

MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
CHANUKAH 5785

Gabby Bral, 11th Grade



Gabby Bral

Mrs. Tsivia Yanofsky
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Principal, General Studies

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From the Desk of the Editors

The following is adapted from the writings of Rav Paysach Krohn, may he have a refuah sheleimah:

The Meiri, in his *hakdamah* to *Shas*, says that every Jew must examine and evaluate each significant event in his life, good or seemingly bad, by asking two questions. First, 'why is Hashem allowing me to have this experience?' and second, 'what can I learn from it?' If one does not ask himself these fundamental questions, he is not using the unique gifts of man, who, unlike other creatures, has the ability to learn, develop, and improve through his lived experiences.

This applies to *Yomim Tovim* as well. Every *Yom Tov*, whether *min Hatorah* or *mi'deRabanan*, is uniquely important and has its own distinctive lessons to impart. The Meiri explains that every Jew is obligated to internalize each *Yom Tov* that he is privileged to observe throughout the Jewish calendar. *Chanukah* provides a pivotal opportunity for growing closer to Hashem and His Torah. As the Vilna Gaon writes, if a person isn't growing, "למה לו חיים?"

The importance of growth is also evident in the Torah itself, in *Parshas Vayeitzei*. The Torah states: וַיְהִי כִּשְׁנֵי יָלְדָה רַחֵל אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹהָנָן בֶּן-נִחֵם יְעֻקֵּב אֶל-דָּבִן שְׁלֹחֲנִי וְאֶלְכָה אֶל-חֲקֹתַי וְלֹא-רָצִי. After Rochel *Imeinu* gave birth to Yosef, Yaakov asked Lavan if he could return to *Eretz Canaan*. Why, we might ask, specifically when Yosef was born did Yaakov *Avinu* feel he could leave the house of Lavan and face the world? Why not when any of the other great *shevatim* were born, like Yehudah, the tribe of kings, or Yisachar, the tribe of *talmidei chachamim*?

The answer, perhaps, can be discerned from the name itself. The name 'Yosef' means 'he will add.' Once Yaakov *Avinu* had a son who, in keeping with the potential implied by his name, would continuously grow in *ruchniyus* and work on himself, he knew that together they would be able to go out into the world and face Eisav. Yosef added to the *shevatim's* capabilities the ability to face challenges productively; to not simply conquer them but to grow from them. This gave Yaakov the confidence to take his family and "return home."

We are all familiar with the famous *machlokes* between *Beis Hillel* and *Beis Shammai* regarding how to light the *Chanukah* candles. *Beis Shamai* teaches us to start with eight lights and subtract one each day, while *Beis Hillel* insists that we light one *ner* on the first night and add one every day. The *Gemara* states that the ap-

proach of *Beis Hillel* is preferred because a Jew must always be in a process of "*mosif v'holeich*;" always developing his relationship with Hashem, his knowledge of the Torah, and his *chesed* towards his fellow man as he travels along the path of life. To do otherwise would be contrary not only to the spirit of *Chanukah* but to the very essence of what it means to be an *oveid Hashem*. A *Yid* has to constantly work on bettering himself and growing in his *middot* and *ma'asim tovim*. This is one important message of *Chanukah*.

Here at MHS, we have tremendous opportunities every single day to work on improving ourselves to eventually become the best version of ourselves that we can be. May we all have the insight to see the lessons that we can learn from every aspect of our lives, so we can grow into better people and ultimately hasten the coming of Mashiach *b'karov*.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this year's Chanukah *Moadim*. Your hard work and talent is what makes this publication possible.

Wishing you a *freilichin Chanukah*,
The Moadim Crew

*This Moadim is generously sponsored
in honor of our two daughters
Yakira and Naomi*

לעילוי נשמות
אריאל יהודה ע"ה בן פנחס צבי
רוחמה חיה פרומא בת פנחס דב ע"ה
תנצבה



Ariela Yusufova, 10th Grade

The Miracle of Faith

We celebrate Chanukah to commemorate the Jews' miraculous victory over the Greeks and the subsequent *Chanukas HaBayis*. As it says in Zechariah 4:6, after Zechariah receives a vision of a *menorah*, "לֹא בְחֵיל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם־בְּרוּחִי אָמַר ה' צְבָקוֹת" —their salvation would not come through their own strength and power, but rather from Hashem.

Because enough olive oil for only one day of *menorah* lighting lasted for eight days, we celebrate Chanukah for eight days. Many of our *rabbanim* question what was miraculous about the first day of Chanukah, if there was, in fact, sufficient oil for the first day.

Rabbi Sacks teaches that the Jews' faith, which prompted them to search for pure, sealed olive oil, was itself the miracle. The Greeks defiled and desecrated the *Beis Hamikdash*; the Jews had no reason to believe there was even a possibility that pure olive oil remained, yet they still sought it. Their extreme hope and faith was itself miraculous.

This faith is a common theme in Jewish history; it is a part of our identity. Throughout *galus*, we have experienced the Crusades, pogroms, and the Holocaust, yet we never gave up. Jews don't weep in despair; rather, we get up and rebuild ourselves. Hashem showed Moshe this message at the *sneh*, about which the *pasuk* says, "וְהָיָה הַסֵּנֶה בְּעֵר בְּאֵשׁ וְהִסָּנָה אֵינֶנּוּ אֶכֶל" —the *sneh* was on fire, yet the fire was not consuming it (Shemos 3:2). This symbolized that while the Jews seemed to be 'burning' in Mitzrayim, they would never be destroyed; this is true for all future exiles as well.

During the times of Chanukah, the Jews went through a great tragedy, but they recovered from it. We should learn from this example and be inspired; right now we are in *galus* and are at war, but we should never lose hope. Just like the Maccabim, we should have faith that salvation is right around the corner; we just need to seek it out.

☞ Kayla Francis

Repairing What is Broken

About fifty years ago, when there weren't many Jews in Australia, a Chassid went to Australia for business. As Shabbos approached, he didn't have a place to stay, so he went to the fish store, hoping to meet another Jewish person buying fish for Shabbos. He met a Jewish man at the store and joined him for Shabbos. The man lived in a luxurious home. During Shabbos, the Chassid noticed a broken jug among all the fine silverware. Before leaving, he asked his host about the jug. The man shared that after his father passed away, he had no money, but eventually he made a fortune. However, his wealth led him away from Yiddishkeit. One day, he encountered a boy crying because he had broken his family's only jug of oil, which his father had specifically instructed him not to break because it contained their last drops of oil for Chanukah.

