



Rosh Hodesh Tebet is BH
Next Shabbat & Sunday

23RD OF KISLEV 5782
NOVEMBER 27TH, 2021
CANDLE LIGHTING 5:10PM
SHABBAT ENDS 6:10PM



PARASHAT VAYESHEB

SHABBAT MEBARECHIM

Synagogue: 310 - 95th Street, Surfside, FL 33154 **Website:** www.hechalshalom.org **Tel:** (305) 867-6024
Mailing Address: Ness 26 Inc P.O. Box 546632 Surfside, FL 33154 **E-mail:** info@hechalshalom.org | oroziel.bookkeeper@gmail.com

THIS WEEK'S BULLETIN HAS BEEN KINDLY SPONSORED LEILUY NISHMAT
שלמה בן יעקב ז"ל



Daily zmanim - November to December 2021 / תשפ"ב כסלו חודש - זמני היום - חודש
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November / December 2021	לילה לרבניו תם R' Tam's Nightfall	לילה Nightfall	שקיעת החמה Sun set	הדלקת נרות Candle Lighting	פלג המנחה Plag Mincha	מנחה קטנה Mincha Ketana	מנחה גדולה Earliest Mincha	חצות Mid day	סוף זמן תפילה Latest Shachris	סוף זמן קריאת שמע Latest Shema	הנץ החמה Sun rise	זמן ציצית ותפילין Earliest Talis	עלות השחר 72 דקות Dawn 72 Minutes	דף היומי Daf Yomi	כסלו תשפ"ב
5 Fri	7:49	7:47	7:12	6:36	5:26	4:17	1:34	1:03	11:13	10:17	7:32	6:49	6:19	6:21	א ששי
6 Sha	7:48	7:46	7:11	6:35	5:26	4:17	1:34	1:03	11:13	10:18	9:42	6:50	6:20	6:22	ב שבת
Turn clock one hour BACK															
7 Sun	6:47	6:46	6:11	5:34	4:26	3:17	12:35	12:04	10:13	9:18	8:42	5:50	5:21	5:23	ג ראשון
8 Mon	6:47	6:45	6:10	5:34	4:25	3:16	12:35	12:04	10:14	9:19	8:43	5:51	5:21	5:23	ד שני
9 Tue	6:46	6:45	6:10	5:33	4:25	3:16	12:35	12:04	10:14	9:19	8:43	5:52	5:22	5:24	ה שלישי
10 Wed	6:46	6:44	6:10	5:33	4:24	3:16	12:35	12:04	10:14	9:19	8:43	5:52	5:23	5:24	ו רביעי
11 Thu	6:45	6:44	6:09	5:32	4:24	3:16	12:35	12:04	10:14	9:20	8:44	5:53	5:23	5:25	ז חמישי
12 Fri	6:45	6:44	6:09	5:32	4:24	3:15	12:35	12:04	10:15	9:20	8:44	5:54	5:24	5:26	ח ששי
13 Sha	6:45	6:43	6:08	5:32	4:23	3:15	12:35	12:04	10:15	9:21	8:45	5:54	5:25	5:26	ט שבת
14 Sun	6:44	6:43	6:08	5:31	4:23	3:15	12:35	12:04	10:15	9:21	8:45	5:55	5:26	5:27	י ראשון
15 Mon	6:44	6:43	6:08	5:31	4:23	3:15	12:36	12:05	10:16	9:21	8:45	5:55	5:26	5:27	יא שני
16 Tue	6:43	6:43	6:07	5:30	4:23	3:15	12:36	12:05	10:16	9:22	8:46	5:56	5:27	5:28	יב שלישי
17 Wed	6:43	6:42	6:07	5:30	4:22	3:15	12:36	12:05	10:17	9:22	8:46	5:57	5:28	5:29	יג רביעי
18 Thu	6:43	6:42	6:07	5:30	4:22	3:15	12:36	12:05	10:17	9:23	8:47	5:57	5:28	5:29	יד חמישי
19 Fri	6:43	6:42	6:07	5:30	4:22	3:14	12:36	12:05	10:17	9:23	8:47	5:58	5:29	5:30	טו ששי
20 Sha	6:42	6:42	6:07	5:29	4:22	3:14	12:37	12:06	10:18	9:24	8:48	5:59	5:30	5:30	טז שבת
21 Sun	6:42	6:42	6:06	5:29	4:22	3:14	12:37	12:06	10:18	9:24	8:48	5:59	5:31	5:31	יז ראשון
22 Mon	6:42	6:42	6:06	5:29	4:22	3:14	12:37	12:06	10:19	9:25	8:49	6:00	5:31	5:32	יח שני
23 Tue	6:42	6:42	6:06	5:29	4:22	3:14	12:37	12:06	10:19	9:25	8:49	6:01	5:32	5:32	יט שלישי
24 Wed	6:42	6:41	6:06	5:29	4:22	3:14	12:38	12:07	10:19	9:26	8:50	6:01	5:33	5:33	כ רביעי
25 Thu	6:41	6:41	6:06	5:28	4:21	3:15	12:38	12:07	10:20	9:26	8:50	6:02	5:34	5:34	כא חמישי
26 Fri	6:41	6:41	6:06	5:28	4:21	3:15	12:38	12:07	10:20	9:27	8:51	6:03	5:34	5:34	כב ששי
27 Sha	6:41	6:41	6:06	5:28	4:21	3:15	12:39	12:08	10:21	9:27	8:51	6:03	5:35	5:35	כג שבת
28 Sun	6:41	6:41	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:15	12:39	12:08	10:21	9:28	8:52	6:04	5:36	5:36	כד ראשון
29 Mon	6:41	6:42	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:15	12:39	12:08	10:22	9:28	8:52	6:05	5:37	5:36	כה שני
30 Tue	6:41	6:42	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:15	12:40	12:09	10:22	9:29	8:53	6:05	5:37	5:37	כו שלישי
1 Wed	6:41	6:42	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:15	12:40	12:09	10:23	9:30	8:54	6:06	5:38	5:38	כז רביעי
2 Thu	6:41	6:42	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:15	12:41	12:10	10:23	9:30	8:54	6:07	5:39	5:38	כח חמישי
3 Fri	6:41	6:42	6:06	5:28	4:22	3:16	12:41	12:10	10:24	9:31	8:55	6:07	5:39	5:39	כט ששי
4 Sha	6:42	6:42	6:06	5:29	4:22	3:16	12:41	12:10	10:24	9:31	8:55	6:08	5:40	5:39	ל שבת

Shabbos (Dec 4) 1:39 PM + 14 חול חודש סכנה: חלקים Zmanim by phone. Call us to hear the zmanim > Call (516) 796-2646 516-7-ZMANIM

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SHABBAT SCHEDULE

Minha 5:15pm
Shir Hashirim: 5:30pm
 Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat/Arvit
Candle Lighting: 5:10pm
Shaharit Netz Minyan: 5:45am
Shaharit: 8:45am
Zeman Keriat Shema 8:51am
2nd Zeman Keriat Shema 9:27am
Shiur 4:30pm
Minha: 4:55pm
 Followed by Seudat Shelishit & Arvit
Shabbat Ends: 6:10pm
Rabbenu Tam 6:41pm
Avot Ubanim: 6:20pm

*We would like to Wish a Hearty Mazal
 Tov to our Dear Phillipe & Julia Cohen
 on the engagement of their Dear Son
 Raphael to Galit Arreaza. They should
 be Zoche to build a Bayit Neeman
 Beyisrael Amen!*

*Avot Ubanim every Mosae Shabbat BH!
 Hanuka Family Event BH this Sunday
 November 28th. See Flyer for more
 details!*

*We Light the first Candle of Hanuka on
 Sunday November 28th at 6:06pm*

WEEKLY SCHEDULE SUNDAY

Shaharit: 6:10am
Shaharit #2 Hodu 8:30am
Minha 5:15pm
 Followed by Arvit

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

Shaharit 6:10am
Daf Yomi 7:15am
Shaharit #2 Hodu 8:00am
Minha/Arvit 5:15pm
2nd Arvit 7:15pm
Shiurim 7:30pm
Night Kollel 7:30-9:30pm

We would like to remind our Kahal Kadosh to please Donate wholeheartedly towards our Beautiful Kehila. Please contact us if you're interested in donating for any occasion, Avot Ubanim \$120, Kiddush \$350, Seudat Shelishit \$275, Weekly Bulletin \$150, Weekly Daf Yomi \$180, Daf Yomi Masechet \$2500, Yearly Daf Yomi \$5000, Weekly Breakfast \$150, Daily Learning \$180, Weekly Learning \$613, Monthly Rent \$3500, Monthly Learning \$2000, Children's Shabbat Program \$500 & Weekly program \$613. Thanking you in advance for your generous support.
 Tizke Lemitzvot!

Donors Column

בס"ד

We Sincerely Thank you for your generous contributions this Week! We truly appreciate it! Hashem should Bless you all with Health, Happiness, Parnasah Tova, Success, & All the Berachot of the Torah Amen!

- **Dr. Jean Jacques Edderai** • **Mr. Avi Bitton**
- **Mr. Eddy Levi**
- **Anonymous**
- **Mr. Isaie Bouhadana**
- **Mr. Simon Chocron**
- **Mr. Leon Levy**
- **Mr. Amichai Shoshan**
- **Dr. Max Nahon**
- **Mr. Isaac Nahon**

We are excited to announce that our Night Kollel continues to grow. We are trying to get the Baale Batim involved in learning. Please come & join! We are excited to announce that we are starting a new learning program on Friday mornings from 9-11am.

