to go into a bathroom with *Tefillin* in his traveling bag, it is permitted if there is nobody outside to watch them from being stolen, even according to the *Shulchan Aruch Harav*. According to the *Machatzis HaShekel* and the ruling of the above *Poskim*, one can take them into the bathroom if they are inside his traveling bag, even if there is someone who can watch them outside. **Seforim**. Today, *seforim* that are printed like books, even if they contain the Name of *Hashem*, are considered less holy than *Tefillin*. Thus, according to most *Poskim*, a single covering is enough to take them into a bathroom. This is based on the *Gemara* ⁽⁵⁾ and **Shulchan Aruch** ⁽⁶⁾ which states that the relevant *posukim* from the *Torah*, may be taken into a bathroom with one cover. This is the opinion of most *Poskim*. **Eliyahu Raba** ⁽⁷⁾ brings one differing opinion that equates printed *seforim* to *Tefillin* and holds that only amulets are permitted with one cover because they are very necessary for a sick person's protection. According to this opinion, *seforim* require a double cover. If one can, he should be strict like this opinion in *Eliyahu Raba*, but if there is an actual need, he can rely on the majority who are lenient. Therefore, if one is in a rush and unable to put his *sefer* down, i.e. he is in an airport terminal, he can quickly cover up the *sefer* in his hand, between his jacket and his shirt, and then enter the bathroom.

(1) ברכות כג. (2) מגיד (3) מנה (4) שער הציון מגין, מהרש"ם
גישו (5) שבת סא (6) יו"ד רפבז (7) א"ר מנח

הוא היה אומר

R' Aharon Perlow of Karlin ZT"l (Bais Aharon) would say:

"Pharaoh dreamed about seven fat cows and seven skinny cows. *Yaakov Avinu* (in *Parshas Vayeitzai*) dreamed about angels going up and down a ladder. Both were unusual dreams. The difference is that when Yaakov awoke, his first words were: *'How awesome is this place.'* When Pharaoh awoke, the first thing he did was ... go back to sleep!"

R' Yosef Chaim Schwab Shlit'a (Niflaos HaTorah) would say:

"*Parshas Miketz* is the only *parsha* for which the *Gaonim* list the number of words, 2025, at the end. Why did they do this? This is so the calendar makers can check their work, because *Parshas Miketz* must fall out on *Shabbos Chanukah* (98% of the time; the other 2%, it falls out right before or after). The word 'נר' has a *gematria* of 250. If we multiply this by the 8 nights that we light the *Menorah*, we total 2,000. Add 25, since *Chanukah* falls out on the 25th of *Kislev* (כ"ה), and we arrive at the number 2025 - a *remez* to *Parshas Miketz* on *Shabbos Chanukah*."

The Rebbe, R' Heschel of Krakow ZT"l would say:

"הפח נשבר ואנחנו נמלטנו. 'All eight days of *Chanukah*, we light a total of 44 candles. We see this from the *posuk*: 'and we are saved!' - 'ואנחנו נמלטנו', - broken in half, 'שבר' - 'פח' (flask of oil) which is *gematria* 88, (תהלים קכז-ז)

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Shabbos Parshas Miketz - Shabbos Chanukah

כ"ח כסלו תשע"ה - December 20, 2014

טוב התבלין

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

יקרא יוסף את שם הבכור מנשה כי נשני אלהים את כל עמלי ואת כל בית אבי.

ואת שם השני קרא אפרים כי הפרני אלהים בארץ עניי וגו' (פא-נאנג) - הודאה ותועלתה

בכל עת, ולדעת שגם זה הוא חסד עצום, כי היא דבר שהנשמה תלויה בה, והם אמצעי לחיים.

וכידוע מה שכתבו כמה גדולי ישראל, ליישב קושיית ה'בית-יוסף' הידועה (או"ח סי' תער) למה קבעו להלל ולהודות בחנוכה שמונה ימים, הרי הנס היה רק שבעה ימים, שכן ביום הראשון היה די שמן בפך שנמצא, כנוכר בגמרא (שבת כא) ותידעו, כדי להראות לנו, שמעשה טבעי כמו עצם מציאת פך השמן גם זה נחשב לנס, ולכן כללו את יום ההדלקה הטבעית יחד עם נס שאר ימי ההדלקה. וידע האדם שבכוח ההודאה לבוראו, להמשיך עליו כל מיני השפעות טובות, ולהושע מכל הדברים המזיקים עליו, שהרי ההודאה הוא הפתח לקבלת התפילות, שהרי בגמרא (ברכות לב:) איתא: מיום שחרב בית המקדש, ננעלו שערי תפלה, שנאמר: (איכה ג' ח) גם כי אזעק ואשוע שתם תפילתי; אך אף אם שערי תפלה ננעלו, מכל מקום שערי הודאה לא ננעלו, כי הודאה הוא כבוד למלכו של עולם, ולכן אין שום בריה שבעולם שיכול לעכב עלייתו זה השבח, ואם בכל זאת חפץ האדם שתפילתו תתקבל עליו להודות מקודם על חסדי המקום ויטפיל בקשתו בתוך הדברים ואז יזכה שיתעלו אגב ההודאה.