The man was moved by the boy's distress. This moment of reflection made him realize that, like the boy, he also needed to find a way back to his own Father, despite having broken something precious that his Father entrusted to him, the responsibility to keep the *mitzvos*. He gave the boy money to buy two jugs of oil, one for the boy's family and one for himself. He used the oil to light his *menorah*, which eventually led him back to Yiddishkeit. The broken jug became a powerful reminder of his journey back.

The boy's question was fundamentally flawed. He asked, "How can I go back to my father with a broken jug?" Though we sin and make mistakes, it is never a question whether or not we can return to Hashem. That always has to be the address we are going to. Hashem should give us the eyes to see Him in every situation. We can't touch Hashem but we can see Him through His actions—much like the Chanukah candles, about which we say "ואין לנו רשות להשתמש בהם אלא לראותם בלבד"—we cannot touch them, only see them alone. We should all learn to see the *hashgacha pratis* in our lives; that is how we combat the Yevani mentality.

Esti Kapetas

Source: Rav Maylach Bedermam



Noa Harris, 11th Grade



Zeldy Itkin, 12th Grade

Every Little Bit Counts

Reb Shmuel, a rich merchant, was preparing for a business trip to buy goods. He divided his money into eight bags. The trip was calm until they neared the city, when a man pretending to need help led a group of thieves to rob the wagon. Reb Shmuel lost most of his money, but he noticed that one bag was left behind by the thieves. He quickly came up with a plan.

When they arrived at the city, Reb Shmuel paid a local tough guy to help recover his stolen goods. Then, he prayed, promising to donate one tenth of the recovered money to charity if his belongings were returned. After praying, the tough guy brought back all seven bags of stolen goods, and Reb Shmuel gave a tenth of each to charity.

However, the charity collectors pointed out that Reb Shmuel should also donate a tenth of the money from the one bag that hadn't been stolen. Without that money, he wouldn't have been able to pay the tough guy to get his possessions back, so that money was also part of the miracle.

This story ties into the question of why Chanukah lasts eight days. Although the oil only lasted for seven days beyond what the oil could naturally support, the miracle couldn't have happened if the one flask of oil hadn't been found. Chanukah celebrates both the small miracle and the big one, teaching us to appreciate every part of a miraculous event.

Adina Sigelman

Source: Rabbi Yehudah Prero

The Beauty of Yefes in the Tents of Shem

The first time Bnei Yisrael and Yavan interact in the Torah is when their ancestors, Shem and Yefes, help cover Noach after he gets drunk (Bereishis 9:23). Noach gives them each a *bracha*. His *bracha* to Yefes, the ancestor of Yavan, teaches us a lot about the nature of Yavan and Chanukah. The *passuk* says, "וְיָפֶס יֹשֵׁב בְּאֶהְלֵי שֵׁם" — "Hashem should give beauty to Yefes, and he should live in the tents of Shem" (Bereishis 9:27).

Yavan was all about physical beauty and perfection and saw these as the highest ideals that a person could achieve, so they definitely got the first part of the *bracha*. However, the second, crucial part was missing—the physical beauty was meant to live in the "tents of Shem," which represent Torah.

Yes, physical beauty and *gashmiyus* can be nice, but they're not intrinsically important; they are meant to serve a higher purpose of *ruchniyus*. They're supposed to enhance our ability to serve Hashem through learning Torah and performing *mitzvos*. Chanukah was about putting the beauty of Yefes back where it was meant to be—under the control of the *ruchniyus* of Bnei Yisrael.

Malka Rosenholtz

Lighting the Way

When we delve into Chazal's recounting of the Chanukah story, it's natural to marvel at the improbable might of the Maccabees. A small band of *kohanim*, outnumbered and outmatched, triumphed against the powerful Greek army. Yet, it is not the victory on the battlefield, but the miracle of the oil that we commemorate each year. On the surface, this seems perplexing; without the military victory, there would have been no rededication of the Beis Hamikdash, no *menorah* to light, and no miraculous oil to marvel at.

The Greeks were not the first to wage war against the Jewish people, but their goal was singular: not annihilation, but assimilation. Their goal—"להשכיחם תורתך ולהעבירם מחוקי רצונך"—sought to sever our connection with Hashem. Physical oppression is certainly tragic and worth remembering, but the threat to our religious freedom strikes at the very essence of our identity. This, as the Nesivos Shalom explains, is the distinction of Chanukah. Chanukah is not merely a commemoration of military victory but a rekindling of our unbreakable bond to Torah and its divine light.

In *Ner Mitzvah*, the Maharal analyzes the unique symbolism of light in the Torah. Light, he explains, represents wisdom and clarity, the antidote to the spiritual darkness the Greeks sought to impose. The flames of the *menorah*, burning against all odds, proclaimed that the light of Torah could not be extinguished. The miracle of the oil—one day's supply sustaining eight days of light—demonstrates how Torah, too, transcends the natural order. In contrast with the Greek worldview, where physical strength was celebrated, the Torah exalts the enduring strength of spirit and faith over brute force.

This conflict is not confined to history. Chanukah urges us to reconsider our priorities, emphasizing the importance of striving for spiritual growth. While physical triumphs are significant, they are not the ultimate goal. Rather, they are orchestrated by Hashem and serve as a means to a higher purpose. In his commentary to Bamidbar 8:2, Rashi recounts that Aharon felt overlooked during the *chanukas hamishkan* because *shevet Levi* did not bring *korbanos*, but he was consoled by his role in lighting the *menorah*. Ramban explains that the reason Ahron was consoled by the *mitzvah* of *menorah* is that lighting *menorah*, unlike *korbanos*, continues to be practiced in some form even after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash, through the Chanukah candles. In this way, Ramban connects the *menorah* of the Beis Hamikdash to the Chanukah candles we kindle to this day. These flames are the embodiment of the Torah's divine light, which has illuminated the Jewish path through millennia of exile and struggle.

Chanukah, then, is not merely a commemoration of past miracles; it is a call to action. The light of the *menorah* is not a relic of the past but a reflection of our *pintele yid*, a spark that burns brightly even in the darkest corners of *galus*. It is this divine light that sustains us through challenges, reminding us that without the *Ohr Elokus*, we are adrift—but with it, we can not only endure and thrive but also bring light to the world. Torah is our strength, transcending time and dispelling all darkness.

