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# *Moadim*





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# *From the desk of...* *The Editors*

"מעט מן האור דוחה הרבה מן החשך"

There is a classic dispute between *Beis Hillel* and *Beis Shamai*, as to whether we increase the number of candles each night of chanukah culminating in 8 lights, or do we start with eight and decrease the amount of candles each night. Although the definitive Halacha rules according to *Beis Hillel*, there is much to be gleaned from the underlying reasoning behind the argument.

Chanukah took place during *golus Yavan*, dubbed *the exile of darkness*. The Greeks made every effort to extinguish the light of *Torah* from the world. *Chanukah* expresses the victory of light over darkness. However, the question remains: which combat strategy is more successful? A flame has two very distinct properties: it can burn, and it can illuminate. In combating Evil in the world, do we destroy and burn it, or do we illuminate with the light of *Torah* so that the darkness vanishes on its own. This is the nature of the *machlokes*, between *Beis Shammai* and *Beis Hillel*. Both methods are valid, but what is supposed to be the main purpose of a Jew, what is to be gleaned from the miraculous Chanukah story?

*Beis Shamai* learns that we fight the corruption of the prevalent pagan world-culture through *tefila*, which actively diminishes the secular influences from us. Thus, we light the *chanukia* in the same way: starting with eight and reducing the number of candles each night, symbolizing the diminishing effect that our light of *Torah* has on negative forces. Conversely, *Beis Hillel* sees the battle against immorality in the world as an impetus to raise ourselves spiritually, to become the embodiment of morality in the world by living according to the light of *Torah* principles. This way, the entire world sees us and wants to imitate us. So, says *Beis Hillel*, the more successful method of wiping out darkness is, not by burning away Evil, but rather, by increasing the light of *Torah* everywhere. For this reason we increase the number of candles each night to remind ourselves of our responsibility as Jews to steadily increase the light of *Torah* knowledge and understanding in the world. This would ultimately banish the darkness of Evil by the Jewish people becoming a light unto the Nations.

We, MHS students, like *Bais Hillel* know that it is incumbent upon every one of us as *Bnos Yisrael*, to continue to follow our glorious *mesorah* thereby illuminating the world with the *Torah* that our parents and *mechanchos* have taught us. It is our hope that the thoughtfulness and skill manifested in this work sheds light on the beauty and depth of *Chanukah*.

A special thanks to all those who submitted!

# Message from the Menabeles

The confrontation of the *Yebudim* and the *Yevanim* presented unique challenges that the *Yebudim* had never previously encountered. Never before had they battled with an enemy comprised of sophisticated writers and philosophers, a people that promulgated a universal vision.

Were it not for the extraordinary determination, total faith and exceptional courage of *Matityahu Kohen Gadol* and his five valiant sons, the Ramban write on *Parshas Vayichei*, Torah and mitzvos would have been obliterated from the Jewish nation.

היום - בימים ההם בזמן הזה - today we too encounter unique challenges that threaten the sanctity of our nation. As in the days of yore, it is only with extraordinary determination, faith and courage that we can prevail.

As I skimmed through the pages of this publication, I could not help but reflect with pride on some of the concepts that were touched upon. Students shared vignettes about our gedolim as well as great women whose recent loss is keenly felt. Our Shabbaton speaker, Rabbi Kalman Rettish, informed our students that prominently displayed on his night table, is Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust, the “mussar sefer” that most inspires him. Unbeknownst to him, Elisheva Rosensweig, a granddaughter of the author, Professor Dr. Eliach a”h, was sitting in the audience. This periodical also contains divrei Torah, exploring topics such as ניסים גלויים ונסתרים, בית הלל ובית שמאי, פך שמן, and פרסומי ניסא among others. Included as well is an article written by Chaya Alexandra Kestenbaum and quoted by Israeli secular newspapers who were inspired by the faith and fortitude of our beloved student. Truly a Kiddush Hashem. Artwork lends a charming touch and is another forum for מהונך, utilizing ones talents in the service of Hashem.

And above all, as our editors, Devorah Amsel, Daniella Cohen, Esther Mehlman, and Leah Rothman quoted, מעט מן האור דוחה הרבה מן החשך. Our beloved students are a cruse of pure oil that spread light and joy. It is with the power of their *chinuch* that they acquire Torah wisdom as symbolized by the menorah in the *Bais Hamikdash*. With this chinuch they can confront the חשך of יון, the surrounding culture that threatens to choke us in its filthy embrace.

Thank you Moadim editors for enhancing the *Yom Tov* of *Chanukah* with your thoughts and *Divrei Torah*. Your dedicated efforts are appreciated by the entire faculty and student body.

A Freilichen Chanukah!