וזהו שמצינו בגמרא (ברכות לב:) לעולם יסדר אדם שבחו של הקב"ה ואחר כך יתפלל, ואפשר כי זהו גם טעם למסבע שטבעו חכמים בתפילה, כי בתפילת שמונה עשרה; קבעו חז"ל שג' ברכות הראשונות הן הודאה, ורק לאחר מכן קבעו כל הבקשות, ולבסוף חוזרים ומודים בג' ברכות האחרונות. וכל זה הוא כדי שהבקשות יהיו כלולים בתוך ההודאה, ועל ידי שההודאה תתקבל יתקבלו גם התפילות.

ועל פי האמור נוכל לפרש את מאמר דוד המלך (תהלים קיח, ט): פתחו לי שערי צדק אבא בם אודה יי', כי רמי בזה דוד על דורות הבאים, (כי כידוע כיוון דוד בממלואו על כל הדורות, וגרמו בהם כל הבקשות של בני ישראל להודותיהם) ואמר שאף כשהיו בני ישראל בגלות, וינעלו ח"ו לפנייהם שערי תפילה, בכל זאת ידעו שיש תקוה לתפילתם, והיא ע"י הודאה, וזהו כוונתו באמרו 'פתחו לי שערי צדק' היינו שערי שמים, ואף אם אין האדם ראוי לזה לפי מעשיו, בכל זאת מבקש דוד על פתיחת השערים עבורו, וכל זה אם כוונתו היא 'אבא בם אודה יי', היינו להודות להשג"ת, על כי ידי זה יתרבה כבוד ה', ולכן בהכרח מוטל על הממונים לפתוח לו שערי שמים, כי אחרת ימנעו רבוי כבוד שמים. וממשיך דוד ואומר 'זה השער לה' צדיקים יבואו בו' היינו שזה הוא אכן עצה

never heard Rabbi Wein speak and they were impressed with his wonderful style, combining wit, wisdom and scholarly advice all rolled up in one hour-long lecture. After he finished speaking, a line of well-wishers formed, to shake the rabbi’s hand and thank him for his speech.

A tall Irish fellow waited patiently on the line until he reached the front. He shook Rabbi Wein’s hand exuberantly and told him how much he admired his lecture. Then, he told him the following story:

“When I was a little boy, my mom brought me and my brothers over from Ireland. We settled here in Detroit and my mom went searching for some sort of employment. Times were tough and the only job she could find was as a cleaning woman for a wealthy Jewish family here in Detroit. The family was rich but I remember that they were always friendly and kind to my mom and would often send her home with bags of extra clothing and food for my family. My mom enjoyed working for them and we managed to get by.

“One year, in late December, the family went on vacation. My mother got it into her head to do something nice for her patrons and being unaware of the difference between Jewish and Christian holidays, she went out and bought a cheap Christmas tree, lighting and other accessories, and excitedly decorated the family’s entire home in green and red! Apparently, she never noticed the stares and strange looks of the Jewish neighbors, as they lived in an entirely Jewish neighborhood - but that was my mom! She was single-minded in her devotion and would let nothing stop her from doing this ‘good deed.’” The Irish fellow smiled wistfully at the recollection.

Rabbi Wein, as well as the others standing nearby, chuckled at the thought of an Irish woman decorating a Jewish home for her holiday! The man smiled and continued, “Well, you can imagine the surprise of the Jewish family as they pulled into their driveway from their vacation and saw their house all lit up in festive green and red lights! Immediately, an argument broke out in the car as the wife and kids insisted that my mother must be fired for doing something so ridiculous as hanging up Christmas decorations in a Jewish home. Was this a mocking gesture or just plain stupidity? Either way, she could not remain with the family. How can they face their neighbors? What an embarrassment! The father, however, was a kind and patient man and he told them to wait in the car while he went in to talk to my mom.

“Well, as my mother tells it, when he walked in the front door, she was standing at attention all excited to impress her patron family with this wonderful holiday surprise! The father smiled kindly and began to explain to her that in the Jewish religion, they did not celebrate this holiday on the eve of December 25th. Instead, they had their own holiday called Hanukah, and instead of a pine tree draped with tinsel and green and red lights, they displayed a *Menorah*, ate Potato patties called *Latkes*, and played with a blue and white (?) spinning top known as a *dreidel*! My mom was shocked but before her disappointment could set in, the man thanked her for this truly touching gesture and offered to help her take down all the Christmas decorations. Immediately, they got to work and within minutes, it was all down and packed away! Then, the family came into the house and not one word was said about the whole incident!”