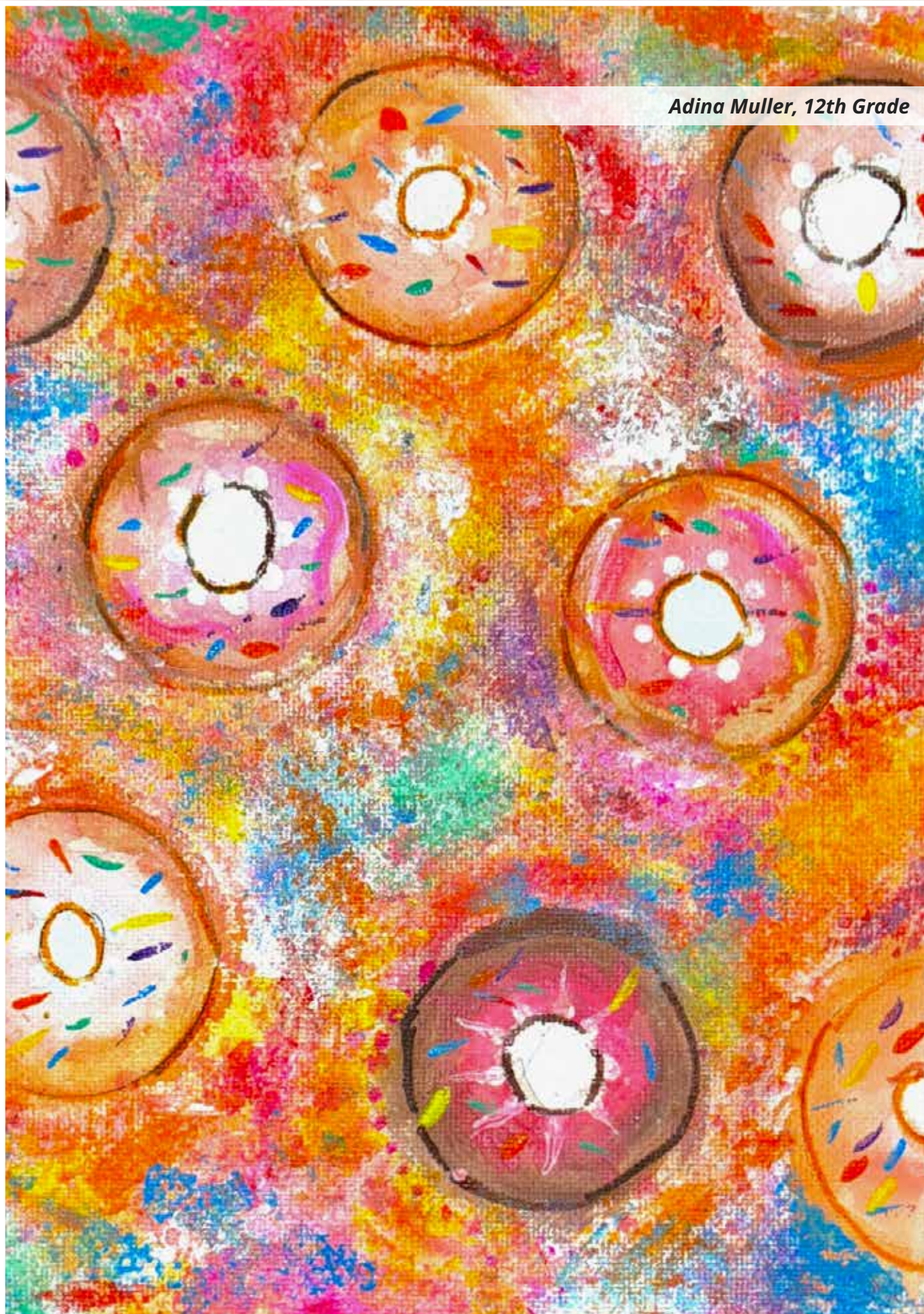
☞ Matea Frieber



Talia Bennett, 11th Grade

Talyn Ben

Adina Muller, 12th Grade



The Unique Spirit of חנוכת בית שני

Three thousand years ago, Shlomo completed the structure of which his father Dovid had dreamed. The entirety of בני ישראל gathered in ירושלים to watch the שכינה descend into בית ראשון and brought קורבנות "in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted" (Melachim 8:5). Presently, we do not have an official יום טוב that celebrates Shlomo's monumental campaign. Yet in a two weeks' time, we will be commemorating with eight days of rejoicing and thanksgiving the purification of בית שני in 155 BCE. Should not the dedication of the *first* בית המקדש, which arose from prophetic guidance and direct instruction from Hashem, deserve greater recognition than its counterpart?

Rabbi Norman Lamm explains that the answer lies within the nature of novelty versus mundanity. New movements gain support and enthusiasm quickly; they are exciting, poetic, and fresh. It was relatively easy for Shlomo to summon the Jews' spirit and sentiment and build a brand new, brilliantly unprecedented sanctuary for the ריבונו של עולם. Who would not be motivated at such a prospect? But for the *Yidden* in Judea under the oppressive fist of the Seleucid Empire and the hostility of Hellenized Jews, with ירושלים under siege and בית שני defiled, there seemed no bright future. There was no appealing initiative to build something new; instead, בני ישראל had to fight through rubble and restore what they had lost. Reconstructing old missions, recovering faded glory, is a tremendous challenge. In a similar sense, Rabbi Lamm adds, a boy feels excitement for his first עלייה לתורה because it promises something new and invigorating, but after years have passed, the same young man struggles to rekindle that supreme level of exhilaration for Torah.

In this way, we finally understand the significance of the rededication of בית שני and why it richly deserves an eight-day remembrance. The חנוכת הבית followed the attack Yehudah Macabee and his men lead against ירושלים to take back בית שני. Most others would have been discouraged at the lack of loftiness in such an act, and the grit necessary for that first step forward. In a time when religious life threatens to mirror that kind of indifference and passivity, we can seek to reinvigorate joy and feeling by imitating those who were חוזר עטרה ליושנה in חנוכת בית שני.

☺ Serach Soloveichik

The Inner Light of the Jewish Spirit

Chanukah represents the Jewish victory over Greek influence. The Greeks reduced individuals to objects, focusing on what can be seen and admired. They did not care about spiritual depth. The Maccabees' triumph was not just military, but a rejection of this superficial mindset. The miracle of the oil burning for eight days serves as a symbol of the inner light of the Jewish spirit overcoming the darkness of the physical world.

In a world obsessed with materialism and external validation, it can be hard to resist being drawn to material possessions, a quintessentially Greek value. However, we know that true joy and fulfillment come from our connection with Hashem. Chanukah teaches us the importance of *kedusha* and the necessity of filtering out the world of *gashmius* so that we are left with purity and connection. It's a time to choose meaningful relationships and purpose over fleeting pleasures. It's an opportunity to find lasting joy in our bond with Hashem, not in the objects that surround us.