If anyone would like to contact our Synagogue, please feel free to email info@hechalshalom.org

Torah Teasers (AISH)

1. Aside from the *kutonet* (tunic) that Yaakov made for Yosef, where else in the Torah is a *kutonet* fashioned? Who in Nach wore a *kutonet passim*?
2. In this parsha, the brothers took Yosef out of a *bor* (pit). Where else is Yosef taken out of a *bor*?
3. Where in this parsha do people handle a goat? (2 answers)
4. Where in this parsha is bread mentioned? (2 answers)
5. Which two different times in this parsha is clothing removed from the same person?
6. In this parsha, in what context does someone tear his clothing? (2 answers) Where else in the book of Genesis do people tear their clothing?
7. About which man does the Torah say *Va'yi'ma'ain* - "And he refused" to do something? (2 answers) Where else does one of those men refuse to do something, and the expression *Va'yi'ma'ain* is used?
8. In this parsha, who was the opposite of his name "in Hashem's eyes"? Who else in the book of Genesis was the opposite of his name in Hashem's eyes?
9. In this parsha, where is the number 3 mentioned? (4 answers)

Answers

- 1) Kutonet is one of the garments of the kohen priest (Exodus 28:4). Tamar, the daughter of King David, wore a kutonet passim (2-Shmuel 13:19).
- 2) When Yosef is needed to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, he is taken out of a bor - pit or dungeon (Genesis 41:14).
- 3) The brothers slaughter a goat into which they dip Yosef's tunic (Genesis 37:31). Yehudah sends a goat to Tamar as payment (Genesis 38:20).
- 4) After the brothers throw Yosef into the pit, they sit down to eat bread (Genesis 37:25). The Torah states that Potiphar entrusted Yosef with all that was in his household - "except for the bread which he eats" (Genesis 39:6, where Rashi explains that "bread" refers to Potiphar's wife).
- 5) The brothers remove Yosef's tunic (Genesis 37:23). Potiphar's wife pulls off Yosef's garment when she wishes to lie with him (Genesis 39:12).
- 6) Reuven tears his clothing when discovering that Yosef is no longer in the pit (Genesis 37:29). Yaakov tears his clothing when he thinks that Yosef was killed (Genesis 37:34). All the brothers tear their clothing when a goblet is found in the sack of Benjamin (Genesis 44:13).
- 7) Yaakov refuses to be comforted over the "death" of Yosef (Genesis 37:35). Yosef refuses to lie with Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:8). Yaakov refuses Yosef's request to change the position of his hands when giving the bracha to Ephraim and Menashe (Genesis 48:19).
- 8) Er (ayin-reish), the son of Yehudah, is described as ra (reish-ayin) "evil in the eyes of Hashem" (Genesis 38:7). Also, Noach (nun-chet) found chein (chet-nun) "favor in the eyes of Hashem" (Genesis 6:8).
- 9) It is discovered after three months that Tamar is pregnant (Genesis 38:24). There are three vines in the dream of the butler and three baskets in the dream of the baker (Genesis 40:10-20). Three days pass from the two dreams until Pharaoh returns the butler to his position and executes the baker (Genesis 40:20).

Community Announcements

(It is YOUR Community, make the most of it!)

Miscellaneous Announcements:

- **This Week's Congregational Kiddush** has been **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Azoulay!**
- **This Week's Seudat Shelishit** has been **Kindly Sponsored by The Nahon Family** in memory of their Dear Father **Yosef Nahon Bar Moshe z"l** the 28th of Kislev. Tihye Nishmato Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen.
- **This Week's Breakfast** is still available for Sponsorship!
- **Last Week's Breakfast** was **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. Jonathan Edderai** in Honor of his Dear Wife & Children!
- **This Week's Daf Yomi** is still available for Sponsorship!
- **Last Week's Daf Yomi** was **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Yizhak Amran Leiluy** Nishmat his Dear Grandfather **Yehuda Amran Bar Luna z"l** the 19th of Kislev. Tihye Nishmato Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen.
- **Masechet Taanit of Daf Yomi** has been **Kindly Sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Michel Benoudiz** in memory of his Dear Mother **Silvia Bat Ruby z"l** the 11th of Kislev. Tihye Nishmata Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!
- **This Week's Learning** is still available for Sponsorship!
- **This Week's Avot Ubanim** has been **Generously Sponsored by Dr. & Mrs. Jean Jacques Edderai** in memory of his Dear Brother **Meir Ben Awicha z"l**. Tihye Nishmato Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!
- We are trying to update our **Congregant's contact information**. We would like to start sending texts about different Events and Shiurim. We would also like to start emailing the weekly bulletin. **We would like to start a list of Nahalot/Azkarot/Yahrzeits**. We would also like to make a **Refuah Shelema list**. Please send your contact information to the Board at info@hechalshalom.org

Important Message!!!

Eruv Update: Surfside: The Eruv in Surfside now includes the walking paths along the beach. Pushing strollers and carrying is permitted on the paths, but not beyond the path or onto the beach.

Bal Harbour: The Eruv in Bal Harbour included the inner (western) walking path only. The pier at Haulover Cut is not included.

- Before hanging up anything anywhere in the Bet Hakeneset, please seek authorization from the Board. This includes flyers etc.
- Please be advised that prior to bringing any food or drinks for any occasion, you must first seek the authorization from the Board.

Special Announcements

- We are pleased to announce that Ness 26 is part of the **Amazon Charity Program**, which would allow our community to collect 0.5% of all the orders made by any of you on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). In order to register you need to log on smile.amazon.com and select Ness 26, Inc as the Charitable Organization you want to support, and from then shop on smile.amazon.com instead of www.amazon.com. It won't cost anything more, and is an easy way to contribute to our budget needs.
- Anyone wishing to receive the **Daily Halacha** please send a whatsapp message to Simon Chocron 786-351-1573

Community Calendar:

- **The program for Teenaged Boys** ages 13-18 Started again with Great Succes with Shiur & Supper every **Evening After Mincha** at around at **7:30 pm With Supper**. New Participants Welcome! Anyone wishing to sponsor this Shiur Please contact the Board. Tizke Lemitzvot!
- We have started the **Mishmar Program** Every Thursday evening at 7:30 pm **with Chulent, Beer, & Snacks. Everyone is welcome!**

Refuah Shelema List

Men

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Yosef Zvi Ben Sara Yosefia, | • Isaac Ben Mesoda, |
| • Mordechai Ben Brucha Malka Shmalo | • Haim Ben Marcelle, |
| • Yizhak Abraham Ben Sheli, | • Yizhak Ben Simja |
| • Yosef Yizhak Ben Sara Hana, | • Michael Ben Aliza, |
| • Mordechai Ben Miriam, | • Avraham Ben Leah |
| • Meir Raymond Ben Mathilde | • Menahem Ben Shira |
| • Aviv Ben Luba Miriam | • Moshe Ben Rahel |
| • Mordechai Ben Mercedes | • David Ben Freha Rina |
| • Yaacov Refael Ben Alegria | • Netanel Sayegh Bar Rosa |
| • Shalom Gibly Ben Fortuna | • R' Yosef Abraham |
| | • Hacohen Bar Hannah |

Women

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Simja Bat Esther, | • Sara Leticia Bat Mesoda, |
| • Rachel Bat Sarah, | • Alegria Simha Bat Esther, |
| • Nina Bat Rachel, | • Naomie Bat Rarel Adda, |
| • Gitel Rina Bat Yael, | • Malka Bat Joyce Simja, |
| • Miriam Bat Sofy, | • Sivan Simha Bat Yehudit, |
| • Rahma Bat Simha | • Natalie Rachel Bat Nancy, |
| • Esther Bat Fortuna | • Abigail Haya Bat Esther |
| • Malka Bat Dina | • Madeleine Bat Esther |
| • Raizel Bat Miriam | • Nurit Jacqueline Bat Rahel |
| • Leah Bat Rivka | • Marcelle Mesoda Bat Alegria |
| • Sol Bat Perla | • Eva Bat Yael Khayat |
| • Chana Bat Bilha | • Camouna Bat Fortuna |
| • Yael Bat Rut | |

the Berachot of the Torah



DAF YOMI SPONSORS



THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF THE DAF YOMI
IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE KAMHAZI FAMILY

IN MEMORY OF THEIR DEAR FATHER

SHELOMO BEN YAAKOV Z"L

& FOR HATZLACHA OF THE WHOLE FAMILY.

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE, AMEN.



THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF DAF YOMI
IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE AKKAD FAMILY

LEILUY NISHMAT

אברהם בן גרסי-ה ז"ל, שלמה בן תמם ז"ל,
אליהו בן רחל ז"ל, ותמם בת אורו ז"ל
תנצב"ה

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE,
AMEN.

THIS YEAR'S LEARNING OF DAF YOMI
IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

THE BITTON FAMILY

LEILUY NISHMAT

OF THEIR DEAR FATHER
DAVID BEN MESSODA Z"L
& FOR HATZLACHAT AM YISRAEL.

HASHEM SHOULD BLESS THEM WITH
HEALTH, HAPPINESS, & LONG LIFE, AMEN.



We would like to Wholeheartedly Thank our Dear Friends,

Mr. & Mrs. Alberto Pinto

for generously Donating the TORAH LEARNING of

Kislev 5782

Leiluy Nishmat his Dear Grandfather

Simon Pinto Bar Freha Benchimol the 19th of Kislev

Tihye Nishmato Tzerura Bitzror Hahayim Amen!

We truly appreciate it. In this merit may Hashem Bless you & your wonderful family with all the Berachot of the Torah. Amen.

Happy Birthday To

- Yosef Avraham Nahon – Fri. Nov. 26th,
- Shana Cohen – Shabb. Nov. 27th,
- Eitan Perez – Mon. Nov. 29th,
- Isaac Hooze – Wed. Dec. 1st,
- Orit Benhayoun – Fri. Dec. 3th,
- Mrs. Dayana Benmergui – Sun. Dec. 5th,
- Nava Taieb – Tue. Dec. 7th,
- Mrs. Jessica Benmergui – Wed. Dec. 8th,
- Isaac Maya – Fri. Dec. 10th,
- Mr. Laurent Becker – Shabb. Dec. 11th,
- Orly Benhayoun – Sun. Dec. 12th,
- Mrs. Raquel Benarroch – Mon. Dec. 13th,
- Mr. Daniel Benhayoun – Thurs. Dec. 16th,
- Mr. Haim Lahmi – Thurs. Dec. 16th,
- Yonatan Mahlouf Edderai – Shabb. Dec. 18th,

Happy Anniversary To

- Remy & Rachel Allouche Dec 7th
- Alberto Cohen Dec 7th
- Max & Eny Aquinin Dec 9th

Nahalot

- Yaakov Lasry Bar Sarah z”l the 23rd of Kislev (Uncle of Mr. Moises Benmergui)(Shabbat)
- Machluf Bitton Bar Salomon z”l the 24th of Kislev (Father of Mr. Yehudah Bitton)
- Perle Nissel Shoshan Bat Bella z”l the 26th of Kislev (Grandmother of Mr. Amichai Shoshan)
- Yosef Nahon Bar Moshe z”l the 28th of Kislev (Father of Dr. Max & Mr. Isaac Nahon)

Next Shabbatot:

- Clara Aronovici Bat Rosa Fanny z”l the 30th of Kislev (Father of Yaacov Aronovici)(Shabbat)
- Yehoshua Belecen Bar Clara z”l the 1st of Tebet (Uncle of Mr. Alberto Belecen)
- Yizhak Hacohen Bar Esther z”l the 1st of Tebet (Father of Mr. David Cohen)
- Bilha Bat Jana Carciente z”l the 3rd of Tebet (Mother of Mrs. Jeannete Kamhazi)
- Daniel David Amar Ben Mazal Tov z”l the 3rd of Tebet (Father of Mrs. Jeannine Fuhmann)

WEEKLY INSPIRATION

How Many Bosses Do We Want?