The tall Irish fellow concluded his story by saying, “My mother, may her soul rest in peace, never forgot the kindness and respect she was shown by this man and his entire family and she always told us that Jews are special people. I grew up with this lesson, that one must treat others kindly and always take their feelings into consideration.”

משל למת הדבר דומה

בני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים (פיזט מקיז ציר)

משל: The following is quoted from an article that was printed in an Israeli newspaper a while ago. The story goes as follows: A young Israeli boy from a non-religious background comes home from school during the festival of *Chanukah*, and asks his father, “*Abba*, who were the Maccabees?”

Father: They were sons of the High Priest, Matityahu, in the Temple. They were righteous soldiers who fought against the Greeks and liberated the *Beit Hamikdash* against great odds. Then they found oil and lit the great *Menorah*.

Son: Did they keep *Shabbat*?

Father: Yes ... most likely.

Son: Did they study the *Torah* and keep *mitzvot*?

Father: Yes, I believe they did.

Son: *Abba*, do we keep *Shabbat*?

Father: Umm no.

Son: Do we study the *Torah* and keep the *mitzvot*?

Father: Uhhh no.

Son: *Abba*, one last question. If the war between the Greeks and the Maccabees was happening today, WHOSE SIDE WOULD WE BE ON?

במשל: Isn’t it ironic that one of the most widely celebrated holidays in the world, by both the religious and non-religious Jewish communities, is the festival of *Chanukah*, which, in essence, celebrates the Jewish victory in its ever-eternal war against the forces of secularization?

ה’ הצליחה נא, ותיכף חור שוב להודאה, להורות כי זהו הדרך לקבלת התפילות בעת פתיחת השערים, שאז יכלול תפילתו בתוך ההודאה וכשעילה ההודאה לשמים יעלה עמה גם בקשותיו ויתקבלו לרצון.

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
מגיד מישרים בק"ק בית שמש

ויאמר אליהם ישראל אביהם אם כן איפוא זאת עשו קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם וגו' (פג-יא) - בעניין אמירת שבה והלל לה'

התפילה והתחינה הזאת, וכן בדוד הוא אומר 'על כן מצא עבדך להתפלל לפניך את התפלה הזאת' (כיון שגם היא גורמת לתיקון וגילוי ספירת ה'מלכות' הנקראת 'זאת' כנ"ל), והיינו, שרצונו לומר, שעל ידי עסק התורה והתפילה תתקנו את הה"א האחרונה הנקראת 'אם' ונקראת 'כן'.

ופירש הדבר, שזאת התקיים ע"י שקחו מזמרת הארץ' הם התפילות שיש בהן זמרה ושבח ונוכלל בוה גם כל אמירת שבח לה', גם בהם יהיה זמר עריצים על ידי הבידוד של ניצוצי הקדושה הנעשה על ידם, 'בכליכם' רמז לניצוצות הקדושה שנקראים כלים (כיון שיש בהם השפעות העליונות), כנודע בסוד 'שבירת הכלים', שאנחנו צריכים לבררם ולתקנם, דבר יום ביומו, על ידי התפילות, עד גמריא (ובכך יתוקן ויתגלה ספירת ה'מלכות'), כי הקדוש ברוך הוא עשה זאת כדי ליכות אותנו בשכר טוב לעולם הבא, במה שמסר בידורם ותיקונם בידינו, וכמו שכתבנו בסייעתא דשמיא על מאמר רבי יוסי בסוף מסכת כלים 'אשריך כלים שנכנסת בטומאה ויצאת בטהרה', ולכן אמר 'בכליכם' שייחס אותם להם וכו"ו.

ומבואר, שכוננת 'קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם' היא אל תיקון וגילוי ספירת ה'מלכות' ע"י שזמזמרים ומשבחים לה'.

ואם כן, כמה זה מתאים, שפרשה זו המלמדת על עניין אמירת שבח והלל לה', נקראת תמיד בהג החנוכה שנקבע לשם כך, וכדאיאת בגמרא (שבת כ"א) "מאי חנוכה וכו', לשנה אחרת קבעום ועשאוים ימים טובים בהלל והודאה".

בני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים

זמזמר שיר חנוכת הבית לדוד (תהלים ל-א)

There are no coincidences in the *Torah*; the concept of something occurring by chance is the very antithesis of Jewish belief. With this in mind, we can begin to see the awesome level of Divine Providence in the juxtaposition of the three elements that are intertwined on *Shabbos Chanukah*: Yosef’s solution to Pharaoh’s dreams in *Parshas Miketz*, which is always read on or about the time of our second element, the *Yom Tov* of *Chanukah*; thirdly, the lesson and inner teaching of "זמזמר שיר חנוכת הבית לדוד" - the chapter in *Tehillim*, which is recited on *Chanukah*.