☞ Adina Muller

An End to the Darkness

Most years, including this year, Chanukah falls out during the week of Parshas Miketz, as there is a strong connection between Miketz and Chanukah. In the *sefer Ohr Gedaliahu*, Rav Gedalia Schorr explains the unique connection that ties Parshas Miketz to Chanukah.

The *parsha* begins, “וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים וּפְרָעָה חֹלִים” — “and it was at the end of two years, and Pharaoh had a dream” (Bereishis 41:1). The Medrash Tanchuma states that there is a connection between the word “מִקֵּץ” in this *pasuk* and the word “קֵץ” in Iyov 28:3, which states “שֶׁמֶלֶךְ לֹאֲשֹׁךְ” — that Hashem brings an end to darkness. The time for Yosef's darkness and suffering had come to an end, so Hashem caused Pharaoh to have a dream, enabling Yosef to begin the process of his own personal *geulah*.

Rav Gedalia Schorr explains that some people mistakenly think that Yosef was saved because of Pharaoh's dream and Yosef's ability to interpret it. In truth, Yosef was saved because Hashem decreed that the time had come for Yosef's period of personal darkness to end. As a result of *hisorerus mi'limaalah*, from an awakening in *shamayim*, Yosef was able to interpret the dream and be freed.

Rav Schorr explains that this concept of divine initiative is also relevant to *neis Chanukah*. Just as Yosef was kept in his own personal darkness, the Yevanim tried to keep the Jewish people in a state of darkness. “שֶׁמֶלֶךְ לֹאֲשֹׁךְ” — Hashem putting an end to darkness — applies during the time of Chanukah as well. There was a *hisorerus mi'limaalah*, as Hashem decided that the time had come for the Jewish people to be saved from the Yevanim. The Chashmonaim were the vehicles to actualize this *geulah*, to bring it “*min ha'koach el ha'poel*,” from potential to actuality, and stand up and fight against the Yevanim.

In our own times, we *daven* that there will likewise be a *hisorerus mi'limaalah*. May Hashem bring about an awakening in *shamayim* for the ultimate *geulah* to come, *b'mherah beyamenu*.

☞ Sari Schwartz



Devorah Korsinsky, 9th Grade



From Flickers To Flames: **Soviet Jews Reignite Their Yiddishkeit**

On Chanukah, we celebrate not only the neis of the military victory of the Maccabim over the Greeks, but also the miracle of the Jewish spirit that prevailed in the extraordinary Jews who refused to succumb to Hellenist culture and ideology. In much more recent times, many brave Jews in the Soviet Union resisted Communist attempts to strip them of their religious beliefs and practices. We are proud to have among our student body children and grandchildren of Soviet Jews who, at the risk of exile or worse, secretly held onto whatever Jewish observances and traditions they could. For some, the flame dimmed to a flicker before being re-ignited by their descendants.



Adina Sigelman's father and mother are both from Chernokov in Ukraine, a satellite state under control of the Soviet Union until the fall of the Iron Curtain in the early 1990's. Each of her parents left Ukraine independently in the 1990's and later met each other and married in NY. The Sigelmans are members of *Bais Hillel* in Brooklyn, which has a large Russian Jewish constituency.



Sarah Tepper's mother was born in Zhitomir, Ukraine which was under the control of the Soviet Union (USSR). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the family was able to obtain a visa to emigrate to the US, where they had close relatives. They arrived in 1989 on the first direct plane from Moscow to NY, and settled in Brooklyn. Sarah's parents met at *Aish Hatorah* in NY as they started their religious journey. They married in 2008 in NYC.



Ariela Yusufova was born in Moscow, Russia to her parents, Anna and Eliezer Yusufov. She and her family left Russia in 2018 because of the lack of a Jewish infrastructure. For example, they had to drive an hour and half each way to get kosher food. It was important to her parents that their family maintain their Jewishness and never, G-d forbid, intermarry, so they moved to Brooklyn and joined the Russian Jewish community there.

In what way was life and/or Judaism in Russia different from life here?

Adina: There was a lot of anti-Semitism in Soviet Russia. Jews were forced to work on Saturdays and could only practice religion in secret. All Jewish artifacts and ritual objects were taken away from our families and destroyed. My grandparents were only able to save two silver *kiddush* cups and a *kesubah*, both of which they brought to the United States. Kosher food was, at best, very limited and usually not available. Jewish people had the nationality "Jewish" prominently specified on their passports. Jews were often not accepted to good colleges, and the colleges which did accept them had a quota of only a few Jews per year.

Sara: In Russia, practicing Judaism was strictly for-

bidden. Anyone that was caught engaging in religious rituals was subject to severe penalties such as imprisonment or exile to Siberia. My great-grandparents would secretly attend *shul* services, which were often held in someone's cellar. Initially, the older generation strove to observe the holidays and preserve Jewish traditions, but their children and grandchildren were too fearful of being associated with religious observance. Being discovered could result in expulsion from school or job loss. For example, my mother was aware of her Jewish identity but was never allowed to disclose it to her school friends. Due to pervasive anti-Semitism, discovery of her Jewish heritage would lead to social ostracization by her peers.

Do you remember a time when you did a *mitzvah* in secret?

Adina: One specific *mitzvah* that my family practiced in secret was lighting the *Chanukah menorah*. Because the government prohibited religious practices, we lit the *menorah* quietly and privately at home, often with the candles hidden from view to avoid attracting attention from the authorities. This *mitzvah* was an important way to preserve our Jewish traditions, even though it had to be kept secret.

Sara: My mother's great-grandparents cleverly disguised their *Rosh Hashanah* celebration as a birthday party. They baked an abundance of sweet delicacies and prepared a lavish meal, inviting their closest Jewish friends and family. While they outwardly celebrated a birthday party, they were truly celebrating *Rosh Hashanah*. My mother recalls being a young girl, hiding under the table, and dipping apples in honey.

Was there any kind of celebrating Chanukah in Russia? Can you describe it?

Adina: As I mentioned earlier we lit the *menorah* in secret so as not to attract the attention of the authorities. And in the privacy of our home, we enjoyed the traditional food and games, and focused on the holiday's themes of light and family.