(Rabbi Eli Mansour from iTorah)

Parashat Vayesheb tells the story of Mechirat Yosef, the sale of Yosef into slavery by his brothers. Initially, the brothers planned to kill Yosef, but Reuben, the oldest brother, persuaded them to instead throw him into a pit and thus leave his fate in G-d's hands, rather than kill him directly. Reuben's intent was to later lift Yosef out of the pit and return him home safely, but instead of frontally opposing his brothers' scheme, he chose to devise this scheme of convincing them to throw Yosef into the pit. (Ultimately, of course, Yosef was sold as a slave when Reuben was not present.)

The Midrash makes a perplexing comment regarding this episode. It says that if Reuben had known that the Torah would record this incident, then he would have proudly lifted Yosef on his shoulders and paraded him home in full view of the brothers. Rather than devising a covert plan to rescue his brother, Reuben would have openly lifted Yosef and brought him home – had he only known that his heroism would be made public for posterity in the Torah.

At first glance, the Midrash seems to be saying that Reuben would have done a better job if he had known about the publicity he would receive. Is this possible? Can we imagine Reuben, one of the righteous sons of Yaakov, being obsessed with fame and public recognition?

Remarkably, the Midrash does not stop there, and instead goes on to make similar comments about two other legendary Sadikim. First, it speaks of Aharon, who went to greet his brother, Moshe, when Moshe arrived in Egypt at G-d's behest to deliver Beneh Yisrael from bondage. The Torah (Shemot 4:27) tells that Aharon warmly bowed and kissed his brother to congratulate him on his appointment as the nation's leader. The Midrash comments that Aharon would have done even more if he had known that this event would be recorded in the

Torah. Rather than just greeting his brother, he would have made an elaborate procession with music and fanfare.

The third Biblical figure of whom the Midrash speaks in this context is Boaz, the wealthy landowner, who gave Rut – a destitute convert and newcomer – some food to eat. The Midrash writes that if Boaz had realized that this Misva was being recorded for posterity, he would have served Rut a full course meat meal.

In all three instances, the Midrash appears to accuse these great Sadikim of underachieving because they did not anticipate the publicity they would receive. How can we understand these baffling comments?

The common denominator between all three situations described by the Midrash is the concern of how other people would respond to the good deed in question. Reuben, of course, feared that he would meet with stern opposition from his brothers if he openly tried to rescue Yosef. In Aharon's case, it was very uncertain how Beneh Yisrael would react to Moshe's sudden arrival and announcement that he is the redeemer. Many people may have resented Moshe's sudden rise to leadership after being away from Egypt for so long. Aharon's decision to warmly embrace Moshe and celebrate his return to Egypt as national leader was not necessarily the popular move. And Boaz understandably had reason to hesitate before making special gestures to a young woman who suddenly arrived in Bet Lehem, which would likely trigger all kinds of rumors and speculation.

The Midrash seeks to alert us to the dangers of cynical peers who are all too eager to dissuade us from doing the right thing. These three Sadikim all did the right thing, but in the absence of pressures from their peers, they would have acted with more fervor and gusto, without any ambivalence. The threat of opposition, of whatever kind, resulted in a more subdued performance of the Misva. But if they had contemplated that these events were being recorded by G-d in the Scriptures, that they had received G-d's explicit and public "endorsement," they would have acted with more vigor and confidence.

This is an important reminder for those of us who occasionally feel self-conscious around peers who do not necessarily approve of or respect our Torah observance. It is natural to feel intimidated and subdued around people who look disdainfully at our Misva observance and are likely to make snide remarks. But we must remember that the Misva acts we perform have G-d's official endorsement. If G-d approves, does it really matter what the people around us think? Should we care that they poke fun at us if G-d Himself admires us for what we do?

A person who concerns himself only with how G-d thinks of him has only one "boss"; there is only one Being whose wishes he needs to satisfy. But those who fret about what the people around them think have dozens, or perhaps hundreds or even thousands, of "bosses." Such people have to answer to everyone; they bear the burden of trying to make everyone happy – a burden which nobody can bear without collapsing under the pressure at one point or another.

Let us, then, focus our attention on what G-d wants, and not on what everyone else wants. This perspective will give us the freedom to pursue our spiritual goals unencumbered by the pressure of our peers, and free from the wishes and demands of everyone around us, which oftentimes conflict with the wishes and demands of the Almighty.

Praying for Our Children

(Rabbi Eli Mansour)

Parashat Vayesheb tells the story of how Yosef's brothers sold him as a slave, and then dipped his garment in goat's blood to make it appear as though he was devoured by a wild animal. When they showed the garment to their father, Yaakob, he concluded that Yosef was killed, and went into a prolonged state of mourning. The Torah (37:35) tells that his family members tried comforting him, but he refused to be consoled, and continued crying: "Va'yebk Oto Abiv" – "His father cried for him."

Yaakob's response seems, at first glance, difficult to understand. Many stories have been told of Sadikim who remained calm and composed in the face of devastating personal tragedy, even upon hearing of the death of their loved ones, Heaven forbid. Indeed, one of the important characteristics of righteous people is the ability to calmly accept life's harsh moments, without falling into depression. But Yaakob Abinu appears to do just that – fall into deep depression and refuse to climb out of it. And the question needs to be asked: why was Yaakob unable to find comfort and consolation? Certainly, his faith in G-d's justice was no less than that of later Sadikim. Why was he unable to find comfort as they did? Why did he burst out crying and then continue crying, without finding solace?

The answer emerges from a brief comment made by Rashi to this story. Yaakob reacted to the sight of Yosef's bloodstained garment by exclaiming, "Tarof Toraf Yosef" – "Yosef was torn apart" (37:33), which seemingly refers to his incorrect assumption that Yosef was devoured by an animal. Rashi, however, writes that Yaakob prophetically foresaw the time when the wife of Potifar, Yosef's master, would try to entice Yosef to sin. She was the "wild animal" who threatened to "tear apart" Yosef, in the spiritual sense.

It emerges that Yaakob bemoaned not Yosef's death, but rather the spiritual challenges he would face as a forlorn teenager in Egypt, which was then the world center of immorality and corruption. Yaakob, like other Sadikim, would have been able to find comfort after the death of his beloved son. However, he saw through prophecy that Yosef was not dead, but was rather alive and alone in Egypt, subjected to unimaginable pressures and spiritual tests. This gave him no rest or comfort.

Yaakob cried for Yosef like all parents must cry for their children whose spiritual future is in danger. And in our day and age, all children's spiritual future is in danger, and so we must all be praying and crying for their wellbeing, that they should not be "torn apart" by the relentless assault of negative influences to which they are exposed.

I once received a call from a man whose wife was pregnant, who asked me to pray that the pregnancy and delivery should proceed smoothly. Sometime later, he called again and said, "Rabbi, you can stop praying – I'm thrilled to report that my wife delivered a healthy baby boy, and everything went well."

"Stop praying?" I asked him. "This is the time to start praying for real."

All children today are in "Egypt," threatened by spiritual dangers, and we need to tearfully pray and cry on their behalf, begging Hashem to help them overcome their challenges.

I heard of a certain exceptional yeshiva student, who stood out from among all his peers in his devotion to and success in his studies. It was discovered that each morning, when his father recites the Birkat Ha'Torah blessing and prays that he and his descendants should be devoted to Torah study, he cries and prays with fervor and emotion. His prayers were effective, and his son grew to be an exceptional student of Torah.

The Torah tells that Yaakov refused – "Va'yema'en" – to accept consolation for Yosef. This same word appears later in the Parasha, in reference to Yosef's refusing to sin with Potifar's wife (39:8). It has been suggested that this shared word connects these two episodes. Yosef had the strength and fortitude to refuse Potifar's wife because his father refused to calmly accept the possibility of Yosef steering from the proper path. It was Yaakov's constant tears and prayers that protected Yosef from sin.

We need to follow Yaakov's example and pray for our children as often and as intensely as possible, so that they, like Yosef, will overcome their tests and challenges, and grow to become the righteous men and women that we want them to be.

Hashem's Wink

(Rabbi Frand from Torah.org)

Detecting the Wink of the Ribono Shel Olam

In Parashat VaYeshev, the Torah teaches "Then they took him, and cast him into the pit; and the pit was empty, no water was in it. They

sat down to eat food; they raised their eyes and they saw, behold! – a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, and their camels were bearing spices, and balsam, and birthwort – on their way to bring them down to Egypt. Yehudah said to his brothers, 'What gain will there be if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites – but let our hand not be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.' And his brothers listened." [Bereshit 37:24-27]

Chazal say that no slave ever escaped Egypt. Yehudah's plan, therefore, seemed very reasonable to the brothers. Rather than cause Yosef's death, they could merely eliminate him as a problem by selling him to the Arab traders who were heading down to Egypt.

Rashi raises the question – why was it important in this narration for the Torah to specify the load that the Arabs were carrying in their caravans ("spices, balsam, and birthwort" – all possessing a pleasant aroma)? Rashi answers that this shows the reward that comes to the righteous. Normally, he says, the Arabs would transport foul smelling petroleum and resin, but this time it happened that spices were the cargo, so that Yosef should not be harmed by a foul odor. (It is interesting to note – some things never change – even today the Arabs still sell oil!)

The question is, at this stage of the situation, does it really make a difference to Yosef whether the merchants were carrying sweet smelling spices or whether they were hauling pigs? Look what he has gone through! His brothers kidnapped him, they accused him, they tried and convicted him and then they threw him into a snake pit. In the end, they sell him into slavery. He is headed down to Egypt with little hope of returning home and seeing his father ever again. What kind of "reward" is this that the *Ribono shel Olam* is giving him that he should have spices to smell rather than oil while he is being transported as a prisoner far away from home? Would he even take notice at such a moment? Is this how the Almighty is "nice" to him? This seems irrelevant at this point. It seems meaningless! What does Rashi mean here?