Mrs. Yanofsky

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A special thank you to our amazing editorial staff:

**Devorah Amsel, Daniella Cohen,  
Esther Mehlman, Leah Rothman**  
for a spectacular job!



# Rebbetzin Salomon

Rebbetzin Salomon was a prime example of a true *Eishes Chayil*. The Rebbetzin's dedication to her husband- Rav Matisyahu Salomon, the Mashgiach of Beis Medrash Gevoha in Lakewood, New Jersey was the stuff of legends. Throughout every one of the *shiurim* and *sichot* that the Rav had in his home, without his knowledge, Rebbetzin Salomon would sit for the entire period during which he was giving over *divrei Torah* and *chizuk* and would say Tehillim, in order that her husband be successful. She was a pillar of *emunah* and a source of help to so many *bachurim* in the Yeshivah and to many more people who frequently visited her home seeking strength and solace. Rebbetzin Salomon was born in Manchester, England. Her father was a descendant of the *Pnei Yehoshua* and as a scion of a distinguished family she truly lived up to the family legacy. Rebbetzin Salomon had an incredible balance in her life. She was able to juggle raising her children and taking care of her family on top of the many *chasadim* that she performed and the advice she graciously dispensed. Somehow she had time for everyone and everything, but her main focus was her dedication to her husband and children, ensuring that they were well cared for and giving them all the tools they needed to serve Hashem in the greatest way possible. Rebbetzin Salomon was a paradigm of *tznius* and was most often found at home tending to her family. Rebbetzin Salomon's everlasting impact on Klal Yisroel and dedication to her husband serve as an example for us to *Be'ezrat Hashem* emulate.



- Daniella Cohen

# Rebbetzin Jungreis

I remember when *Rebbetzin Jungreis* came to our school 3 years ago. She was healing from a procedure and leaning heavily on a cane. Her soft voice filled the library, passing on her message of love and warmth. Suddenly, music started blasting throughout the library. Everyone gasped in shock, looking at *Rebbetzin Jungreis* for her reaction. *Rebbetzin Jungreis* grabbed her cane and started dancing and singing. When the music went off *Rebbetzin Jungreis* shouted, "Be a ballerina! Be a *baal rina*! Make everyone happy and smile!"

Rebbetzin Jungreis made such a large impact on that little fourteen year old me. Her message to love every person "kindled" something inside me that made me want to be happier. I always remember that I can be a *baal rina*! I can be a master of happiness!



- Baila Schuster



# My Grandmother, Prof. Dr. Eliach

A major theme of Chanukah revolves around the idea of learning Torah and continuing our Jewish legacy despite the odds stacked against us. The Yevanim took whatever measures they could to prevent the Jews from practicing Judaism, yet Jews risked their lives in order to continue learning Torah, ensuring the continuity of Judaism. My grandmother, Professor Doctor Yaffa Eliach א"ה was a survivor of the Holocaust, a historian, poet, writer, and visionary. She was a pioneer in the research and commemoration of the Holocaust and one of the first to encourage the recording of Holocaust history through oral interviews of survivors. After the war, the Holocaust was remembered and documented only through the eyes and data of the Nazis *yemach shemam*. My grandmother was of the opinion that this portrayal alone, only showing the degradation and destruction of the Jews, was continuing the Nazi legacy, for it singularly displayed the Jews in a dehumanized manner. She believed that one should “choose life not death” and that the Jews should be remembered through their rich and vibrant history before the war and acts of heroism and dedication to Judaism throughout the war. Many did not support this new means of representation and remembrance, but against all odds, she followed her vision and revolutionized the outlook of Holocaust commemoration. By means of her exhibits in the United States Holocaust Museum, and through her many books (especially *There Once was a World*, and *Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust*) my grandmother strove to convey this rich history and portray each Jew as an individual with their own dynamic and unique story. She was a larger than life personality, with a true *simchat hachayim* and mission. Her books, classes, methodology, and philosophy of life influenced the Jewish world at large. She was a woman of many accomplishments and I am extremely privileged and proud to be her granddaughter.



- Elisheva Rosensweig

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## Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel ז"ל

Every night of *Chanukah*, the *bochurim* of the *Mir yeshiva* would go watch their *Rosh Yeshivah*, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel ז"ל, light *Chanukah* candles. Afterwards, because his apartment was small, they would go outside to dance. One year my uncle had just davened *maariv* on the second night and it was already past the time that the *bochurim* usually danced with the *Rosh Yeshivah*. On the way to his *dirah*, he noticed the door to the *Rosh Yeshiva's* apartment was ajar. He saw the *Rosh Yeshivah* sitting by the table, learning *gemara*, while his candles burned. He decided to go in and ask for a *bracha*. He received a *bracha* and after (as is customary when one leaves a big *tzaddik*) he walked out backwards. All of a sudden he felt his foot hit something and he tripped. As he fell, the *Rosh Yeshiva's menorah*, in its glass case, came crashing down with him. My uncle frantically tried picking up some of the shattered pieces as the *Rebbeitzin* and his *gabbe* came running into the room, each yelling variations of “what happened” and “don’t worry about it”. Amidst the chaos, the



*Rosh Yeshiva* sat smiling, and with a sweet voice told my uncle not to worry and not to bother picking anything up. Amazingly, although the glass case was completely shattered, the candles were still burning. My uncle was so embarrassed that he ran out, and as he ran out he still saw the *rosh yeshiva* waving at him gesturing that it was okay. Parenthetically, that *Chanukah* was the last *Chanukah* of the *Rosh Yeshiva's* life.

So what's the point of telling over this mortifying story? When we move away from that aspect of the story, we are left with a powerful, and raw display of a fundamental aspect of *yiddishkeit*. Sometimes people get so caught up in *chumros* and being *machmir* and trying to do a *mitzvah* in the "best" way, that they forget that a core component of being a Jew is how we treat each other and how sensitive we are to the emotions of everyone around us. *Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel* lived his life emulating that message of *bain adam lachavairo*, as is so clearly manifested in his reaction. His first concern was not about his candles or even about picking up the shattered glass. Rather, he was concerned with the feelings of his embarrassed *talmid*, and he immediately tried to ease his embarrassment.