In **Einei Yisroel, R’ Yisroel Belsky Shlit’a**, elaborates on the threefold repetition of a lesson that *Hashem* wishes to establish deep within our hearts. *Yosef HaTzaddik’s* advice to Pharaoh not only solved a national problem; it proposed a revolutionary approach to establishing equilibrium in a world beset by conflicting fortunes. Yosef taught that it is we who must take the initiative, to use the circumstances of our existence in a wise way, in order not to waste the abundance of prosperous times in self indulgence, but to preserve this goodness for times when we may lack such blessing. *Dovid HaMelech* repeats this message in *Tehillim* through his intimate account of his

לצדיק החפץ להורות לה', כי דרכם יפתחו לפניו שערי שמים.

ולכן אחר שביקש דוד המלך ע"ה על פתיחת השערים לכבוד ההודאה, המשיך בהודאה, ובתוך הדברים תפס וביקש (שם כה): 'אנא ה' הושיעה נא, אנא

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו עפ"י פרשיות השבוע

כתב ה'בן איש חי' (הלכות, שנה ראשונה) לפרש את הכתוב ע"פ תורת הסוד, "נראה לי בסייעתא דשמיא, שידוע שה"א ראשונה דשם יהו-ה (הרומזת על ספירת 'בינה', המשפעת על ששת הספירות של המידות-חסד, גבורה, תפארת, נצח, הוד, יסוד') נקראת אם העליונה (המולידה ומשפעת), וגם ה"א האדונה דשם יהו-ה (הרומזת על ספירת ה'מלכות', המשפעת בכל העולמות) נקראת אם (המולידה ומשפעת), שהיא אימא תתאה, אלא שזו נקראת בשם 'כן', דהיא כן ומושב (וקוים והשפעה) לכל העולמות, שהיא סופא רכל דרגין (היינו, שהיא הספירה האחרונה המשפעת בכל העולמות) כידוע.

וזהו שכתוב 'אם כן', קרי בה אם בציד", רוצה לומר, 'אם' שהיא 'כן' איפוא זאת עשו, **זאת-ו' אות**, רמז לאותיות השם (יהו-ה), שהוא של ארבע אותיות, והכ**סא** (שהוא של שלוש אותיות, שהן שייכות לתיקון וגילוי ספירת ה'**מלכות**'), או רמז לאותיות שד-י ואותיות אדנ-י (שביחד הם שבע אותיות, ושייכות להנ"ל), שנפגמו בחטא אדם וחוה, **עשו**, רצונו לומר תקנו, כמו 'זבן הבקך אשר עשה' (ע' רש"י בראשית י"ח ח, ושם א' ו', ורבינו בחיי שמות ל"א ט"ז).

או שזאת' כינוי לתורה, כמו שאמרו רבותינו זכרונם לברכה, במדרש רבה פרשת אחרי, ש'זאת' כינוי לתורה, כמה דאת אמר 'זאת התורה' (שעמלה גורמת לתיקון וגילוי ספירת ה'מלכות' הנקראת 'זאת', כיון שהיא עלמא דאתגלייא שעליה יכון לומר 'זאת' כמורה באצבע), ועוד אמרו זכרונם לברכה, ש'זאת' כינוי לתפילה, כמו שכתוב 'יהי ככלות שלמה להתפלל אל ה', את כל

own inner struggles to balance the feelings and realities of life with his constant faith in *Hashem*. Finally, *Chazal* took an almost identical approach in preserving the effects of the miraculous salvation afforded our people on *Chanukah* thousands of years ago, and making this power accessible to us in each and every generation.

In all three cases the message is similar: There is never a time to be complacent with our good fortune. We must always be fully aware that this goodness may be temporary, and we must labor to engrave this basic fact of reality in our hearts and minds, that all we have comes from Above, and that if we learn how to properly appreciate these gifts of kindness and truly understand their source, we will have stored this energy within us, preserving it for times of material or spiritual paucity.

This lesson is also true when we are beset with ill fortune and suffering. Yosef worked hard though he was enslaved. *Dovid HaMelech* struggled to stem the horrible scandals that threatened to topple his monarchy. The wicked decrees of Antiochus and the Hellenists spurred the *Chashmonaim* to greater levels of dedication and *mesirus nefesh*. In all three examples, the response was a tireless effort to make the best of a terrible situation.

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויבר יוסף את אחיו והם לא הכירוהו וגו' (כב-ה)

The Pressburg Yeshivah, was the largest and most influential *yeshivah* in Central Europe in the 19th century. It was founded in the city of Pressburg, Slovakia, by the great **Chasam Sofer, R' Moshe Sofer ZT”L** and was considered the largest organized *yeshivah* since the time of the Babylonian Talmud. Upon his passing, the mantle of leadership was passed to his oldest son, the **Ksav Sofer, R' Avraham Shmuel Binyamin Sofer ZT”L**, who led the *yeshivah* for thirty-two years - just as his father had before him - through the tumultuous “Age of Enlightenment” and surge of the Jewish Haskalah movement, that was wreaking havoc on communities all throughout Europe.