I saw in a sefer called Nachal Eliyahu an answer in the name of Rav Mordechai Pogromansky,

who was known as the “ilui of Telshe”. He suggested the following approach – and the underlying idea is certainly a correct concept:

There are two types of ways the *Ribono shel Olam* can punish a person. One way is that He can say “I have had it with you. You are on your own. Whatever happens to you, happens. I abandon my Divine Providence over your fate and leave you to the vagaries of statistics and ‘teva’ (natural happenstance).”

Another type of punishment is when the *Ribono shel Olam* himself is meting out the punishment. He is the one giving the “Patch”. It is much more reassuring when the person realizes that even though I am being punished, I know it is the *Ribono shel Olam* punishing me and I know that He is still thinking about me, and He still cares about me. He feels that I need to go through the suffering I am now experiencing, for whatever reason it must be, but I am not just a statistic. I am very much in His Consciousness.

This is a fundamental idea (*yesod*) which we have mentioned on various occasions. We have cited a very famous observation of Rav Yonatan Eybeschütz [1690-1764] in his *Yearot Devash*. The Gemara [Brachot 7b] brings a famous drasha on the *pasuk* “A Psalm of David when he fled from Avshalom his son” [Tehillim 3:1]. This is one of the most tragic scenes in all of Tanach. Avshalom rebels against his own father – *David Melech Yisrael!* David must flee the capital from his own son Avshalom. When that happened, the *pasuk* says “A *Mizmor* (song of praise) to David, when he fled from Avshalom his son.” The Gemara asks: Is this a *Mizmor*? It should rather be an elegy (*Kinah l’David*), a dirge!

The Gemara explains: David was anxious about a major debt of his which had yet to be paid. The prophet told him he was going to be punished: “Thus sayeth Hashem: Behold I will raise against you evil from the midst of your own household...” [Shmuel II 12:11]. *David HaMelech* did something wrong and he knew he was going to be punished. This was a price that he was going to need to pay. But he was anxious that the enemy from his household who would rise up against him might be an *Eved* or a *Mamzer* who would not have mercy upon him. David was thus expecting that the coup against him would come from some kind of servant or

army officer who would be ruthless and cruel to him. When he saw it was his own son, then he was happy.

The *Yearot Devash* explains: It is not natural for a son to rebel against his father, the king, who was so good to him. When David saw that it was his own son who took up arms against him and was usurping the monarchy, he understood that the “Patch” was coming directly from the *Ribono shel Olam*. A “Patch” from the *Ribono shel Olam* means that He is still in charge, He still cares about me, He is still involved with me. That itself is a major consolation.

We once said that this is also the key to understanding a famous phrase from Perek 23 *Pasuk* 4 of *Tehillim*: “Your rod and your cane will comfort me.” A cane, we understand, is an aid – it is a comfort, and it helps. But a rod in Tanach is a tool for administering punishment. How could that be a comfort? It is the same idea. Sometimes a “Klop” from the *Ribono shel Olam* is comforting. A person realizes that he still has a connection with *Hashem*.

We see this in life. Sometimes it is amazing to hear, but people go through terrible *tzarot* and yet they still feel a connection to the *Ribono shel Olam*. They feel that the *Ribono shel Olam* is punishing them for whatever reason, but He still is in charge, and He still cares for them.

That is the meaning here as well. For Yosef to be taken down to Mitzrayim by a bunch of Yishmaelim, who 99 out of 100 times carry smelly petroleum, and against all odds he finds himself riding in a caravan with sweet smelling spices – this was a source of comfort. “G-d still loves me.” It is like a *Potch* with a wink and a smile. By smelling the sweet aroma, Yosef saw the Wink of the *Ribono shel Olam*. He saw His smile. This is not normal.

The Gemara [Nedarim 50] says that Rabbi Akiva and his wife, Rochel, were extremely poor. Rabbi Akiva’s wife was the daughter of an extremely wealthy individual who cut her off from his fortune because he was upset that she was marrying an ignorant shepherd. The couple was destitute. They did not have a bed. They slept on straw. Every morning, he needed to pick the straw out of his hair. One night, Eliyahu HaNavi came in the form of a poor person. He

told Rabbi Akiva and Rochel that his wife was in labor, and they did not have straw. He asked for some straw. Rabbi Akiva and Rochel gave their straw for this 'woman in labor' so that she should at least have a more comfortable bed on which to give birth. Rabbi Akiva turned to his wife and said, "You see, there are people who are poorer than us – they do not even have straw."

The question needs to be asked: If Eliyahu HaNavi is coming to visit, why does he need to come as a pauper asking for straw? Why doesn't he come as a millionaire and say, "This is terrible that you need to sleep on straw. Here is a bag of gold that will solve your problem!"

The answer is that for whatever reason, the Ribono shel Olam wanted Rabbi Akiva to grow in Torah out of a state of poverty. He was the key link in the chain of Torah transmission through the ages. After all his original disciples died out between Pesach and Shavuot, he took five additional students who eventually became the foundational transmitters of the entire corpus of Talmudic literature. For whatever reason, it was part of the Divine Plan that Rabbi Akiva should learn *m'toch ha'dchak*! But He saw that at that moment, perhaps they were depressed about their poverty – how can we live like this? He therefore sent them a message: There are people worse off than you. That gave them the courage to continue. This is the "*Potch* with the smile; the *Potch* that comes with a wink."

This is what the Almighty did for Yosef as well, and this is what Rashi means "The reward of the righteous". Even when Tzadikim need to suffer, they still feel that the Hand of the *Ribono shel Olam* is together with them.

Reuven's Jealousy

(Rabbi Frand)

Reuven's Sackcloth and Fasting: Why Now?

The pasuk says, "Reuven returned to the pit – and behold! – Yosef was not in the pit! so he rent his garments." [Bereshit 36:29]. Rashi asks – where was Reuven when the entire event of picking Yosef out of the pit and selling him to the Arabs was transpiring? He explains that the brothers took turns taking care of their father,

and it was Reuven's turn that day to serve Yaakov. He had gone home to his father, and consequently was not together with the rest of his brothers during that fateful sale.

Rashi then quotes a second interpretation: "He was sitting in sackcloth and fasting, in repentance for the event in Parashat VaYetze, where he switched the beds in his father's tent and his father got angry at him." But make the calculation. How long ago was that? It happened shortly after Rachel died. She died when Yosef was approximately eight years old. Yosef is now seventeen. It happened nine years prior, almost ten years ago! All of a sudden, Reuven decides he needs to do *Teshuva* because he switched the beds? Why now?

I saw a beautiful interpretation in a sefer called Abir Yosef. We are all subject to *negiyot* – our biases and agendas. We do not see straight. The brothers hated Yosef. They hated him because they were jealous. Jealousy is the type of thing that can warp a person's perspective. You do not see straight because you are so obsessed with your jealousy that you cannot see the facts as they are.

Reuven, Chazal say, got cold feet about this whole incident. He said, "My father is going to blame me for this." This fear put a brake on his jealousy. Once he put a brake on his jealous emotion, he was able to see the facts as they were. He recognized that Yosef was not a *Rasha*. Yosef was not trying to kill them. Reuven saw how the *negiyot* of his brothers – their jealousy and their agenda – warped their entire perspective, and they were not seeing things as they should be seen.

All of a sudden, Reuven had an epiphany and he said "You know what? Just like their jealousy affects their perspective and they do not see things right, so too when I protested against my father, that was also out of a sense of jealousy for my mother. I felt it was not right that my father should move his bed into Bilhah's tent after Rochel died. I felt strongly that he should have moved his bed into the tent of my mother, Leah. But I now realize that my jealousy for my mother colored my perspective. It caused me to act improperly and do things that were not right.

Just at that moment, Reuven realized how much *kinah* and emotions of jealousy affect a person's view of reality. "Just like the brothers were dead wrong, maybe I was dead wrong as well." That brought Reuven to Teshuva – fasting and sackcloth – at that very moment.

Shira on Chanukah

(Rabbi Frand)

Chanukah: Once the Shirah Starts – It Must Keep Going

The Rambam writes [Hilchot Hanukah 4:12]: The mitzvah of Haunkah is very precious. A person must be particularly careful to publicize the miracle and to add to the praise of the Almighty, and thank Him for the miracles He did for us; even if he has nothing to eat other than from charity funds – he must borrow or sell his clothing to be able to buy oil and wicks and light.

If we pay close attention to these words, we notice a discrepancy. The Rambam begins by saying the goal of the mitzvah is to publicize the miracle (*nes*), singular. Then he says that we are to add to the praise of the Almighty and thank Him for the miracles (*nisim*), plural, that He did for us. So, which is it? Is it *nes* or is it *nisim*?

I heard a second question on this Rambam from Rav Daniel Lander of Monsey: After lighting Chanukah candles, we say "*HaNerot Halalu*" and then we recite "*Maoz Tzur*." *Maoz Tzur* recounts the miracle of the Exodus from Egypt, the redemption from the Babylonian exile, the story of Purim, and the Chanukah story of the struggle with the Greek empire. Basically, it is a brief synopsis of Jewish history: Egypt, Bavel, Purim, and Chanukah.

On Purim we say "*Shoshanat Yaakov*". We only mention the story of Purim. What about the rest of the miracles of Jewish history? Why in the Chanukah *Pizmon* (liturgical poem) do we mention all the major miracles of Jewish history and by Purim, the holiday *Pizmon* is exclusively about Purim?

Rabbi Lander offered the following answer: The Gemara says [Megilla 14a] that there is a fundamental difference between Chanukah and

Purim – namely on Chanukah we recite *Hallel* and on Purim we do not. There are several explanations why this is the case. Rava, in the Gemara there, explains why unlike the commemoration of the Exodus, where we recite *Hallel*, in commemorating the Purim deliverance we do not: When we left Egypt, we could indeed say *Hallel* because we were no longer servants to Pharaoh, but even after the "deliverance" of the Purim story, we were still servants of Achashverosh. The "deliverance" of the Chanukah story was more similar to the Exodus: After the successful Maccabean revolt, we were free men, we were in our own country, and we had our own government. We had the *Bet HaMikdash*. We were not enslaved to anybody! Therefore, on such a *Nes*, we say *Shirah*. On Purim, we were very happy that the decree of annihilation was cancelled. That was a terrific miracle. But after all is said and done, we still were in exile, subject to foreign domination by a Gentile king!