Sara: Growing up in Russia, my mother was unfamiliar with *Chanukah*, as religion was not acknowl-

edged there. Like most Russians, she celebrated the national holiday of New Year's. A far cry from lighting *Chanukah* candles, her family decorated a New Year's tree with ornaments. In Russia, this practice marked the arrival of the new year, but did not carry the religious significance associated with it in Christian countries.

How has the Russian experience shaped your Torah and *Mitzvos* observance?

Adina: We appreciate *Yiddishkeit* more because we had to go against the flow to keep our traditions.

Sara: My mother reflects on her upbringing in Russia, where she had little connection to Judaism, and how it has deepened her appreciation for the *mitzvos* she can now perform with knowledge and devotion. She cherishes her Torah observance and is grateful daily for discovering *Yiddishkeit*. Becoming a *Ba'alas Teshuvah* filled a void within her, providing a sense of meaning she'd never known before. Growing up in Communist Russia, she always felt that something was missing, a feeling that vanished when she embraced *Yiddishkeit* in her early twenties. With limited exposure to it during her childhood, discovering its beauty made her feel complete. She realized the missing piece was her connection to Hashem.

Ariela: After hearing many stories from my parents about how it felt to be a Jew in the USSR, I started appreciating being Jewish much more. It

took me a while to begin to understand what it was like for my great-grandparents to be Jewish in Communist Russia. Although they were not religious, my great-grandparents were in grave danger during the war. Learning about the fear and danger that they experienced brought me to treasure the opportunities that America offers me. Now I find the fact that I'm free to be Jewish astounding. Knowing from my own experience that Judaism isn't so popular in other countries, I thank G-d that I moved to the US and that I am surrounded by so many Jews. Every time I think about my great-grandparents and how they were able to maintain their Jewish culture I am inspired and encouraged to continue on even though it is sometimes hard (although school here is much easier!) I'm extremely grateful to them for surviving and giving me an opportunity to live in this world. But most of all I'm thankful to my parents who brought me to America and showed me exactly how wonderful it is to be a Jew.



Shoshana Giloni, 12th Grade

To Light Another Light

There's a fascinating argument in the Talmud (Shabbos 22a) regarding Chanukah candles; can you use one Chanukah candle to light another? Usually, of course, we take an extra candle, the *shamash*, and use it to light all the candles. But suppose we don't have one—can we light the first candle and then use it to light the others?

Two great sages of the third century, Rav and Shmuel, disagreed. Rav said no, and Shmuel said yes. The Talmud explains that normally we have a rule that when Rav and Shmuel disagree, the law follows Rav. There are only three exceptions and this is one.

Why did Rav say you may not use one Chanukah candle to light the others? The Talmud explains, "אֵיךָ מְכַחֵשׁ הַמִּצְוָה"—in doing so, you are weakening the *mitzvah*. You diminish the first candle; inevitably you spill some of the wax or the oil. Therefore, Rav says not do anything that would diminish the light of the first candle.

However, Shmuel disagrees, and the law follows Shmuel. Why?

The best way to understand this is to think of two Jews, both religious, both committed, both living Jewish lives. One says, "I must not get involved with Jews who are less religious than me, because if I do, my own standards will fall. I'll end up keeping less. My light will be diminished." That's the view of Rav.

The other says, "When I use the flame of my faith to light a candle in someone else's life, my Jewishness is not diminished. It grows because there is now more Jewish light in the world. When it comes to spiritual goods as opposed to material goods, the more I share, the more I have. If I share my knowledge, faith, or love with others, I won't have less; I may even have more." That's the view of Shmuel, and that is how the law was ultimately decided.

So share your Judaism with others. Take the flame of your faith and help set other souls on fire.

☺ *Miri Brody*



Suri Weiner, 11th Grade

נשים וחנוכה - "אף הן היו באותו הנס"

חנוכה הוא חג של נס והצלה.

חנוכה הוא סיפור של אישה נחושה ואמיצה,
החדורה ביראת שמים טהורה.
אישה עם אחראיות ואכפתיות לבני עמה.

ויהודית שמה!

בזכותה קבעו חכמים: **"נשים חייבות בנר חנוכה, שאף הן היו באותו הנס"**

חנוכה הוא ספור מעורר השראה,

של אישה שאבדה את שבעת ילדיה,
והעדיפה למסור את נפשה,
ולא להכנע לעבודה זרה!
וחנה שמה!

מאחורי מתתיהו הצדיק עומדת אישתו הצדיקה,
שמגדלת משפחת כוהנים לתפארה.
יהודה המכבי ואחיו שנלחמו במלכות היוון הרשעה!

ועוד מאות ואלפי נשים שמסרו נפשן,
שלא יכתב על **"קרן השור"** - בקבוק של תינוק,
"שאין לנו חלק באלוקי ישראל".

זה הכוח שלנו- של האישה!

לאישה יש קשר ישיר עם הקב"ה, בתפילה

יום יום, שעה שעה,

על גידול וחינוך הילדים ברוח ישראל סבא.

לאישה יש אמונה תמימה ויראת שמים בטבעה.

לכן, בזכות נשים צדקניות נגאלו אבותינו ממצרים
ומאז, נגאלנו בזכות נשים צדקניות שבכל דור.

ואנחנו, נהיה מאותן נשים,

שמוסרות את נפשן על חינוך הילדים בדרך התורה!

בזכותן - בזכותנו תבוא הגאולה!

כי מאחורי כל נס הצלה עומדת אישה!

חנוכה שמח!

מורתכן, א. טווערסקי



Reflections from Rebbetzin Twersky

1. How do you remember חנוכה as a child? What experiences and memories stick with you from that time?

Chanukah is one of the *chagim* that brings up a lot of warm feelings for home...there's really nothing like those memories. I remember how, as a child, I would watch my father light the candles opposite the *mezuzah* and we would all sit together near the dancing lights for thirty minutes or more as he learned alongside them. And I recall clearly how he told me (in Yiddish) that when you look at the candles you need to think about what they're telling us. He would say, הם - הנרות הם לא רק דולקים - מספרים. Everyone internalized what that meant to them.

On the fifth night of *Chanukah* my father would give us דמי חנוכה, and as a child, this was the highlight!

2. What are the differences between the way your *talmidot* experience *Chanukah* and how you did at their age?

"היינו שמחים מכל דבר! מה קיבלנו כבר בדמי חנוכה? לירה, זה היה הרבה כסף!"