Traditional *Torah* Jewry was under attack on a daily basis, and many *yeshivos* suffered for lack of funds. Students did not receive proper nourishment or medicine and buildings lacked basic heat, plumbing and other necessities that people take for granted today. The Pressburg Yeshivah was forced to hire a dedicated fund-raiser to travel about and collect sorely needed funds to keep the *yeshivah* going.

On one occasion, the fund-raiser came running to the *Ksav Sofer*, his face beaming with joy, a letter waving wildly in his outstretched hand. “*Rebbe*, a huge donation has arrived!” he declared exultantly. He handed the check to the *Rosh Yeshivah*. R’ Avraham Shmuel looked at the amount and his eyes widened in shock. Indeed, the donation was huge, enough to cover expenses for an extended period of time. Attached to the check was a letter which contained one short sentence. It was a *posuk* from *Parshas Miketz*, written in Hebrew: “*And Yosef recognized his brothers.*”

The *Ksav Sofer* scrutinized the check carefully, turning it over and looking at it, front and back. Suddenly, his face turned white. The donor, a man by the name of Yosef, was a former student who had thrown off the yoke of religion and refused to adhere to the traditions of his fathers and teachers. He had become quite wealthy and his name was renowned, but his attitude toward religious observance was equally famous, as was his public displays of sinful behavior. Apparently, he had sent a check to his former *yeshivah*, hoping to prove that he was not a rebel, that he had not forgotten his brothers, the desperate students of the *yeshivah*, and still considered himself as one of them, despite his misdeeds.

“It is forbidden to flatter the wicked,” the *Ksav Sofer* ruled. “We cannot accept this check. If we accept his contribution, he will think we approve of his deeds.”

The fund-raiser, who had been so excited just a moment before, was aghast. He could not believe it possible to pass up such a large sum of money especially when the students’ were learning under such harsh conditions. With regretful trepidation, he watched as the *Rosh Yeshivah* picked up his pen and wrote a short sentence on the reverse side of the attached letter. Then, he was handed the check and letter back and given instructions to return the envelope.

The fund-raiser could not restrain himself. When he left the *Ksav Sofer’s* study, he glanced at the letter and read the words. Under the rich man’s handwritten text, “*And Yosef recognized his brothers,*” the *Rosh Yeshivah* had added the remainder of the *posuk*: “*And they did not recognize him!*”

רבים ביד מעטים וממאים ביד מהורים ורשעים ביד צדיקים (על הנסים)

In the fall of 1990, cataclysmic events were taking shape and the world was on edge. Things were heating up in Kuwait between the advancing armies of Iraq and neighboring Saudi Arabia. A coalition of world powers, led by the United States, was standing by ready to intervene and push Saddam Hussein’s forces back to where they came from.

Retired Army Major Mike (Michoel) Neilander, who is now a Judaic silversmith in Newport News, Virginia, had been an Army Captain and a helicopter maintenance test pilot for a decade before receiving notice that he was being transferred to the First Cavalry Division which was on alert for the Persian Gulf War. As a practicing Jew, though, Major Mike had a problem: Jews are forbidden by Saudi law to enter the country. But in preparation for this war, American troops were required to base on Saudi Arabian land. The U.S. Secretary of Defense told the King of Saudi Arabia, “We have Jews in our military. They’ve trained with their units and they’re going. Just look the other way.” With Kuwait occupied and the Iraqis at his border, King Faud did the practical thing and did just that. However, this led to the Department of Defense’s “dog-tag dilemma” with regard to Jewish personnel. A dog-tag is an identification tag worn by military personnel and used primarily for the identification of dead and wounded soldiers, to convey essential basic medical information, such as blood type and history of inoculations, along with religious preference. Normally the dog tags of Jewish servicemen are imprinted with the word “Jewish.” But Defense, fearing that this would put Jewish soldiers at further risk should they be captured, substituted the classification, “Protestant B,” on the tags of Jewish servicemen.

Major Neilander did not like the whole idea of classifying Jews as “Protestants” and so he decided to leave his dog

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מחשבת הלב

הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו ניסים כמו שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה וגו' (הרחמן בברכת המזון)

The **RM’A** (אר”ח סימן ס’) writes that if a person forgets to recite “*Al Hanisim*” in *bentching* on *Chanukah*, he should add the words: "הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו ניסים כמו שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה" when he gets to the “*Harachamans*” near the end, and then continue with "בימי מתתיהו". The **Tevuos Shor** argues and says that this cannot be the correct *psak* because when a person asks the *Ribono shel Olam* to perform miracles for him (הרחמן הוא יעשה לנו), it reduces his *zechusim* - merits. He brings a *Gemara in Berachos* that if a woman is expecting a child, her husband is not permitted to say "תפילת שוא" (May it be Your will that my wife should have a son) because that is a false prayer. However, when *Leah Imeinu* gave birth to a girl she called her Dina - שדנה דין בעצמה (Rashi). She rationalized that she was allowed to be *mispallel* that her baby is a girl so that her sister, Rochel, could have a son. *Hashem* answered her *tefillah* and Rochel had Yosef. *Chazal* tell us that this was a special situation, and although normally one may not deplete his merits by asking for a miracle, in this instance there was an overpowering reason for it to happen. Therefore, concludes the *Tevuos Shor*, since one cannot ask for a *nes*, one does not recite the *Harachaman*.