Shirah is an expression of the heart. When you say *Shirah*, you sing! You express your deepest emotions, your feelings of gratitude to the Almighty for all He has done for you. When people engage in *Shirah* they do not stop with a single expression of thanks. They give thanks for everything! Therefore, on Chanukah, which justifies *Hallel*, which is *Shirah*, once we begin singing His praises, we must express thanks for all the *tova* He has done for us throughout the ages! Purim has various *Mitzvot* commemorating the event, but they are localized to the exact event that happened "in those days at this time of year." An obligation to say *Shirah* does not exist "for we are still slaves of Achashverosh."

So this is what the Rambam means: A person needs to be particularly careful to publicize the miracle (i.e. – of Chanukah) and to add to the praise of the Almighty and thank Him for the miracles that He did for us (i.e. – during the rest of Jewish history as well)."

A Happy Chanukah!

Yosef and His Brothers: The Anatomy of a Sale

(Rabbi Zev Leff)

...and Joseph would bring evil reports about them to their father (Bereshit 37:2).

Just as the halachic sections of the written Torah were meant to remain a closed book without the elucidation of the Oral Torah, so, too, are the narratives incomprehensible without the explanations of the Oral Torah. One of the most difficult portions in the Torah to understand is the episode of Yosef and his brothers that culminated in his being sold by them as a slave to Egypt. What follows is a compendium based on Chazal and later commentaries.

Each of the twelve sons of Yaakov possessed specific traits and talents that would be required by their descendants, the twelve tribes, in order for each tribe to fulfill its unique role in the building of the Jewish people. Each son expressed a different facet of their father Yaakov's personality. Yaakov himself embodied the entire Jewish people, Yisrael, in microcosm.

Yosef, unlike his brothers, was a complete replica of his father Yaakov, fashioned in his physical and spiritual likeness. Yosef was Yaakov's firstborn in thought, for Yaakov had intended to marry Rachel first and Yosef was Rachel's firstborn. As Yaakov's likeness, Yosef also possessed all the various traits that would define the entire Jewish people.

Yosef's role was to provide the other tribes with the means to develop their individual roles. Thus Yosef preceded his brothers to Egypt and lay the foundation for his brothers' eventual sojourn there. Yosef's descendant Yehoshua conquered the land that the tribes then developed into the Jewish commonwealth. And at the end of time, Mashiach ben Yosef will prepare the way for Mashiach ben David.

With the birth of Yaakov's twelve sons, the transition between the period of the Avos (Forefathers) and that of the Shevatim (Tribes) was completed. The question arose, however, did the twelve brothers constitute the beginning of Klal Yisrael, or were they only the forerunners of a nation yet to be? Did they have the halachic status of Jews or were they still considered Bne Noach (Noachides). The answer to that question obviously had profound halachic significance. The brothers maintained that they already represented a nation in embryo and

therefore possessed the status of Jews. Yosef, however, maintained that they were not yet a nation, but only the forerunners of a nation. To the brothers the time had already come to start fulfilling their individual roles in the totality of Klal Yisrael, whereas Yosef saw himself as a shepherd to his brothers, to nurture and prepare them for their eventual roles.

Now we can understand why Yaakov conveyed to Yosef alone the Torah he had learned in the yeshivah of Shem and Ever. Since this was a Torah of Bne Noach, only Yosef considered it relevant. The other brothers already considered themselves to be Jews.

Consonant with his view of his role, Yosef kept careful watch on his brothers. For instance, he nurtured and guided the sons of the maidservants, who were destined to become followers and supporters among the Jewish people. The Torah's description of Yosef "vehu naar (he was a youth)" - suggests his self-appointed task - "lenaer" - developing and arousing their talents. With the more influential brothers, who would be the leaders of the future nation, Yosef served as a watchdog monitoring their activities and reporting to his father.

Chazal tell us that Yosef reported three things concerning his brothers to his father: That they were eating eiver min hachai, flesh torn from a living animal; that they were calling the sons of the maidservants, slaves; and that they were conducting themselves in an immoral fashion with the Canaanite women. In each of these cases, the disagreement between Yosef and his brothers hinged on their halachic status.

A Jew is permitted to eat meat from an animal that has been ritually slaughtered even if it is still twitching (mefarcheset). Bne Noach, however, were prohibited, prior to the giving of the Torah, from eating meat from an animal until all motion ceased. Because the brothers considered themselves Jews, they did not wait to begin dismembering an animal until all movement ceased. Yosef however deemed this "eiver min hachai" since he considered them bne Noach.

Similarly, if Yaakov had the halachic status of a ben Noach, then even though Bilhah and Zilpah were servants, their children were free men (see Kiddushin 67b). But if he was considered a Jew,

then his children by the maidservants were slaves unless their mothers were previously freed or converted. Yosef assumed that Yaakov was of the same opinion as he, and therefore had not freed his maidservants. But according to the brothers, if the maidservants had not been freed, their sons were slaves. Thus, the brothers' halachic opinion, in Yosef's eyes, was tantamount to calling the children of Bilhah and Zilpah slaves.

The brothers considered themselves naturally separated from the other nations by virtue of their status as Jews. Thus, they was no danger in engaging in business transactions with Canaanite merchant women. Yosef, on the other hand, saw no natural barrier between his brothers and their neighbors, and therefore regarded this association as fraught with danger.

Had Yosef reported to his father the facts and let him decide how to interpret them, there would have been no fault in his report. Instead, he reported his conclusions alone to his father, creating a negative impression of his brothers' conduct. He was still not mature enough, says Sforno to consider the far-reaching implications of his actions.

The Torah then informs us that Yaakov, in his role as Yisrael, the progenitor of the future nation and not as Yaakov, the personal father to twelve individual sons - loved Yosef mikol banav - literally, from all his sons. His love for Yosef emanated from the love of all his sons, for he viewed Yosef as the one who represented them all and who would prepare them for their future tasks.

He made Yosef a ketonet pasim, either a coat of many colors, representing his multi-faceted role, or a wristband (see Baale HaTosafot). Just as the wrist represents the link between the arm muscles and the hands, so too, Yosef was the link to actualize the potential of the brothers. (The name Yosef is 'pas' - wrist - plus two letters of G-d's Name.)

The brothers viewed Yosef as a threat to the nation, which in their view had already come into being. They perceived him as attempting to curry favor in Yaakov's eyes at their expense. They viewed their father's love for Yosef as

coming at their expense, and thus estranged themselves from him and could not find the ability to speak to him in harmonious perfection that had to be reached through the unity of each tribe contributing its unique portion and not usurping the role of another tribe.

Chazal tell us that there are two distinct types of dreams: those generated by one's own thoughts and ideas; the other linked to prophecy. When Yosef related his dreams concerning his brothers' sheaves of grain bowing to him - and later the dream of the sun, moon and stars bowing to him - he did so because he viewed them as prophetic mandates. The brothers, however, saw them as further proof that thoughts of domination preoccupied his mind.

When Yosef was sent by Yaakov to report on the welfare of the brothers, they saw this as an opportunity to defend themselves against this usurper of their roles in Klal Yisrael. They feared he would defame them to Yaakov, and that they would be banished, as Yishmael was by Avraham and Esav by Yitzchak.

Thus, Yosef was in their view a rodef, a pursuer who threatened both their physical existence and eternal roles as the founders of Klal Yisrael. For this reason they decided that they were justified, perhaps even reequired, to kill him first. Rather than kill Ysef, however, they listened to the pleas of Reuven who argued that their involvement in his death should be passive, and ultimately to Yehudah, who urged them to sell Yosef as a slave.

The brothers were so convinced that they were justified that after selling Yosef they sat down to eat bread without any pangs of guilt. Their common meal was in effect a celebration of the fact that now unity and harmony between them would be unhindered by Yosef's evil designs. Even years later, when they searched their pasts for any sins that could explain a series of apparently tragic events, they could not come with anything other than their failure to be more merciful. But they still deemed the sale itself to have been justified.

In the final analysis, both Yosef and his brothers seemingly acted with proper intentions. But if so, why did Yosef's sale leave such a stain on the history of the Jewish people? The midrashim

and piyutim attribute, for instance, the death of the ten martyrs mentioned in the Yom Kippur davening to the sale of Yosef.

Though the brothers felt fully justified, the Torah reveals to us that their misperception concerning Yosef was not simply an innocent mistake. Coloring their judgment was a slight trace of jealousy. Chazal tell us that jealousy removes a person from the world. This means, in part, that it removes one from the world of reality and causes him to view people and incidents in a distorted fashion.

Since the brothers' deed was tainted by jealousy, both they and future generations had to suffer the consequences. Rabbeinu Yonah finds in the sinas chinam (causeless hatred) for which the Second Bais Hamikdash was destroyed an echo of the hatred of Yosef's brothers.

With this understanding of how one imperfection in middos (character traits) can have such long-range effects, we can understand a difficult Chazal. When R' Yochanan ben Zakkai's students went to visit him on his death bed, he began to cry. His students asked him why he was weeping. He answered that if he were brought before a mortal king who could be appeased or bribed, and whose decrees extended only as far as the grave, he would wail, how much more so now that he was soon to face the judgment of Hashem, Who cannot be appeased or bribed and Whose punishment is eternal. Did R' Yochanan ben Zakkai really entertain the possibility that he was deserving of eternal death, the punishment reserved for heretics of the worst type?

When R' Yochanan ben Zakkai went out to meet the Roman general Vespasian during the siege of Jerusalem, he was allowed to make certain requests. He asked that the Sanhedrin be permitted to continue in Yavneh, that Rabban Gamliel be spared and the line of the Nesi'im thereby preserved, and that a doctor be provided to heal R' Tzaddok, who had fasted forty years to avert the destruction of the Bet Hamikdash.

Many years later, the Amoraim discussed whether R' Yochanan ben Zakkai acted correctly. Some thought he should have instead

asked that the Temple and Jerusalem be spared. Others argued that had he asked for too much, he might have ended up with nothing. The Talmud concludes that he erred. He should have asked that the Bet Hamikdash be spared, but it was in fact the Divine Will that he err, since G-d had decreed that the Temple be destroyed.