- Devorah Amsel



## *Rav Shlomo Zalmen Auerbach זצ"ל*

When I was learning in ארץ ישראל I had the opportunity to develop a relationship with one of the gedolim of our generation, *Rav Shlomo Zalmen Auerbach זצ"ל*. Although not a formal *talmid* of his, I was able to observe and interact with him on a nearly daily basis during the years I lived there.

I learned in ישיבת מעלות התורה located in the שכונת חסד neighborhood of ירושלים led by *Rav Shmuel Auerbach*. His father, *Rav Shlomo Zalmen* lived around the corner from the yeshiva. *Rav Shlomo Zalmen* davened every day in the yeshiva and on many occasions I would walk him home after davening. During those times I was able to ask him many questions in Halachah and talk with him in learning. He had a rule that you could only ask two questions at a time but it was rare that we ever finished discussing the questions by the time we reached his house. On many occasions others would join and also posed questions. Over the years I was able to get a glimpse into how one of the פוסקי הדור responded to questions presented to him.



However, more than the answers he gave, I was able to observe how he interacted with the many individuals who approached him. No matter how simple or complex the questions were, he was always patient, kind and always spoke with the greatest נעימות, showing tremendous כבוד האדם to all those he spoke with.



Over the years, as I think back to that time, I've come to realize that his patience with me, a twenty year old בחור, was truly astounding. He dealt with the most complex of questions for *Klal Yisroel*, yet had the consistent patience to treat the simpler questions with equal respect. Rav Shlomo Zalmen saw the צלם אלקים in every person and treated them as such. There are many stories written about Rav Shlomo Zalmen's kindness and the way he treated people, but when you experience it firsthand on such a consistent basis it makes a deep impression on you. This is a lesson I've tried to incorporate into my life. When dealing with others, always convey the proper כבוד האדם each person deserves.

- Rabbi Shimon Taub

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## *A Light in the Dark*

They came after us — first with knives, stabbing our soldiers, citizens, and visitors wherever they could find us. It quickly became known as the “knife intifada.” Then came the fires set throughout our land, displacing thousands and scorching the earth of our sacred country. It quickly became known as the “fire intifada.”

A builder sees fire as an agent for construction. An arsonist sees the same flame as a tool of destruction. A luminary sees fire as a warming agent. An arsonist uses fire to scorch and destroy. A visionary sees darkness and dreams of fire. An arsonist sees light and envisions only darkness.

Only an arsonist, and a deranged arsonist at that, would burn land he claims is his own. Perhaps he knows it's not his land and therefore has no problem reducing it to ashes. From the moment they can strike a match, they are indoctrinated to burn and destroy instead of smelting, welding, and building. Their proclivity to destroy has done more to harm the building of their own “state” than it has done to destroy our state. Their dreams continue to go up in smoke by fires they have set themselves.

One can enlighten and create or be a purveyor of darkness and destruction. It's a choice people make at an early stage of life. Do I bring light into this world, do I light candles that spread warmth and illuminate? Or do I burn the good earth and good opportunities that have been granted to me? So this too shall pass, and we will respond to fires of destruction with never-ending light.

There were other fires of destruction that ravaged our people, not too long ago in the dark days and darker nights of Nazi Germany. Many of those who survived those fires of hell were able to come to these shores and use fire, use passion for our heritage, to build anew. They indeed brought light to the remnant of our nation, for whom there were only yahrzeit candles, to those who thought there would never again be Chanukah candles.

But they were wrong, as in major Jewish American cities and in little cities and villages all across this land torches were lit. Jewish schools were established, synagogues flourished, kosher-certification agencies were created, scores of Jewish publications hit the shelves, mikvas followed by *eiruvim* were built—and Hitler's worst nightmare was realized. Jewish light and life had been rekindled.

- Adapted from Rabbi Professor David Seidemann



# Eight Days of Chanukah

*Sefer Ner LeMeah* brings 100 reasons why Chanukah should last for eight days and not seven. This is hinted to in the word Chanukah itself. The *Abudraham* explains that the word Chanukah is an acrostic for ה' נרות והלכה כבית הלל, there are eight candles and we follow the ruling of Hillel. According to *beis* Hillel the miracle of the *menorah* became clearer with each day of Chanukah. The longer the initial jar of oil burned, the more apparent the miracle became. Therefore, on each subsequent night of Chanukah, we light an additional candle, so that eight candles are lit on the eighth night. The *sefer* Beis Ayin explains that we learn from this acrostic that Chanukah is celebrated for eight days. Rabbi Lam explains that the number seven represents nature, which is a collection of repeating miracles, and the word הטבע has the same *gematria* as *Elokim*. The number eight represents miracles that are beyond nature, למעלה מן הטבע. The number eight in Hebrew is שמנה - which can be rearranged to spell נשמה, and it has a similar spelling to שמן. Our *neshama* is beyond the natural world, and we recognize the great miracle of Chanukah. So we light the *menorah* for eight days, and it is preferable to do so with oil.