Along comes the famous *Gaon, R' Yaakov Orenstein ZT”L*, the “**Yeshuos Yaakov**,” and he agrees with the RM’A. He explains that there is a difference between a hidden miracle (נס נסתר), and a revealed miracle (נס גלוי). When a woman asks for a miracle regarding her child and it is fulfilled, this is a hidden miracle, as no one knows about it but herself. Such a *nes* depletes a person’s *zechusim* and should not be asked for. On the other hand, when a *nes* has פרסום (publicity) and creates a *Kiddush Hashem*, like the *nes* of *Chanukah*, not only is it permitted, but it is a *mitzvah* to ask for such a miracle. Therefore, *Chazal* instituted this specific text in the *Harachaman* - "בימים ההם בזמן הזה" - we should be *zoche* to miracles just like the miracles *Hashem* performed in the days of *Chanukah*.

With this *yesod*, I once answered the following question: How could *Yaakov Avinu* ask *Hashem* for a miracle to be saved from Esav - "קטנתי מכל החסידים" - I already used up my *zechusim*? *Yaakov Avinu* answers this himself: "ועתה הייתי לשני מחנות" - All the miracles *Hashem* did before were *nistar*, hidden, because I was a יחיד (as the *Targum* states, ארי יחיד, "כי במקלי - ארי יחיד") and I used up my *zechusim*. However, now - "ועתה" - I am divided into two camps, I am a רבים, so this *nes* will be a revealed *nes*, and a *Kiddush Shem Shamayim*.

May all our *tefillos* be answered by the *Ribono shel Olam* and may we all enjoy a *Freilichin Chanukah*.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

* הבהרות *

ולעמך ישראל עשית תשועה גדולה ופרקן כהיום הזה (על הנסים)

The 25th word in the *Torah* is "אור" - Light, from the *posuk*, “*And Hashem said let there be light*” (“יהי אור”) *and there was light.*” This was the very first creation for it was this light that the Jewish nation would utilize throughout their long and dark history of exile and banishment in order to survive and overcome their enemies.

In *Tefillas Al Hanisim* we say: “*And You made a great salvation*” - "כהיום הזה" - *like this very day.*” **Rabbi Zev Leff Shlit’a** explains that this means UNTIL this very day. Indeed, we relive the miracles of *Chanukah* every single year because we actually experience all the evil decrees that were decreed against the Jews then, during this time. *Chanukah* is a time of salvation because we prove to the world that WE WON. *Torah* life and *Yiddishkeit* live on while our enemies are long gone and forgotten. The three main decrees of the Greeks were that the Jews may not keep *Shabbos*, celebrate *Rosh Chodesh* and perform *bris milah*. Every *Chanukah* we keep one *Shabbos*, one *Rosh Chodesh* and rejoice for 8 days to allude to the 8 days of *milah*.

Women have a special connection to *Chanukah* by not doing *melacha* after the candles are lit, to commemorate

how the *Yevanim* tried to defile the Jewish women and failed. And the reason we specifically light our candles by the "פתח הבית" - the doorway to our home, is because the Greeks did not allow Jewish homes to have any doors. They tried to destroy any sense of privacy and modesty. They tried to attack the greatest power that we have: the Jewish home.

Therefore, we celebrate *Chanukah* UNTIL this very day by coming together, eating *latkes* and playing *dreidel*, laughing, singing and sharing *divrei Torah*. This is our revenge - this is our victory! The Hellenists of Greece did not wish to exterminate our physical bodies; they wanted us to stay alive - as Greeks - devoid of all spirituality and connection to the One above. We celebrate this *Yom Tov* by living as proud Jews and making sure all our days are filled with light. The light of *Torah*. The light of the *Shechina*. The light of the *neshama* that burns bright inside every single Jew. This is the special "אור" - the light of *Chanukah* that was created at the very beginning of time. It is our most precious commodity and we must guard it carefully in order to utilize it wisely. May the light of *Chanukah* and it’s message fill our lives with "אור" all year long.

יִנְיָם נִקְבְּצוּ עָלֵי אִזִּי בִּימֵי הַשְּׁמָנִים וּפְרָצוּ חֻמוֹת מִגְדְּלֵי וּמִמָּאוֹ כֹּל הַשְּׁמָנִים וּמִנֹּתָר קִנְקָנִים נִעְשָׂה נֵם לְשׁוֹשְׁנִים (פִּיט מֵעוֹ צוֹר)

There is a *Medrash* that recounts how the Jewish people once complained to the angels: “*Hashem* promised to make us an eternal people. Why then did He give powerful weapons to many nations and none to us? How can we survive if our enemies are so well armed?”