Before his death, R' Yochanan ben Zakkai was also beset with doubts as to whether he had acted properly. In his rigorous self-scrutiny, another explanation of why he erred came to him. He had opposed the zealots, who led the rebellion against Rome. But the zealots had ignored his opinion and forced the issue by burning all Jerusalem's food supplies. The destruction of the Temple and exile of the Jewish people was an apparent vindication of R' Yochanan ben Zakkai's stance since the zealots could hardly claim a Divine sanction for a policy that failed so miserably.

On his deathbed, R' Yochanan ben Zakkai worried that perhaps subconsciously he had not asked that the Bet Hamikdash be spared out of a fear that there would then be no clear proof that he had been right. And he suspected that his own honor - offended by the zealots' refusal to heed his psak - might have influenced his request. If that were true, and as a consequence the Bet Hamikdash were destroyed, would he not have merited eternal death? The Talmud tells us that R' Yochanan ben Zakkai's suspicions were unfounded; he was innocent; the Bet Hamikdash was destroyed by a Heavenly decree. Yet we can learn from R' Yochanan's concern as to the power of subtle traces of honor, desire and jealousy in distorting one's decisions.

It is incumbent upon us to learn from the sale of Yosef the devastating effect of jealousy and hatred, even in its subtlest forms and even in the greatest of people, so that we can strive to conduct ourselves in a manner that will cause us to merit seeing the ultimate reunion of Yosef and his brothers, when Mashiach ben Yosef will be sent as a harbinger of Mashiach ben David.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Hanukah & the Story of Yosef

(Rabbi Eli Mansour)

Every year, without exception, the story of Yosef and his brothers is read during or just before the celebration of Hanukah. It is always at this time of year that we read about the very first instance of Sinat Hinam (baseless hatred) among the Jewish People – the hatred shown to Yosef by his brothers, who ended up selling him into slavery, banishing him from their family. Is this just a coincidence, or might there be some connection between the story of Yosef's being sold as a slave, and the festive celebration of Hanukah?

In truth, we have proof that a connection exists between the story of Yosef and the story of Hanukah. The Kabbalistic work Megaleh Amukot (by Rav Natan Shapiro, Poland, 1584-1633) noted that the Gematria (numerical value) of the name "Yosef" equals that of the name "Antiochus" – the Greek king who enacted the edicts against the Jews. Moreover, the Midrash writes that the Greeks forced the Jews to write upon the horns of their oxen a formal declaration that they renounced their allegiance to their G-d. Some Rabbis noted that this edict was intentionally associated with Yosef, who is compared to an ox ("Bechor Shoro Hadar Lo" – Debarim 33:17).

The question, then, becomes, what is the point of connection between Yosef and Antiochus; between the story of the cruelty suffered by Yosef at the hands of his brothers, and the story of the cruelty suffered by the Jews at the hands of the Greeks?

The answer is that the Greek persecution came because the Jews of the time repeated the mistake of Sinat Hinam which was first made by Yosef's brothers. The entire story of Hanukah was all about strife among the Jews and the decision to cure this ill through unity and peace. Indeed, the war against the Greeks was led by the Hashmonaim, a family of Kohanim. The Kohanim, the descendants of Aharon, carried his unique legacy of "Oheb Shalom Ve'rodef

Shalom" – living as a "lover" and "pursuer" of peace. They embodied the ideal of peaceful relations among people, and thus it was specifically they who led the campaign to restore peace and harmony in Am Yisrael and thereby put an end to the Greek persecution.

Additionally, the Mishna (Middot 2:3) teaches that when the Greeks stormed the Bet Ha'mikdash, they made thirteen breaches in one of the walls surrounding the structure. Thirteen is the numerical value of the word "Ehad" ("one"), and thus represents Jewish unity, the ideal of Jews working and living harmoniously together as one. The thirteen breaches symbolize the breach in unity that wrought the campaign of oppression launched by the Greeks against the Jews.

For good reason, then, "Antiochus" has the same Gematria as "Yosef." If we repeat the mistake made by the brothers in their mistreatment of Yosef, then we suffer the oppression of Antiochus.

This is why we always read the story of the sale of Yosef around the time of Hanukah – because Hanukah is the time for us to focus our attention on eliminating Sinat Hinam from our midst, to correct the mistake made by Yosef's brothers, the mistake which, unfortunately, we continue to make even today. We read this story as a somber reminder of the devastating consequences of strife among Jews, and the need to work towards peace and harmony – especially during the time of Hanukah. It is perhaps for this reason, we might add, that people customarily make special parties with relatives, friends and neighbors during the Hanukah holiday. Celebrating together with our fellow Jews in joy and camaraderie is an effective way of strengthening the bonds between us and thereby combating strife and fighting.

Please G-d, we will succeed during the upcoming Hanukah celebration to strengthen our love for all our fellow Jews, eliminate hatred and contention from our homes, from our communities, and from our hearts, and increase the level of peace and unity in our nation, so we will earn the merit of witnessing and experiencing miracles like those which were performed for the Hashmonaim, Amen.

8 Simple, Powerful Ways to Cultivate Gratefulness in Your Family

How to teach your kids (and yourself) gratitude. (By Adina Soclof, MS. CCC-SLP)

Now is the perfect time to teach your kids about gratitude. Here are 8 simple but powerful ways.

1. Say thank you to your kids:

The more they hear the people they look up to the most say thank you, the more likely they'll do the same.

You can thank your kids for almost anything:

"Thanks so much for clearing your plate!"

"You cleaned up your toy! Thanks! That makes clean up easier for everyone!"

"That hug made my day! Thanks!"

"Thanks for all those mushy kisses!"

2. Say thank you to your spouse:

We are consumed by performing daily tasks. It's nice to have someone show appreciation for the mundane. So say thank you to your spouse and let your kids overhear you, often.

During the pandemic when my husband was working from home, he had to deal with some tough Covid related stuff. I always knew he worked hard, but now I actually saw it. I made sure to say thank you to him for providing for our family and I tried to make a point of saying it in front of my kids.

3. Thank you notes:

At the risk of sounding old fashioned, there is nothing like a handwritten thank you note. They never go out of style. When your kids get gifts have them write simple thank you notes. Younger kids can color pictures and dictate their message (they are often very funny!). Grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends are delighted with this show of gratitude.

4. Don't sweat the small stuff:

It's a real effort for me not to nitpick and complain. I realize sweating the small stuff does nothing to cultivate gratefulness. So I make the conscious effort to flip it and focus on the

positive instead. When I've stained my favorite shirt and I've forgotten that one item on my grocery list (ugh!), I try to think of what I am grateful for. I have laundry stain remover that might just do the trick or the grocery store is really just two minutes away.

5. Put G-d into the picture:

Everything happens for a reason. The next time you can't find your phone, your cake flops, or you're stuck in traffic, take a minute to thank G-d that it's nothing worse or to ask G-d for help.

Challenges, even minor ones, can be a vehicle for growth, allowing us to be thankful for the difficulties. This helps us assign a higher purpose to the frustrations of life and ultimately feel gratitude instead of annoyance.

6. Start the day off right:

Every morning, Jews say the following words when they wake up:

"Modeh Ani – I give thanks unto You, O living and eternal King, for having restored within me my soul, with mercy; great is Your trust."

We thank G-d for the start of a fresh new day. Ruchi Koval in her book, *Conversations with G-d*, recommends adding a personal reflection: "Specifically, I am grateful this morning for _____."

This is a wonderful exercise to do with our children as well. When we wake them up in the morning, we can say *Modeh Ani* and ask them if they have anything that they are looking forward to that day, something for which they are grateful.

7. Point out the beauty around you:

We are surrounded by so much beauty – if you open your eyes and look. Focusing on the little things that can do wonders for exercising our gratitude muscles. The trees outside your kitchen window, your comfy rocking chair, the sun creating rainbows on your floor and your neighbor's smiley baby. Make sure to point out what you're appreciating to your kids.

8. The science behind gratefulness:

Researchers at Indiana University studied a group of participants suffering from anxiety and depression. Half of the group were assigned a

simple gratitude exercise – to write letters of thanks to people in their lives. Three months later all of the participants underwent brain scans.

During these brain scans the subjects participated in a gratitude task in which they were told a benefactor had given them a sum of money and were asked whether they'd like to donate a portion of the funds to charity as an expression of their gratitude. All those who decided to give away money showed a particular pattern of activity in their brains.

However, the participants who'd completed the gratitude task months earlier reported feeling more grateful two weeks after the task than members of the control group.

Researchers concluded that there were profound and long-lasting neural effects of acts and thoughts of gratefulness.

The more practice you give your brain at feeling and expressing gratitude, the more it adapts this mindset. You can strengthen your gratitude muscle. The more effort you put into feeling grateful the easier it will be to tap into those feelings spontaneously.

6 Ways Jews Shaped Thanksgiving

How Jews helped to create the quintessential American holiday.

(By Dr. Yvette Alt Miller)

1. Modeling the first Thanksgiving on Sukkot

America's first Thanksgiving holiday took place in 1621, just a few months after the first Pilgrim settlers first landed on the shores of Cape Cod in Massachusetts. They arrived in the New World just as winter was approaching, and spent their first few months in Massachusetts huddled on the *Mayflower* boat that had brought them from England, subsisting on the ship's stores of food. Fully half of the Pilgrims perished over the winter.

When the weather began to improve, they ventured onto land. March 21 was the day the

Pilgrims officially left the *Mayflower* and began to farm and build homesteads. The Pilgrims were aided by members of the local Abenaki, Pawtuxet and Wampanoag tribes, particularly by a Pawtuxet man named Squanto who had an amazing history. He had been kidnapped some years previously by an English ship captain, had learned English, and eventually returned to his tribe in Massachusetts. With Squanto's aid, the Pilgrims succeeded in cultivating native crops.

At harvest time, the Pilgrims declared a three-day long feast of Thanksgiving to thank G-d for their harvest. Deeply religious Christians, the Pilgrims were well acquainted with the Hebrew Bible and Jewish holidays, including the autumn festival of Sukkot, when Jewish pilgrims brought offerings from their harvests to the Temple in Jerusalem. Some see the first American Thanksgiving was an attempt to thank G-d for His beneficence in a new place, and to a new set of Pilgrims, a conscious imitation of Sukkot.