Everything made us happy, we didn't need a lot in order to be happy. And I feel now, *Baruch Hashem*, Hashem has given us *revach*, *harchavah b'gashmiyut*, material comfort which enables us to live like בני מלכים, and girls like princesses. But along with this there sometimes comes the need for grand parties, which is beautiful but not what I had as a child. When the party's over it should not be just over; you should be left with something, and I was always left with the warmth of quality family bonding time, and a sense of spirituality. "זה נשאר בעצמות" - it stays in your bones and fills your whole system. "למלא הקנקן" it should leave a lasting impression. All the external is beautiful but it should bring out the inner beauty - otherwise, it passes, and though we worked very hard it's gone. Altogether, in ארץ ישראל we lived a life of *tzniyut* in my time. *Baruch Hashem*, we were comfortable. My father was a diamond dealer but was an "איש ספר, תלמיד חכם גדול" and we were "מסתפקים במועט".

3. What's one especially meaningful aspect of חנוכה and why is it special for you?

On *Chanukah* we celebrate the כח של מעט, the power of the few, and the truth that האור דוחה הרבה מעט מן האור דוחה הרבה. And also כח של מצוה אפילו מצוה אחת מן החושך. These are the ideas that fill my *Chanukah* with meaning.

4. Is there a *Chanukah* song that is particularly special to you?

A song that rings in my ears is a song from my childhood נר לי נר לי קטן.

5. Every *chag* has its specific culinary aspect. Is there a particular food that you associate with *Chanukah*? Please tell us about it.

My mother's *latkes*. Just potatoes and oil and eggs. It wasn't much of a recipe, just the basics, but it was delicious. My married brothers and everybody came just to eat my mother's *latkes*.

6. What is a legacy that you would like your family to have in regard to חנוכה?

"להמשיך כל אחד מה שראה בבית."

That my children should do it in their homes, and their children in their homes, according to what they remember from our home. This connects us to our roots. It shows that we come from somewhere great. I enjoy when my married children continue this on. I love when my son calls me and says, 'Ma, I'm doing exactly what you did,' or tells my husband, 'I'm singing exactly the same songs you sang!' This gives me a sense of *nachat*. להמשיך מדור לדור.

7. Has there been an experience in your life that you felt was a ממש רבים ביד מעטים experience?

During the Six-Day-War and the Yom Kippur War "היינו ממש כבשה בין שבעים זאבים".

I had friends from all around *Eretz Yisrael*, and the *nissim v'nifla'ot* that we experienced were ממש רבים ביד מעטים. At the time of the Six-Day-War I was in elementary school, and I remember that when we found out that the *Kotel* was in our hands, I prepared my room. I decorated it, and put a table in the center with a little flower. My mother asked me, 'What are you preparing your room for? We are in the middle of a war.' And I told her, 'I am preparing my room for the *geulah*.' Once I knew that the *Kotel* was in our hands, I was so sure that that was what was happening; from here we would go on to have the entire *Beit Hamikdash*, הבית הנצחי. My memories of that war are memories of רבים ביד מעטים.

8. Is there a special message of חנוכה that is especially relevant to women?

Yes, the power of a woman to save *Klal Yisrael*. Two of the *chagim* that we have, *Chanukah* and *Purim*, are בזכות נשים. We know that both Esther *HaMalkah* and Yehudit saved *Klal Yisrael*. In addition, the *me-sirut nefesh* of Chana for the *chinuch* of her seven sons also serves as a model of the power of the Jewish woman. Women, called by the Torah בית יעקב, don't only build their own homes; they build *Klal Yisrael*. They save our nation not only physically, but in *ruchniyut* as well.

9. How does הלל's concept of מוסיף והולך find application in our daily lives?

מוסיף והולך. Every day has to be an addition to what was yesterday. In decisions, in *mitzvot*, in *hidur mitzvah*, in *ahavat Yisrael*, in *kibud horim*. It is important to always think, 'I want to be on the way that's leading upwards in *ruchniyut* and always adding. Never to be satisfied with what I have already done, but wanting to do more.



Our beloved and erudite former faculty member and current visiting lecturer on Churban Europa, Ms. Rochel Licht, pays tribute to her pious father by recalling Chanukah in her home. How apt that their family name is 'Licht!'

In many ways, my dear father, *Avraham ben Shimon Licht z"l*, a Holocaust survivor from Poland who to his last day remained a loyal *Skverer Chassid*, modeled for me and my siblings what it means to feel *chavivus hamitzvos*. This was particularly so on *Chanukah*, when he spent hours twisting shapeless puffs of cotton into elongated wicks. As night fell and it was time to '*tzind un di Chanukah lecht*,' he placed those hand-made irregular wicks into the oil-filled cups of his small rounded silver *menorah*, polished to a sparkle in honor of the *chag*. After the *brachos* and *Maoz Tzur*, our family would sit focused on those *neiros* as if they held the *kedushah* of *Yom Kippur*. I remember that if any one of us dared to move on to something else too soon, my father would stop us with a motion of his hand and a wordless admonition, "*nu, nu, nu*," not daring to interrupt that sacred half hour with idle speech. As those thirty minutes came to an end, he checked the clock to be sure it was over. Then, finally, we could all proceed to the table for supper. At the time, we may have been starving and impatient, but what remains for me now is the image of my father, uncompromising in his scrupulous observance of *mitzvos*, every one of which he cherished.



Avigayil Waltuch, Chaya Rosenthal, Nechama Wiesner, 11th Grade



YEHUDA WILL PERISH SO SAYS
THE FLAG
YEHUDA WILL LIVE SO SAY
THE LIGHTS



כי ממך מקור חיי באורך אראה אור

*From You Is My Life's Source; By
Your Light I Will See Light*

(אריאל יהודה ז"ל בן פנחס צבי יבלחט"א, A Tribute to my Beloved Father)

Every *Chanukah*, my mind brings me back to the *Chanukahs* of my younger years. I was the oldest, a twin with Yair, then came Netanel, and Chen was just a baby. We gathered excitedly in my father's office, surrounded by his *seforim*, and facing the picture window where all of our *menoros* would soon be glowing. Daddy lit first, his stately silver *menorah* a gift from my mother, and us children followed. And then - there was light and joy. Dancing to the tune and words of *Maoz Tzur*, and wishing it would never end. Although those *Chanukahs* did, in fact, end, the light that my father brought into our lives, and the lives of so many others whom he touched, burns brightly within all of us.

My father, Ariel Yehudah Klein z"l, was born in London, England, in 1984. He was educated first at Menorah Primary School, then Hasmonean High School for Boys, the classic Anglo-Jewish education available then. Upon graduation, he travelled to Yerushalayim where he studied at Yeshiva Kol Torah for three years under the guidance of Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Schlesinger. At the request of my grandparents, he returned to England to further his education at the University of Westminster. Ultimately, he joined the family business which required him to travel frequently. He worked very hard to make his livelihood, but even harder to make his, and our, life. In my mind's eye I still picture him with his laptop in hand, as he typed the Torah insights which continually bubbled up in his mind. To me, whatever his professional responsibilities, he was *kulo Torah*.