The angels listened and replied, “When *Hashem* created the animals, He gave each a particular weapon. To the lion, He gave powerful paws; to the tiger, He gave sharp claws; to the eagle, soaring wings; to the serpent, fangs ejecting poison. But the little sheep, who was not given any form of protection, was disturbed: ‘What about me? What will I get?’” In response, the sheep was told: “Your weakness is your strength.” “How can that be?” asked the sheep. The angel replied, “Do you see that cedar tree? It is tall and strong! Now look at the reed near the lake. It is small and feeble. Yet, in a severe storm, the cedar is uprooted and the reed, bending to the wind, remains unharmed. Size and strength do not always assure

survival.” This was the answer the angel gave to the Jewish people. Indeed, Jewish history proves this.

As part of the eternal world-wide struggle for democracy, the struggle of the *Chashmonaim* is of eternal world-wide interest. The little Maccabean band was like a rock in the midst of a surging sea. Standing almost alone in their day, these heroes beat back the forces that threatened to involve all mankind in a common demoralization. The story of *Chanukah* is the story of courage, and courage makes for miracles. A man once defined courage as follows: “Courage is fear that has said its prayers.” The Land of Israel was built by men who took risks, who were not afraid of the desert; brave men who were not afraid of failure; thinkers who were not afraid of progress; dreamers who were not afraid of action; religious men who believed in the Almighty’s power.

A young Israeli paratrooper was injured during one of the recent wars. As he was coming out of a coma in a hospital, he was told that he had lost an arm. “I didn’t lose it,” the soldier replied courageously, “I gave it.”

(Rabbis Mandel/Gartenberg, *Treasures from the Torah*)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV

מחשבת הלב

FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

וַיִּקְרָא יוֹסֵף אֶת שֵׁם הַבְּכוֹר מְנַשֶּׁה כִּי נִשְׁנִי אֱלֹקִים אֶת כָּל עֲמָלִי וְאֵת כָּל בֵּית אָבִי וְגו' (מַטֵּה-נָח)

Yosef named his firstborn son Menashe, thanking *Hashem* for “*making me forget* (נִשְׁכַּח) *all my hardship and (forgetting) all of my father’s household.*” It is hard to believe that *Yosef HaTzaddik* would use his son Menashe as a reminder to forget the home of his father! Everything Yosef had was thanks to his father, *Yaakov Avinu*, even being saved from sin with the wife of Potiphar, as Rashi tells us last week in the *parsha*: “נראה לו דמות דיקנו של אביו”.

I had a *machshava* on this. The *shoresh* (root) of Menashe is “נשה” as the *posuk* says “לא תהיה לו כנושה” (שמות כב-כד). If someone owes you money, you should not treat him like a בעל חוב by reminding him all the time. Yosef called his *bechor* “מנשה” to always remind him that everything he was *zocheh* to have is because of his father, *Yaakov Avinu*. He wasn’t trying to forget his father - he was recognizing how much he owes his father! Remember, never forget your parents. What they did for you, what they continue to do for you, and what they will always do for you!

וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשָּׁת מֵאֵת פָּנָיו אֱלֹהִים וְתָרַב מִשָּׁת בְּנִימִין מִמִּשָּׁת כָּלֵם חֲמֵשׁ יִדּוֹת וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ וְגו' (מַגֵּן-לֶדֶ)

The *Torah* relates how *Yosef HaTzaddik* invited his brothers to sit and partake in a meal with him. He knew who they were but they didn’t know who he was. Yosef served each brother one portion of food and gave Binyamin five times as much as the other brothers. Then they drank wine together. Rashi says in the name of the *Medrash*: “מִיּוֹם שֶׁמִּכְרוּהוּ לֹא שָׁתוּ” - “*Since the day that they had sold him, neither they (the brothers) nor he (Yosef) had drunk wine, but on that day they did drink wine.*” The question is obvious: Yosef drank because he knew that he was reuniting with his brothers. He was happy and this was a cause for celebration. But why did the brothers drink? The brothers were stuck in Egypt, being framed for the crime of espionage that they did not commit, and their father, *Yaakov Avinu*, was still in *aveilus* (mourning) from losing his beloved son! They had no reason to drink or celebrate!

I believe the answer is as follows: If we think about what brought about the entire episode of selling Yosef, we see that it was the קנאה (jealousy) of the *shevatim*, who were upset that Yosef received the *Kesones Pasim* (colorful coat) and they didn’t. The brothers were conscious of this fact and knew that their jealousy was to blame. But now, when the Egyptian leader gave their brother Binyamin five times as much as them, they were not jealous - in fact, they were happy about it! They realized that with regard to what their brother got, they had eradicated the *middah* of jealousy, and they were prepared to celebrate this fact. Thus, “וַיִּשְׁתּוּ וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ עִמּוֹ” - they drank with him joyously! When a person sees there is no jealousy in his family, this is the biggest *beracha* he could hope for. It is now time to celebrate and drink wine together.

tag alone, figuring if he were to be captured, his fate was in *Hashem’s* hands anyway. Changing his tag was tantamount to denying his religion and he couldn’t swallow that.