Another reason we celebrate Chanukah for eight days is to show that we are following *Beis* Hillel. If Chanukah were to be celebrated for seven days, then on the fourth day it would not be clear if we were following *beis* Hillel or *beis* Shamai, as one would not be able to tell if they were increasing or decreasing the number of candles each night. This is the same reason as to why we do not celebrate Chanukah for nine days in *chutz la'aretz*, to avoid this confusion. However, the *Minchas Chinuch* brings down that there were towns that were far from Yerushalayim that used to celebrate Chanukah for nine days.

The *Sefer Bnei Yissacher* explains the name Chanukah is a *lashon* of *chinuch*. The lights of the menorah reveal a small portion of the *Ohr Haganuz*, the light that was hidden after *Adam Harishon* sinned. This special light will be returned to us in the days of Mashiach, and Chanukah is *mechaneich* us and prepares us for the days of Mashiach. The *Talmud Yerushalmi* explains that Adam was in Gan Eden for 36 hours with the *Ohr Haganuz*, from *erev* Shabbos until *motzei* Shabbos. In total over the eight days of Chanukah we light 36 candles, excluding the *shamashim*. In addition, the word *ohr* is written 36 times in the Torah. The Chanukah candles represent a little spark of the *Ohr Haganuz* and therefore the light of the *menorah* is not a physical light, so we are forbidden from benefiting from the flames.

- Esther Butler

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## The Chanukah Miracle

There is a famous *midrash* on the *pasuk* in *Shir Hashirim*: הודואים נתנו ריה ועל פתחינו כל מגדים. The *dudaim*, flowers are those that *Reuven* picked for his mother Leah and Rachel asked for them from Leah to help her bear children. The *medrash* splits the *pasuk* in half, saying that הודואים נתנו ריה refers to when *Reuven* tried to save *Yosef* by putting him in the pit. The *midrash* continues and says that the second half of the *pasuk* ועל פתחינו כל מגדים refers to the candles of chanukah.

The *Sefer Aperyon* asks a question on this. Why is it that when it comes to the *mitzvah* of *ner chanuka* there is a commandment for it to be done outside, publicly? What's more, the candles have to be a certain height so that people can see them. When it comes to other *mitzvos lezecher haneis* they do not necessarily have to be done in a public setting. For example, *Purim* is about remembering the *neis* that Hashem saved *Bnei Yisroel* from the hands of *Haman*, but we don't go outside and publicize this, rather we stay indoors and have a *seudah*. Also with *zecher yetziyas mitzrayim* we have a familial *sefer* which is a private affair and we don't go forth and publicize the *nissim*.

The *Sefer Aperyon* says that we are not obligated to be *mefarseim* the publicly performed *nissim*, such as *krias yam suf* and *neis purim*. Only the *nissim* that were done inside, like the *menorah*, must we publicize. The source for this idea is that



we have a *mitzva* to behave and act like Hashem והלכת בדרכיו and Hashem takes things that are inside and private and He publicizes it to the whole world. A prime example is when Reuven tried to save Yosef and put him in the pit. This action was completely private and no one knew about his savior plan. We only know about this plan because the *Torah* exposed his actions.

This is the connection between the *pasuk* על פתחינו כל מגדים והודאים נתנו ריח. When one has something cooking in the oven he doesn't see the food, but the smell or fragrance that it emits is what exposes it. This is what the *midrash* means when it connects the *pasuk* to the *medrash* that Reuven tried to save Yosef privately and then his intentions were written by Hashem in the *Torah*. The *pasuk* then finishes with ועל פתחינו כל מגדים and this refers to the *neiros* of *Chanukah* and this *neis* was done privately so we need to expose it and do it publicly by our doors for all to see.

The *neis* of the war of *Chanukah* was public so that aspect we celebrate inside with a *seudah* but the *nerot* of the *menorah* were private indoor *nissim* so we need to publicize this and expose it to the world with complete *persume nisa*.

- Rachele Benedict

## Why the Menorah?

*Rav Chaim Shmulevitz* Z"TL asks an important question regarding the meaning of lighting the *Menorah*. It is important however, to start with some critical background of the *Chanukah* story. The Jewish People were physically and spiritually endangered during the time of the *Chanukah* story from the assimilated Jews, and the *Yevanim*. The *Maccabim*, great Torah leaders, hardly having any military power or experience, were victorious over the *Yevanim*, who had a mighty army. Since the *Maccabim* were very successful, they were able to re-dedicate the *Beis HaMikdash* by cleaning it from the impurity. Surprisingly, during their re-dedication they came upon a flask of oil which miraculously lit the *Menorah* for eight days. Considering that the Jewish People were at a tremendous threat, it is strange that the miracle with the oil became the halachic requirement to commemorate the events of *Chanukah*. Doesn't the victory of the *Maccabim* earn more attention than the miracle of the oil? It seems as if the miracle of *Chanukah* was that the Jews were victorious, however, the *mitzvah* chosen to represent *Chanukah* was the subset of the main miracle.

The answer that *Rav Chaim Shmulevitz* gives, begins with a *mashal* of a family who had a precious gem which had been passed down from father to son. The gem was lost and the family went on an intense search in the house for the priceless gem. Finally, the youngest child of the family found the cherished, valuable diamond and was given a kiss from his father as his reward. The child rejoiced with his family upon the find, but the child had something else; a kiss from his father. The lesser the gift, the closer the receiver is to the giver. *Bnei Yisroel* needed the liberation that the *Maccabim* gave them, however, they didn't need the oil; that was a kiss from Hashem, our Father. The proximity that we feel with Hashem was demonstrated when He gave us that small jug of oil. This is why we celebrate and commemorate *Chanukah* by lighting the *menorah*, which represents the "smaller" miracle.