At the risk of sounding like a doting daughter, I believe that my father was a true *tzadik*. He embodied the highest levels a person can reach in both *בין אדם לחברו* and *בין אדם למקום*. My mother has often described that when he received his cancer diagnosis, devastating news that would cause most people to crumble, my father danced around the living room as if it were *Simchas Torah*, showcasing his deep subservience to Hashem's will. That extraordinary *emunah* and *bitachon* were never shaken, even in the face of immense challenges.

Our family's *Yiddishkeit* came alive through Daddy. He was never content with us merely going through the motions or allowing *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov* to pass by without meaning. I recall my childhood *Shabbosim*—often, I would wake up early, and bored I would go knock on my parents' door. Instead of becoming frustrated by his eight-year-old waking him so early on a *Shabbos* morning, my father would rise, take a *Tanach* off of the *seforim* shelf, and share captivating stories from *Tanach* with my twin brother and me. I will never forget how he relayed the story of Shimshon *Hagibbor*. He truly brought the stories and timeless lessons of Torah to life for us.



The concern and respect that my father showed to each of us was mirrored in his conduct and exceptional *middos* outside the home. His non-Jewish co-workers, many of whom attended his *shiva* to pay their respects, and continue to contact my mother every year on his yartzeit, are a testament to the impact he had, and the *Kiddush Hashem* he created. His sense of humor and *joie de vivre* brought so much joy to those around him, and many people fondly remember him for his ability to make anyone and everyone laugh.

Daddy was an *eved Hashem* in the truest sense. In addition to his pure and elevated religious commitment, he also possessed an incredible knowledge of worldly matters, such as geography, mathematics, and science. He was particularly fascinated by the magnificence and complexity of the solar system and

its celestial bodies. He turned this passion for astronomy into a way to serve Hashem; in time he acquired a reputation as the go-to person for the *halachic zemanim*, well before it became commonplace to have *zemanim* calendars or hotlines. Personally, he never once missed a *minyan b'zman*, sometimes traveling 60 mile detours due to his unpredictable travel schedule. Such was his unwavering commitment.

As a father, he was truly exceptional. I am deeply grateful for the memories he joyfully created for my siblings and myself during our early childhood. Whether it was taking us to the library once a week, driving us around "just because," or patiently helping me with my maths (as we British call it!) homework time and time again, my father always made us feel that we were his priority—even with his demanding work schedule and frequent, long commutes.

Daddy held *Gedolei Yisroel* in the highest esteem. He shared a close correspondence with Rav Chaim Kanievsky *zt"l*, exchanging letters regarding his various *shailos*, such as the obscure topic of *zemanim* in places such as the North Pole. Active involvement in the study and discovery of Torah was of paramount importance to him. Two *seforim* of his original insights into *Parshas Hashavua* were published posthumously. These Torah thoughts were penned by my father throughout the years, as he slowly amassed a beautiful collection which is now available not only on his computer screen, but in books to peruse and learn, especially on long Friday nights or *Shabbos* afternoons.

This coming *Chanukah*, as I gaze into the flickering candles that symbolize the endurance of our people, I will thank Hashem for giving my family and me the strength to continue without my father, and I will pray for the privilege to carry on his legacy, sharing it with those around me and, please G-d, with my future children.

יהא זכרו ברוך



As we celebrate *Chanukah*, I am touched by my father's thoughts on the description of the *menorah* which appears at the start of *Parshas Beha'alosecha*:

ונתקשה משה בזה, כי הלא כידוע המנורה מרמזת על לימוד וחכמת התורה...ואם כן נרמז במה שהמנורה היתה עשויה חתיכה אחת, שהתורה עשויה מקשה אחת, והיינו שאפע"פ שלכל אחד ואחד מישראל לפום דרגתו ודרכו ניתן לו חלקו המיוחד בתורה, מכל מקום באמת תורת ישראל כולה מקשה אחת. ובה נתקשה משה, כיצד יתכן שחלקם בתורה של בעלי המדרגה הגבוהה נמצא ביחד, בחתיכה אחת, עם חלקם בתורה של בעלי המדרגה השפלה. וזהו 'אמר לו הקב"ה, אין רצוני שתורת כל אחד ואחד תישאר לחוד כי כל ישראל בני הם ותורתם חביבה עלי, ולפיכך תיעשה המנורה מחתיכה אחת.

And Moshe was troubled by this [a *menorah* made of one block of gold,] because as is well-known, the *menorah* alludes to the study and wisdom of Torah...and if so, the fashioning of the *menorah* from one block of gold suggests that Torah, too, is one solid block; that is to say, that even though every Jew is granted a particular portion in the grasp of Torah in accordance with his level, ultimately all of *Toras Yisroel* is one entity. This is what troubled Moshe *Rabbeinu* - how is it possible that the portion of Torah of those on a high level of scholarly achievement is equivalent to the Torah of those on a lower level? And that is what Hashem communicated to him, 'it is not My will that everyone's Torah remain its own entity, because all members of *Klal Yisroel* are my children and the Torah of each of them is precious to me. And therefore the *menorah* will be made of one solid block."

How fitting a *dvar Torah* for my beloved father, who appreciated the worth of every Jew and treated each accordingly.