Pilgrim leader William Bradford had another Jewish custom in mind when he declared a service of thanksgiving soon after the Pilgrims made landfall in 1620. He opened his Bible and led the Pilgrims in reciting Psalm 107. Incredibly, the annotations in Bradford's Bible, written by the English clergyman Henry Ainsworth, quoted the Medieval Jewish sage Rabbi Moshe Ben Maimon (Rambam), whose legal work the *Mishnah Torah* directs Jews to recite a prayer based on Psalm 107 after making a dangerous journey and overcoming other obstacles. It seems that the very first American act of Thanksgiving had Jewish roots as William Bradford incorporated Jewish traditions into his first thanksgiving prayers in the New World.

2. Ensuring Jews Can Celebrate Thanksgiving

During Colonial times, it was common for colonies to declare special days of thanksgiving at times of prosperity and good fortune. Shearith Israel, the oldest synagogue in America, eagerly took part. Established in 1654 by Sephardi Jews seeking refuge from the Portuguese Inquisition in Brazil, Shearith Israel (also known as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue) took part in various thanksgiving celebrations that were declared by New York's colonial governor.

Shearith Israel wrote new prayers and included prayers of thanksgiving during these colonial thanksgiving days.

There were times, however, when New York's Colonial Governor insisted that special days of thanksgiving have a specifically Christian character. (This was true of other colonies as well, which sometimes insisted that days of thanksgiving be celebrated with Christian prayers.) At these times, Shearith Israel had no choice but to refrain from taking part. The synagogue's predicament became known to George Washington, thanks to the synagogue's leader, Gershom Mendes Seixas, the congregation's cantor who was devoted to the cause of American Independence, and his family.

Many of Shearith Israel's members joined the Continental Army and fought with George Washington; approximately 20 members of the synagogue died in America's revolutionary war. After the war, Seixas was selected to be one of the small number of clergy people present at George Washington's presidential inauguration. When the new President declared a National Day of Thanksgiving for the new United States in 1789, he specifically made his day of thanks non-denominational, ensuring that his Jewish supporters could fully take part in America's first national thanksgiving festival.

Gershom Mendes' Seixas brother Moses was active in his own synagogue in Rhode Island, Kahal Kadosh Yeshuat Yisrael (later called the Touro Synagogue). In 1790, seven years after the conclusion of America's War of Independence, President George Washington visited that synagogue and Moses Seixas delivered him a warm letter of affection on behalf of his congregation. Pres. Washington responded with a letter of his own, in which he famously reiterated his strong belief that America was not to be a Christian nation, but one to which all peoples could equally contribute and call home.

"All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship," Washington wrote. "For happily the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should

demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it all on occasions their effectual support..." It was a strong reminder that America's national character must include all its citizens, no matter what their religious persuasion.

3. The Shavuot Connection

Thanksgiving only became a regular, annual holiday in 1863. That was thanks in large part to one woman: Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of America's most popular journal, *Godey's Ladies Journal*.

Hale was a progressive idealist. Each year, starting in 1846, she published a public appeal in *Godey's*, asking the government to establish a National Day of Thanksgiving across the entire country. Notably, she called for a day of Thanksgiving in which all Americans, including Jews, could take part. Hale made specific reference to a key Jewish holiday in her annual appeal, "Pentecost," which is a Greek name for the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, the day G-d gave the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.

Hale saw this Jewish holiday as a time for family gatherings and giving charity so that no poor household would be left out of the national celebration. (Hale lived in New Hampshire, which had a small Jewish population, It's possible she observed the ways that Jews support their communities with charity, ensuring that all members have the resources to celebrate festivals such as Shavuot and other Jewish holidays.)

"The noble annual feast day of our Thanksgiving resembles, in some respects, the Feast of Pentecost, which was, in fact, the yearly season of Thanksgiving with the Jews," Hale insisted in the pages of her magazine, year after year. Fixing a regular Thanksgiving Day "would then have a national character.... It is a festival which will never become obsolete, for it cherishes the best affections of the heart – the social and domestic ties. It calls together the dispersed members of the family circle, and brings plenty, joy and gladness to the dwellings of the poor and lowly."

President Lincoln finally listened to Hale's entreaties – and those of her many readers and admirers – and proclaimed the final Thursday in November to be an annual holiday of

Thanksgiving across the United States. Deep in the Civil War, it was the hope of many that a National Day of Thanksgiving could help heal the country's wounds.

4. The Jew Who Changed the Date of Thanksgiving

For years, Thanksgiving was celebrated on the last Thursday in November: until a Jewish businessman helped alter the date – and provoked a firestorm across America.

In 1939, there were five Thursdays in November and Thanksgiving fell on November 30. With the economy in depression, merchants were worried that a late Thanksgiving would mean an unusually short Christmas shopping season, as in the 1930s it was customary to start decorating stores and promoting Christmas merchandise only after the Thanksgiving holiday.

American retailers lobbied President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to bring Thanksgiving forward a week, to November 23, to help America's embattled retailers. The leader of the push was Fred Lazarus, Jr., the Jewish chairman of the Federated Department Stores, a national retailing grouping he'd organized in 1930 to link stores in different communities by sharing a financial base. (Federated Department Stores eventually became Macy's.)

Lazarus' logic appealed to President Roosevelt, who changed Thanksgiving from the final Thursday of November to the third Thursday of the month in order to help the nation's merchants. This provoked a swift backlash from conservative states and politicians, some of whom seized on the change to promote antisemitic tinged criticisms of Pres. Roosevelt's New Deal policies. Critics called the "new" Thanksgiving "Franksgiving" and many states refused to celebrate it.

The backlash fell along party lines. As the New England Historical Society notes, "Republicans called Roosevelt's declaration an affront to the memory of Lincoln. (P)eople began referring to the 'Republican Thanksgiving (last Thursday)' and the 'Democratic Thanksgiving' (fourth Thursday) as 'Franksgiving'."

Pres. Roosevelt changed Thanksgiving back to its original date in 1941. Fred Lazarus Jr. went

on to contribute to the American war effort, serving as vice-chairman of the Retail Advisory Council of the National Council of Defense. He also served on the Office of Price Administration and the War Production Board during World War II. After the war, President Eisenhower appointed Lazarus to the President's Committee on Government Contracts, where Lazarus was a voice for fair labor practices. He passed away in 1973.

5. Inventing Thanksgiving Day Parade

No Thanksgiving would be complete without watching a Thanksgiving Day Parade, a tradition started by the descendants and business partners of a Jewish immigrant named Adam Gimbel.

Born in 1817 in Bavaria, Gimbel moved to America where he worked as a dock hand and then a travelling peddler. He soon gained a sterling reputation as a scrupulously honest businessman who treated all people fairly, no matter what their background. Gimbel founded Gimbels Department Store in Milwaukee. He later expanded to Philadelphia; after his death, his sons expanded Gimbel's further, opening a store in New York City.

In 1920, Bernard Gimbel, Adam's grandson, held the first Thanksgiving Day Parade, sponsoring a huge spectacle that marched from the Philadelphia Museum of Art to Gimbel's Department Store at 8th and Market Streets. Each year, until the last Gimbels' Parade in 1986, the department store sponsored Philadelphia's annual Thanksgiving Day Parade. Macy's in New York started their own Thanksgiving Day Parade in 1924, in a clear imitation of Gimbels'.

6. Creating America's Green Bean Casserole

The iconic green bean casserole topped with crunchy fried onions that many Americans enjoy on Thanksgiving has a remarkable story, and was popularized in the 1950s by the Jewish food writer Cecily Brownstone. In 1955, Ms. Brownstone wrote a story about a journalists' dinner she'd attended at the home of John Snively Jr., a pioneering citrus grower in Florida.

At the dinner, Mrs. Snively served a delicious green bean casserole – and shared a remarkable story about that signature dish. The Snivelys had recently hosted the Shah of Iran and his wife, and Mrs. Snively made her delicious green bean casserole. The Iranian Queen was so taken with the dish that she kept asking about its ingredients. The Snivelys' butler answered each question, until he finally lost his patience and told the royal, "Listen, lady, it's just beans and stuff."

Cecily Brownstone realized this would make a great food article. She wrote it up, but wanted a recipe to go with her story. Ms. Brownstone reached out to the Campbell Soup Company to see if they could help her develop a fool-proof green bean casserole that was similar to what she'd eaten at the Snivelys. Campbell complied, creating the iconic recipe featuring cream of mushroom soup that's still popular today.

DAILY HALACHA

Halachot of Hanuka

(Daily Halacha)

1) It is preferable to use **olive oil** for Hanukah candles, since the miracle of the Menora involved olive oil. Furthermore, there is a custom to add water beneath the oil, in order to symbolize the Jews' triumph over the enemy gentile nations. The oil symbolizes Am Yisrael, and the water represents the enemy nations. It is therefore appropriate on Hanukah, which celebrates the Jews' victory over their oppressors, to place some water underneath the oil as a symbol of our triumph over tyranny. One should not light the Hanukia partly with wax candles and partly with oil. If one uses wax-coated floating wicks for the lighting, it is preferable, if possible, to first light the wicks to melt the wax coating before lighting them for the Misva. One should light the Hanukah candles when the time arrives even if he is at that moment engaged in Torah study. The lighting should be done with the entire family together, and with genuine joy borne out of the recognition that we directly benefit from the Hanukah miracle. It is preferable to fuel the

Hanukah lights with olive oil, but the act of lighting should preferably be performed with a wax candle.

2) As we know, one must add an extra candle (the "**Shamash**") from which he may derive personal benefit. Since Halacha forbids deriving personal benefit from the Hanukah candles, one must add another candle so that if he does make use of the candles, he will be considered as making use of the extra candle. Even if one does not intend on using the Hanukah candles, he must nevertheless add an extra candle to demonstrate that the others were lit specifically for the Misva, and not for light.

3) Nowadays, it is customary to light the Hanukah candles **inside the home** (as opposed to Talmudic times, when the Hanukah candles were lit outside, near the entrance to the home). If a person lives on a ground floor, it is clear that he should light the Hanukah candles near a window, as they will certainly be visible to pedestrians outside. The question arises, however, as to whether somebody who lives in a high apartment should light by his window. Halacha disqualifies Hanukah candles lit higher than twenty Amot (approx. 40 feet), since at this height they are not visible to the public. Seemingly, then, those who live in high-rise apartments should not light Hanukah candles by the window. In truth, however, even in such a case one may light near the window, since these windows are generally visible to people living in adjacent apartment buildings or buildings across the street. In such a situation, then, lighting even at a height of above twenty Amot achieves "**Pirsumeh Nisa**" (publicizing the miracle), and one may therefore light by a window even in a **high apartment**.