In September, Major Neilander shipped off to defend a country he was prohibited from entering. The “Jewish” on his dog tag remained as clear and unmistakable as the American star on the hood of every Army truck. In December, all units were placed on alert, expecting to begin battle any day. Surely it was no coincidence then, that the Hand of *Hashem* placed a Jewish Colonel in charge of Major Neilander’s unit. One December night, the Colonel received a coded message through military channels that all Jewish servicemen are to report to a specific barrack, where a Jewish gathering was being held. It had to be coded since no one in Saudi Arabia was permitted to know that Jewish men were on the base. Colonel Schneider relayed the message to his unit immediately. Had a non-Jew been in that position, the information would likely have taken a back seat to a more pressing issue. Like war. But it didn’t.

When notice of the *Chanukah* party was decoded, the Jewish servicemen all reported to a windowless room in a cinder block building. The first thing they saw when they entered the room was food, tons of it. Care packages from the states, cookies, *latkes*, sour cream and applesauce, and cans and cans of gefilte fish. The wind outside was blowing dry across the desert, but in the secrecy of that little room, there was an incredible feeling of celebration.

A Jewish chaplain spoke about the theme of *Chanukah* and the ragtag bunch of Maccabee soldiers fighting Jewry’s oppressors thousands of years ago. It wasn’t hard to make the connection to what lay ahead of them. There in the middle of the desert, inside a tiny windowless room, they felt like the Maccabees themselves. They lit the *Menorah* candles and made the blessing acknowledging the King of the Universe who commanded them to kindle the *Chanukah* lights. They recited the second blessing, praising G-d for the miracles He performed, “*Bayamim hahem bazman hazeh*” - in those days as well as now. And they all sang together the third blessing, the “*Shehecheyanu*” thanking *Hashem* up above, for keeping them alive and enabling them to reach this season.

War was imminent. All week long, reports of mass destruction, projections of the chemical weapons that were likely to be unleashed by the madman, Saddam Hussein, were floating about. Intelligence estimates put the first rounds of casualties at 12,500 soldiers. Major Neilander heard those numbers and thought, “That’s my whole division!”

But that first night of *Chanukah*, he sat back in his chair, gefilte fish cans at his feet. He and his unit were in the desert, about to go to war, singing songs of praise to the Almighty G-d who had saved their ancestors in battle once before. The feeling of unity was as pervasive as their apprehension, as real as the sand that found its way into everything from their socks to their toothbrushes. That small group of soldiers felt more Jewish there on that lonely Saudi plain, their tanks and guns at the ready, than most had ever felt back home in *shul*.

But it seemed to do more than that. That *Chanukah* in the desert solidified the urge for every Jewish soldier in the room to reconnect with Judaism. Any soldier will tell you that there are no atheists in foxholes, and for the good Major, he knew that part of his feelings were tied to the looming war and his desire to strengthen his bond with his Creator before the unknown descended in the clouds of battle. “It sounds corny,” said Major Neilander, “but as we downed the latkes and cookies and wiped the last of the apple sauce from our plates, everyone grew quiet, keenly aware of the link with history, thinking of what we were about to do and what had been done by soldiers like us so long ago.”

The trooper sitting beside him stared ahead at nothing in particular, absent-mindedly fingering his dog tag. Neilander turned to him. “How did you classify?” he asked, nodding to the dog tag. Silently, he withdrew the metal rectangle and its beaded chain from beneath his shirt and held it out for him to read. Like the Major’s, his read, “Jewish.” One by one, each soldier removed his dog tag, revealing the word “Jewish” on each and every tag! At that moment, every soldier proudly displayed his religion, believing with pure faith that *Hashem*, the G-d of the Jewish people, was spreading His protective grace over them. And somewhere, in a military depot someplace, there must be boxes of dog tags, still in their wrappers, all marked “Protestant B.” (Rabbi Y. Tilles, Ascentofsafed.com)

A number of years ago, a business conference was held in a hotel in downtown Detroit, Michigan. The organizers of the conference were two Jewish businessmen who wished to import a renowned orator to deliver a lecture on business ethics that would be well received by both Jews and gentiles alike. One of the men was a devoted fan of **Rabbi Berel Wein Shlit’a**, and listened to every one of his lectures on tape. Rabbi Wein was living in Monsey, N.Y., at the time and this fellow arranged to have him flown in to speak at the conference.

As expected, Rabbi Wein was masterful. The conference room was overflowing with men and women, and the message he delivered was one that resonated deeply throughout the room. Many of the attendees were gentiles who had