- Ettie Guelfgat





# Pure Intentions

On *Shabbos Chanukah*, we usually read *Parshas Mitzvos* in Shul. In *Parshas Mitzvos*, *Yosef* is in jail and the butler has a dream. In the dream he saw a grape vine with three branches. The *Ben Ish Chai* points out that oftentimes, Jews are compared to grape vines. They are weak and fragile but have the ability to bear fruit.

So too *Bnei Yisrael* constantly experience persecution, yet they are able to bear fruit by doing *mitzvos*. The three branches represent the three ingredients needed to properly carry out *Hashem's* words. Our thoughts, actions and speech all have to be completely focused on the goal to do the *mitzvah* properly. If one of these aspects is missing, the person's *Avodas Hashem* is not complete. Similarly a *ner* requires a candle, a wick and fuel to ignite. If one of these aspects are missing, the light cannot shine. The *Chanukah neiros* remind us that we need to have pure intentions, words and actions, when it comes to doing *mitzvos* and developing a relationship with *Hashem*.

- Kayla Landau, Source: Rabbi Prero

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## Recognizing Daily Miracles

*Rashi* asks; for what miracle was the holiday of *Chanukah* established?

The classic answer is that we celebrate the miracle that *Bnei Yisroel* were able to find pure olive oil to use for the *Menorah*. The *Sifsei Chaim* asks many questions on this idea. Firstly, why is it that *Chanukah* was established as a *yom tov* to remember a miracle that only the *Kobanim*, and those who worked in the *Beis HaMikdash*, witnessed instead of the miracle of the war against the *Yevanim*, which all of *Bnei Yisroel* witnessed?

He deepens the question by saying that we say:

הנרות הללו אנו מדליקים על הניסים ועל הנפלאות ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות

This *bracha* makes it seem as if the candles also commemorate the miracle of our success in the war against the *Yevanim*, and how a small nation was able to defeat a larger and stronger nation.

Furthermore, the language of all the *Brachos* that we say when lighting the *Menorah* are in plural, which seems to indicate that we are referring to more than one miracle. If we were only referring to the miracle of the *Menorah* itself, then the language used would be singular. (for example: *על הנס ועל הפלא*.)

Lastly, when we say *על הניסים*, we don't even mention the miracle of lighting the *menorah* and only discuss the great miracle of the war.

And so, with all these questions it would appear that the *yom tov* of *Chanukkah* should have been established for the miracle of the war with the *Yevanim*, rather than lighting the *Menorah*.

The *Sifsei Chaim* explains that a *נס גלוי* is what teaches us to see a *נס נסתר*. We are able to recognize a *נס גלוי* much easier than a *נס נסתר*. Only after we see that *Hashem* did a *נס גלוי* can we then perceive that there was also a *נס נסתר*. The fact that we can acknowledge the open miracles of *Hashem* helps us to realize that *Hashem* is truly in control of every aspect of our lives.



And so, the miracle of the war against the *Yevanim* is included in what we say by הללו הנרות because we wouldn't be praising *Hashem* for the miracle of the war, which is a נס נסתר, if it wasn't for recognizing the נס גלוי of the *menorah*. For this reason the miracle that led to the establishment of the *yom tov* of *Chanukah* was the miracle of the candles, because through this we were able to recognize all the other hidden miracles of *Hashem* that we wouldn't have seen otherwise. We have to maintain this mindset even today when lighting the *menorah*, and understand that we are commemorating an open miracle of *Hashem*. The key is to remember that the same *Hashem* that controls the entire world is constantly performing miracles for us in our own daily lives.

- Ashira Feld

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## Keep On Shining

There is a disagreement between *Beis Shamai* and *Beis Hillel* about how one is to perform the *mitzvah* of lighting the Chanukah candles. *Bais Shamai* is of the opinion that we begin the first night with 8 candles, then every night we decrease in order. "*Pochet v'holech*." *Bais Hillel* argues and says we add another candle on every night. "*Mosif v'holich*". We *paskin* according to *Bais Hillel*.

The important thing is that both say "*v'holech*." The *machlokes* between *Bais Shamai* and *Beis Hillel* is how does one get his light to shine the brightest? The answer is through his own personal *neshama*. "*Ner Elokim nishmas adam*."

How do we make our *neshama* shine?

*Bais Shamai* says that we should stay away from negative exposures and the evil of this world. But we don't *pasken* like him. *Bais Hillel* states, "*Mosif v'holich*", do whatever you can. Are we always effective? Perhaps not, but we must try to perform *mitzvos* to the best of our ability. "*v'holech*", just keep moving. *Mosif v'holech*". That is the best way to get your *neshama* to shine.

- Bassy Reissman

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## Will You Give Your Will to Hashem?

What does it mean to be *moser nefesh*?

We all know how the Jews during *galut Yavan* were *moser nefesh*, and went against the decrees put in place, learning *Torah* while hidden in caves.

In *Beresbit*, 23:8 it says, "*Im yesh et nafsbechem*," to which Rashi says, *Nafsbechem* is *rezonchem*.