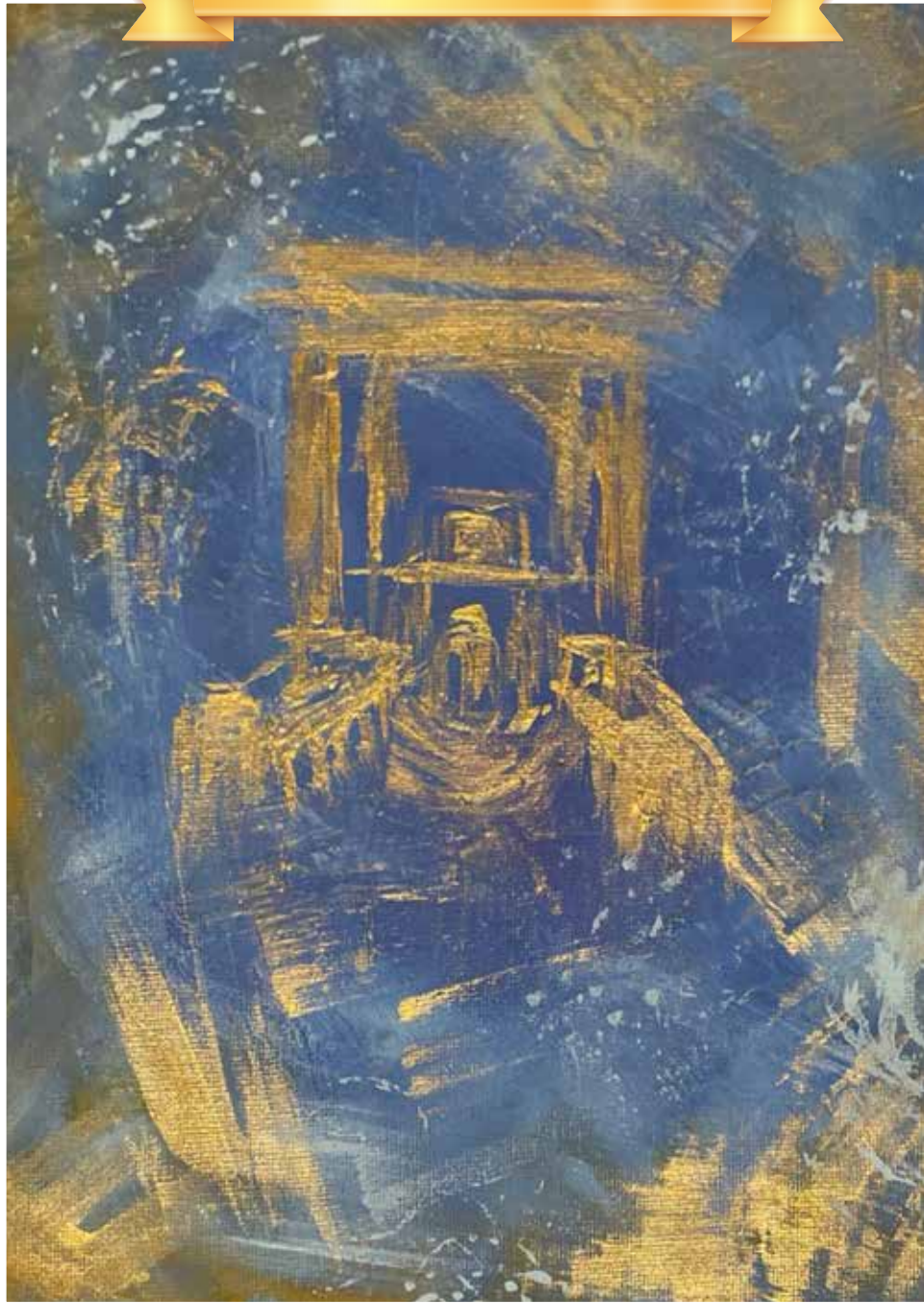
Maoz Tzur Artwork Competition

O Fortress, Rock of my salvation, unto thee it is becoming to give praise:
let my house of prayer be restored, and I will there offer thee thanksgivings
when thou shalt have prepared a slaughter of the blaspheming foe,
I will complete with song and psalm the dedication of the altar.

INTRODUCTION

מַעוֹז צוֹר יְשׁוּעָתִי לָךְ נִאָּה לְשִׁבְחָךְ
תִּכּוֹן בֵּית תְּפִלָּתִי וְשֵׁם תּוֹדָה נִזְבַּח.
לְעֵת תִּכְיֶין מִטְבַּח מִצֵּר הַמְּנַבְּחִים.
אֶז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזִמֹּר חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.

Winner: Zeldy Itkin, 12th Grade



The Grecians were gathered against
me in the days of the Hasmoneans;
they broke down the walls of my tow-
ers, and defiled all the oils;
but from one of the last remaining flasks
a miracle was wrought for thy beloved,
and their men of understanding appoint-
ed these eight days for song and praises.

YAVAN

יָוָנִים נִקְבְּצוּ עָלַי אֶזְרֵי בֵּיתִי חֲשֵׁמָנִים.
וּפָרְצוּ חוֹמוֹת מִגְדְּלֵי וְטִמְאוּ כָּל הַשְּׁמָנִים.
וּמִנֹּתֶר קִנְקָנִים נַעֲשָׂה נֶס לְשׂוֹשְׁנִים.
בְּנֵי בֵּיתָה יָמִי שְׁמוֹנֶה קָבְעוּ שִׁיר וְרִנָּנִים.

Winner: Sarah Wassner, 12th Grade



Bare Your holy arm and hasten the End of
salvation –
Avenge the vengeance of Your servants' blood
from the wicked nation.
For the time has delayed and there is no end
to the days of evil,
Push away the Red One in the lowest shadow
and establish for us the seven shepherds.

ULTIMATE GEULAH

חֲשׂוֹף זְרוּעַ קֹדֶשְׁךָ וְקִרְבֵּךָ הַיְשׁוּעָה.
נָקָם נִקְמַת דָּם עֲבָדֶיךָ מֵאֲמָה הַרְשָׁעָה.
כִּי אֶרְכָּה לָנוּ הַשָּׁעָה וְאֵין קֵץ לַיָּמִי הָרָעָה.
דַּחֲהָ אֶדְמוֹן בְּצֶל צִלְמוֹן, הִקֵּם לָנוּ רוּעָה שְׂבָעָה.

Winner: Batsheva Malavsky, 10th Grade



Thanking Hashem for Challenges

In על הנסים, ועל הפירקון ... ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו— “for the miracles, for the redemption...**and for the wars which you waged** for our fathers.” While it is clear why we thank Hashem for miracles and redemption, why would we express gratitude for wars? After all, we seek peace, not conflict.

In הררי קדם, Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik explains that when we give thanks to Hashem, we don't only acknowledge the salvation itself, but also the difficult situations that led to that salvation. The Gemara in Pesachim 117a states that the נביאים instituted הלל on various occasions—in response to צרות, and when they were redeemed from those difficulties. This implies that hardships themselves also warrant a recitation of הלל.

As part of our obligations as Jews, we know that we are in this world to serve our creator. While we don't seek out trials or tribulations of any sort, we do understand that should we face hardships, those experiences are avenues for קידוש ה'. Hashem's love is shown when He redeems us from distress. May we see the end to the war in ארץ ישראל with the final redemption, the coming of משיח, במהרה בימינו אמן.

Chaya Steinman



Batsheva Spira, 12th Grade



Zeldy Itkin, 12th Grade