We learn from this Rashi that *Nefesh* is *Razon*, so what does it mean to be *moser nefesh*? It means to give up your will for the will of *Hashem*. When you really want to do something to benefit yourself, but you stop and choose to do the will of *Hashem* instead, you raise your status to the level of the *yidden* during *galut Yavan*, who were able to win over an army, a few hundred times their size.

There was once a man who was asked by his wife to go *Chutz L'atetz* to buy some things for the house. His wife gave him a list, and sent him on his way. When he returned home, his wife asked him if he remembered everything that was on the list, to which he replied, "Of course, I even looked at it every day so that I would not forget a thing." But when his wife parried, "so *nu*, where are all the things I asked for?" he responded that he had left it all in *Chutz L'atetz*.

This is a *masbal* for *Chanukah*. During the beautiful *Yom Tov* we sing, we have *Chanukah* parties, and we daven and praise



*Hashem* on a new level. But if you don't internalize the true message of *Chanukah*, which is that *Hashem* did a *Neis Galui* for us, it is as if you went out to go shopping, and returned empty handed. You need to focus on the huge *neis* that *Hashem* did for us. Once you do that, you will be able to notice the *nissim nistorim* that *Hashem* does every single day.

In this, you will be able to bring the message of *Chanukah* all the way home, as well as be able to work on submitting your will to the will of *Hashem*.

Kayla Samet, Source: Sifsei Chaim Moadim Beis

## *Small Miracles Really Do Happen*

אם תחנה עלי מחנה לא יירא לבי אם תקום... מלחמה בזאת אני בוטח

To say you believe is one thing; to believe in your heart is another. For one Jewish boy– a son, a brother, and a soldier for Am Yisrael– the difference became clear. It was *Rosh Chodesh Av*, a scorching hot day. It was also the midst of Operation Protective Edge. There was a ceasefire that day– or at least there was supposed to be. Yosef Yitzchak, who was stationed in Gaza, had gone back to his tank that morning to take a short rest. After 43 draining hours in a hot, stifling tank, the exhausted soldiers in his unit were given permission from their commander to leave the tank for some fresh air. But Yosef Yitzchak had a promise to keep. He had promised his father he would say Tehillim every day. And he was going to keep his promise. He began to recite the Tehillim for Monday–

מזמור שיר חנכת הבית לדוד. ארוממך ה' כי דליתני ולא שמחת איבי לי

*I will exalt You, O Lord, for You have raised me up, and You have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me.* Out of respect for their fellow soldier, the other boys in the unit sat and waited for Yosef Yitzchak in the tank while he recited his Tehillim.



There was a blinding flash of light in the tank, followed by a deafening explosion. The tank filled with smoke, making it impossible for the soldiers to breathe. “Tank No. 3 has been destroyed” was announced on the radio. The commander rushed to the tank followed by paramedics, crying out “Are you alive? Are you alive?” They were untouched. As they emerged from the tank, they saw their equipment lying on the ground, burnt. The missile had struck one meter from their resting spot outside the tank.

דוד מלך ישראל חי וקיים

- Shalva Gozland



# The Meaning Behind the Month

*Chanukah* falls out during the darkest and coldest time of the year, in the month of כסלו. Winter often is referred to as darkness. Physically, because daylight is at its minimum and spiritually because it is far from the *Yomim Tovim* of the Fall and Spring. The *yom tov* of *Chanukah* dispels this darkness. It re-inspires us to grow in our *Torah* and *Mitzvos*. It represents light overpowering darkness, both physically and spiritually. This is demonstrated by the miracle we celebrate by lighting candles each night of *Chanukah*. In fact, the *Ramban* explains that the reason the focus of *Chanukah* is on the candles is in order for our eyes to become “enlightened” to all the miracles that *Hashem* performs for us daily.

Sparks of the *Ohr Haganuz*, the light that shined for 36 hours and then was hidden by *Hashem* during Creation is, once again, revealed, on *Chanukah*. This is hinted to from the name of the month itself, כסלו, which can be broken into two words, כס and לו. כס means cover, hidden and לו has the gematria of 36. כסלו is the month that reveals the “hidden 36.” 36 is also the total of candles lit during *Chanukah*.

The *Mazal* of the month of כסלו is a *keshet*, a bow. The *Bnei Yissaschar* explains that the kingdom of *Yavan*, was called *keshet* because they made laws forbidding the mitzvot of *Shabbat*, *Rosh Chodesh* and *Bris Milah*. This is hinted to by the acronym *keshet*, “*Kiddush Shabbos Tamim*.” *Kiddush* standing for *Kiddush HaChodesh*. *Shabbos* referring to *Shabbos* and *Tamim* referring to *Bris Milah* because a *milah* makes a *zachar* perfect.

*Keshet*, a bow also symbolizes *Tefillah*. The victory over the *Yevanim* was not due to *Bnei Yisroel's* physical strength because they were few and weak rather, it was because of their *Tefillah*. When *Yaakov Avinu* said that he defeated *Shechem*, he said “*bechavari u'bakashati*,” *Yaakov Avinu* was talking about *Tefillah*. The *Gur Aryeh* explains that *Tefillah* is like a *keshet* because the effect of our *Tefillah* is like a bow; it is dependent on the pressure exerted or the concentration and sincerity with which one davens with. Before each battle with the *Yevanim*, the Jews fasted and davened. Their heartfelt *Tefillah* was the impetus to their success.

- Leah Rothman





## A Miracle

Before we light the *menorah* we say two *brachot*; להדליק נר של חנכה and שעשה נסים

In the second *bracha* we are blessing *Hashem*, who has done miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time of year. The ‘miracle’ being referred to is the jug of pure oil that was found and that lasted 8 days.

*Rav Pam* notes that in the *Beis HaMikdash* many miracles occurred every single day. For example, the *Lechem HaPanim* never became stale, flies never descended upon the *korbanot*, and the fire by the *mezbeach* never went out. If so, asks *Rav Pam*, what was so special about the miracle of *Chanukah* that only that miracle is commemorated with a special blessing?

This can be understood through the *halachic* principle that says “*Tumah hutrah b’Tzibur*,” that when a *mitzvah* is being performed on behalf of all *bnei yisroel*, *tumah* can’t make it *pasul*. The *Pnei Yehoshua* comments and asks, why then was a pure jug of oil needed, since the menorah was a *mitzvah* that was done for all *Bnei Yisroel*, they could have lit the *Menorah* with impure oil. The *Pnei Yehoshua* answers that the miracle of the oil on *Chanukah* was unnecessary. The reason, that *Hashem* performed the miracle was only to demonstrate *chiba yetzirah* to *Bnei Yisroel*. *Hashem* wanted to show the Jewish people that after they did *Teshuvah*, the relationship was fully restored and *Hashem* still loved them.

*Rav Pam* answers, certainly the *Beis HaMikdash* was full of miracles, but this particular miracle was special. This was the miracle that showed that *Hashem* will allow us to come back and that He will not hold grudges against us — if we sincerely return to Him with complete *Teshuva*.

- Nechama Weiner



# אישים ומנהיגים

לו הייתי יכולה לפגוש מנהיג או איש חשוב הייתי רוצה לפגוש את חנה מספר שמואל א', אשתו של אלקנה.

חנה היתה אישה מיוחדת מאוד. אני רוצה לפגוש את חנה כי אני רוצה לשאול אותה איך היא יכלה לתת את הבן שלה לעבוד את ה' בגיל שלוש, אחרי כל כך הרבה שנים שהיתה עקרה ורצתה ילד. חנה התפללה עם כל הלב שלה ובכתה לה' שייתן לה את בנה. ה' לא ביקש מחנה לנדור שתיתן לו את בנה. אבל חנה עשתה את הנדר כי היא רצתה.

חנה היתה צדיקה גמורה. היא רצתה בן עם כל לבה ונתנה אותו לה'. חנה מלאה באמונה לה', אפילו שהיא סובלת כי אין לה ילדים. מאיפה באה כל האמונה שלה, למרות כל הסבל שלה? קשה לי להבין איך היא הקריבה את שמואל, הבן שלה, שזה הקורבן הגדול ביותר בעולם.

מחנה למדתי שלתפילה עם כוונה יש את הכח הגדול ביותר בעולם. התפילה של חנה פתחה את שערי שמים והקב"ה ענה לבקשה שלה ונתן לה בן. מחנה למדתי שאפשר לדבר עם ה', אפשר לעשות ברית או עסקה עם ה': חנה עשתה עמו ברית - הוא נתן לה בן והיא נתנה לו אותו בחזרה אחרי שלוש שנים. מחנה למדתי שאפילו כשרוצים דבר יותר מהכל אפשר להקריב אותו.

אני לא מבינה את המדרגה שלה ואיך היא עשתה את זה. אני נשארת עם השאלה איך חנה יכלה להקריב את הבן האהוב שלה, שמואל, בגיל שלוש. אני רוצה לפגוש את חנה ולבקש ממנה לתת לי את הכח והאמונה שיש לה. אני בטוחה שחנה היתה יכולה לעזור לי להיות קרובה יותר לה'.

- Chaya Alexandra Kestenbaum

Excerpt from: Makor Rishon (Israeli Newspaper)

הזוכה עצמה לא יכלה להגיע לכנס; סבה וסבתה, איזידור ומלכה לקס, קיבלו את הפרס בשמה, והקריאו בהתרגשות את החיבור. חיה קסטנבאום כתבה על חנה הנביאה, בטקסט שביטא גם את אשר על לבה של המחברת, ולא הותיר בקהל אף עין יבשה. "אני לא מבינה את המדרגה שלה ואיך היא עשתה את זה", כתבה על חנה, שוויתרה על גידול בנה ושלחה אותו לשרת את עם ישראל. "אני נשארת עם השאלה איך חנה יכלה להקריב את הבן האהוב שלה, שמואל, בגיל שלוש. אני רוצה לפגוש את חנה ולבקש ממנה לתת לי את הכוח והאמונה שיש לה. אני בטוחה שחנה הייתה יכולה לעזור לי להיות קרובה יותר לה'".



# *MHS Chanukah Artwork*



Ahuva Lisker



Serene Klapper





Leah Rothman



Nechi Bertram



Shira Zelefsky



# Special Gifts

*We asked the faculty to tell us about a gift they received that is particularly special to them.*

**MRS. ROTTENBERG** - My mother in law gave me a candelabra that belonged to her grandfather. My husband is named after him so it is particularly special.

**MRS. M. COHEN** - When I was recovering from my illness, my students bought me a bracelet. It was an expression of their devotion and is a constant reminder to me of all the *tefilos* and *kabalos* they had taken on on my behalf, and I treasure it deeply.

**REBBETZIN TWERSKY** - My husband put a coin from the Lubavitcher Rebbe on a necklace for me. I also got a dollar from the Rebbe. The dollar is irreplaceable and I have taken it with me to all of my surgeries. Because I felt that the dollar is so soaked with *refuah* and *tefilos*, I gave it to my precious student, Chaya Alexandra, as a *shmirah*.

**MRS. FROM** - the gifts that are most special to me are the ones that are handmade. I come from a particularly crafty family and the items my mother has knitted and crochet for me are very precious to me. I also love when my students make me posters, it shows their appreciation for what I have taught them.

**MRS. KLUGMANN** - My grandmother gave me her wedding band at my Shabbos sheva brachos.

**RABBI GELLEY** - I always wanted a pair of Rabbainu Taam tefillin, but I never felt I was fully ready for it. After 30 years of marriage, 10 years in kollel and 20 years of *harbatzos hatorah* (spreading Torah), I felt it would be a way for me to connect deeper to Hashem. I told this to my wife and for our 30th anniversary she bought me a beautiful pair.

**REBBETZIN EISENBERGER** - Whenever I get a handwritten expression of gratitude I treasure it deeply. After one graduation, I got a beautiful letter from a student. She was always very quiet and quite honestly, I didn't think that she so strongly connected to the classes or the experiences. She wrote a detailed letter and explained how every class and experience touched her and affected her. It touched me deeply to get that from her and it gave me tremendous support and *chizuk*.

**MRS. YANOFSKY** - When I was a young girl, whenever my father would take a business trip (particularly to Europe) he would purchase a beautiful and distinctive doll or figurine for me, his only daughter. My brothers were not so privileged. I was always very touched by the thought that even though my father was so far away, he was thinking of me. Although it is many years later and the dolls were lost over the years, I can still visualize them in my mind's eye, a token of love from my father.

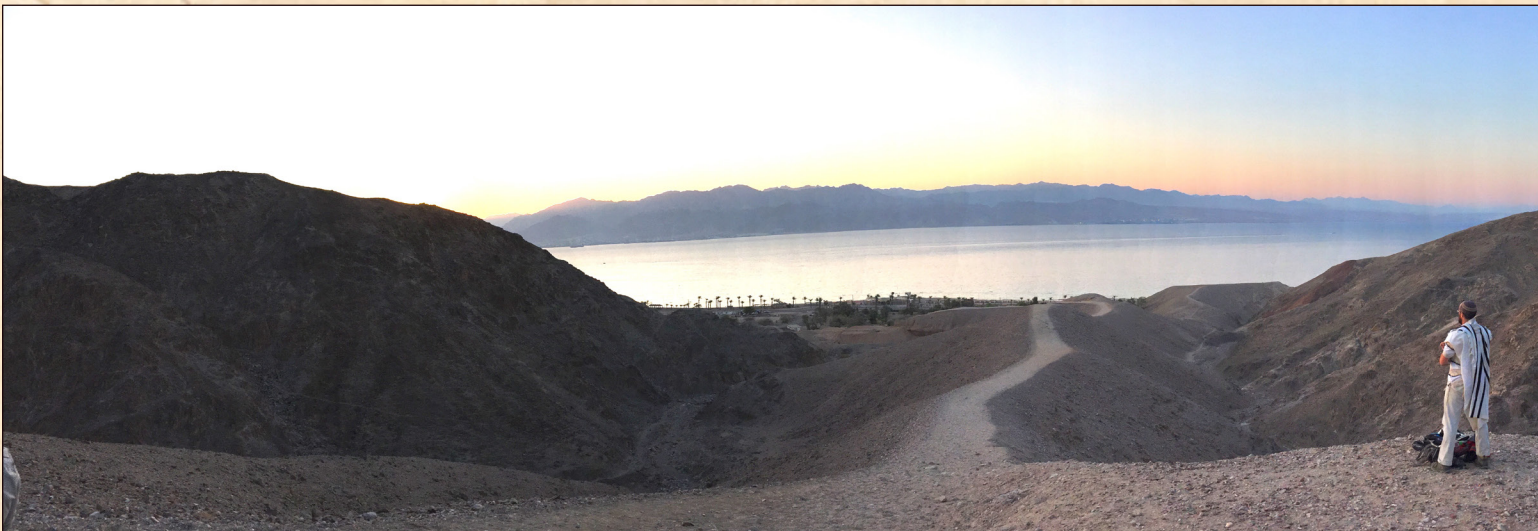


Photo by Shalva Gozland



# Chanukah Fiasco

*We asked the faculty if they ever had a Chanukah fiasco*

**MRS. WEISZ** - When my oldest daughter was about nine years old, she was spending time watching the Chanukah lights; after a while her head started to feel oddly warm. When she looked at the window behind the menorah she saw that her hair (a large afro) was on fire, so she quickly tumbled over on her head and doused the flame. By the time I came from the kitchen everything was good. The whole family had a good laugh at her quick response.

**DR. TRAPEDO** - Tip for life- if you make a menorah out of wine bottles, remember to spill out any wine inside. Otherwise your tablecloth will catch on fire...