4) It is preferable to position the candles at least three Tefachim (handbreadths) from the ground, and no higher than ten Tefachim. Therefore, one should not place the Hanukah candles **directly on the floor**. When we speak of these heights, we refer to the height of the flame itself (as opposed to the candle); the flame should, ideally, be positioned between three and ten Tefachim from the ground. One may place the candles on a window sill that is higher than ten Tefachim, since they will be visible by people outside. However, if one has the option of

placing the candles on a window sill that is within ten Tefachim of the floor, he should preferably place the candles on that window sill, rather than a sill higher than ten Tefachim.

5) If a person lit the Hanukah candles properly in a place where they can be expected to burn for at least a half-hour, but they happen to burn out before a half-hour, he should preferably relight them, though strictly speaking this is not required. One should not relight the candle from one of the remaining Hanukah candles but rather from another candle. If one or more candles burn out before one has completed lighting all that night's candles, then he is obligated to relight them.

6) It is forbidden to **fast** on Hanukah, even on the occasion of a Yahrtzeit. **Eulogies** should not be given during Hanukah, even at a funeral, except at the funeral of a Torah scholar when the body is present. All the laws of mourning apply during Hanukah, as does the Misva of visiting mourners. One should not **visit a cemetery** during Hanukah, though it is permissible to pray by the gravesite of a Sadik.

7) Although **one who travels** on Hanukah generally does not have to light Hanukah candles, as he fulfills his obligation through his wife's lighting at home, if he is in a place with no Jews he should light Hanukah candles, with the Berachot.

8) **Sefaradim lights** the candles immediately with Tzet Hacoachavim (**Nightfall**). This year nightfall is at 6:10 pm. There has to be enough oil to last a minimum of half an hour after nightfall. If one does not light at nightfall one should try their utmost to light within the half an hour after nightfall. Bediavad, in extenuating circumstances one can light until Dawn the next morning on condition that family members are awake.

9) Hanukah candles on **Erev Shabbat**. We should light the Hanuka candles Erev Shabbat in a different place from where we light our Shabbat candles. We first light the Hanuka candles and then the woman lights the Shabbat candles. If one forgot and the woman lit the Shabbat candles the man can still light the Hanuka candles as quickly as possible to avoid Chilul Shabbat. On Erev Shabbat one must

place extra oil so it will stay on until half an hour after nightfall. One should not light the Hanukah before Pelag Haminha.

10) One is **not allowed to eat a meal or work half an hour prior** to the time of lighting the Hanukah in order to ascertain they will fulfil the Mitzvah.

11) **Married children** visiting their parents on Hanukah are not required to give them money to participate in the lighting, although it is praiseworthy to do so.

12) It is permissible to light a Hanukah candle from another Hanukah candle, but it is prohibited to light an ordinary candle from the Hanukah candles, even if the purpose of the ordinary candle is to light other Hanukah candles. Furthermore, it is prohibited to use a Hanukah candle to light another Hanukah candle that was lit but became extinguished immediately afterward. This restriction applies only to the Hanukah candles during their first half hour after being lit.

KIDZ CORNER

INTERESTING MIDRASH

(from Torah Tots)

Yaakov - Yosef; like father, like son!

Yosef's coat of "many colors" was just the top layer in a heart to heart relationship between Yosef and his father, Yaakov. Yaakov understood prophetically that Yosef was destined for greatness. Outwardly, he played down Yosef's dreams, but inside he knew that they would come true. While Yaakov loved all his sons (and daughter), Yosef and he shared a bond that stayed strong even through the 22 years of separation.

The *Parsha* tells us "These are the chronicles of Yaakov" - then it adds in - "Yosef". What about the other sons (and daughter)? The *Torah* is hinting to us that the lives of Yaakov and Yosef are so similar that the story of the father is the story of the son.

Yosef reminded Yaakov of himself. Not only did they physically look alike, but the events of their lives had uncanny similarities.

Check these out:

- Yaakov and Yosef both had mothers who couldn't have children for a long time. The Rabbis tell us that it was a miracle that enabled them to eventually have kids. And when Yaakov and Yosef were born, it was a "no-mohel-necessary" situation — both were born circumcised!
- Yaakov's brother, Esav, hated him and tried to kill him; Yosef's brothers, too, hated him and attempted to kill him. (Of course, Yosef never snitched on his brothers, so Yaakov wouldn't know about the snake pit part).
- Yaakov married outside of *Eretz Yisrael* and became a rich man before returning home; Yosef married in *Mitzrayim* and became a wealthy man in Pharaoh's court. This proves that *Hashem* gave these two *Tzadikim* special attention. Usually the *Shechina* rests in *Eretz Yisrael*, but these two were so holy that the *Shechina* tagged along past the borders of the Holy Land.
- *Malachim* accompanied both Yaakov and Yosef: Yosef met up with three *Malachim* on the way to meet his brothers in Shechem; two groups of *Malachim* guarded Yaakov. One as he left *Eretz Yisrael* on his way to Lavan, and another when he returned.
- Yaakov and Yosef both received blessings in the form of a dream: Yaakov's famous dream of *Malachim* on a ladder ended with *Hashem's* promise to make him great; Yosef was given a clear interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, which rocketed him to fame, fortune and the job of Viceroy.
- Both of their fathers-in-law made fortunes on the backs of these two holy men: Yaakov's *Father in law*, Lavan and Yosef's *Father in law*, Potifar, became very wealthy under the guidance of their sons-in-law.
- Both ended a famine in *Mitzrayim*: Yosef came up with the seven-year food storage program; the moment Yaakov stepped foot in *Mitzrayim*, *Hashem* ended the famine in his merit.

- On his deathbed, Yaakov made his sons swear that they would take his remains back to *Eretz Yisrael*. Yosef too, made his brothers swear that when *Bnei Yisrael* leave *Mitzrayim*, they would take along his remains. Both died in *Mitzrayim* and were embalmed.

It is obvious that Yaakov saw Yosef as the true continuation of himself. Even the way he chose to pass along his knowledge was a sure sign that Yosef was heir to *Bnei Yisrael's* future. There was the *halachic* knowledge Yaakov had learned at the *Yeshiva* of Shem and Ever. This he taught to Yosef directly. Yosef would then teach it to his brothers. Yaakov also taught Yosef secrets of the *Torah*, which were not to be passed on to his brothers.

Yaakov - Yosef; like father, like son!

Kid'z Korner (Revach)

The Ugly Present

(Adapted from *Mishle Yaakov*, pp. 73-74)

The peculiar - and uncomplimentary - story of Judah and Tamar was meant to set the stage for King David and the future *Mashiach*, the messianic king. The Midrash poignantly describes the scene:

"The tribes [Jacob's sons] were occupied with selling Joseph. Joseph was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting. Reuben was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting. Jacob was occupied with his sackcloth and fasting. Judah was occupied finding a wife.

And G-d? He was occupied creating the light of the Messiah."

But the entire story is strange. If G-d had already decided to bestow this wonderful honor to Judah - the *Mashiach* would come from his descendants! - then why couldn't Judah have found a wife in a more respectable manner?

The Matching Gift

The Maggid told the story of a wealthy man married off his son. The local rabbi sent a congratulatory letter. The letter included a beautiful poem, written in exquisite calligraphy,

extolling the virtues of the bride and groom and their respective families.

The letter and the poem were truly wonderful - but it was inscribed on an worn-out piece of scrap paper with uneven edges. The father of the groom was upset when he saw this peculiar gift. However, he decided not to ruin the joy of the moment; he would respond to the slight on a later date.

After the wedding, the wealthy man sent the rabbi a basket of fresh fruits and delicious cakes. But he placed the fruits and cakes inside a grimy bowl, and covered it with a soiled napkin. He found a bedraggled street urchin to deliver the gift.

The rabbi was amazed by this strange gift. When he met the wealthy man a few days later, he asked him, "Why did you do this? Why did you send me such an expensive gift wrapped in rags?"

The wealthy man replied, "I was only repaying you in kind. You also sent me a beautiful gift in an ugly, unattractive vessel."

Judah's 'Reward'

The Midrash teaches that Joseph was destined to go down to Egypt in order to fulfill the "profound counsel" of G-d's covenant with Abraham, the *Brit Bein HaBetarim*. "They will enslave and persecute them." This was all part of the Divine plan to create the Jewish people.

There were many ways that G-d could have brought Joseph down to Egypt. Since the brothers hated Joseph and sought to disprove his dreams of grandeur, G-d let them be the cause for Joseph's descent. The final result of the sale of Joseph - which was Judah's idea - was desirable; but the way it was done, with betrayal and lies to their father, was obviously improper and unseemly.

The Midrash teaches that the affair of Tamar was a case of poetic justice, *middah knegged middah*. *With this incident, G-d was telling Judah:*

"You tricked your father with a goat; so too, Tamar will trick you with a goat. You asked your father, "Do you recognize this?" Tamar will also ask you, "Do you recognize this?"

The ultimate result of Joseph's sale was good; but on the outside it looked ugly and repulsive. G-d therefore repaid Judah in the same coin. He gave Judah a wonderful gift, but in a soiled and tattered wrapping. The final result was priceless - preparing the way for King David and the *Mashiach* - but it came in a disreputable vessel, in a way that suggested prostitution and moral turpitude.

One Chanukah Rav Chaim Ozer Met The Tailor In Cracow...

Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky, z"tl once visited Cracow. When he arrived, Rav Chaim Ozer sought a tailor who could sew his suit, which had torn on the way. He eventually found one, and requested that he fix his suit.

The tailor answered, "Forgive me, Kavod HaRav, but I have not yet lit the Chanukah candles. If you wish, you can wait until I light, and after a half an hour, I'll sew your suit."

While Rav Chaim Ozer waited, he noticed how this simple tailor prepared himself for the mitzvah. He removed his weekday clothing, and donned Shabbat clothing. He washed his hands and joyously prepared to light the candles.

Rav Chaim Ozer was astounded by the temimus of this man and he said, "Now I understand how the city Cracow produces such Gedole Torah and giants of spirits, if this is what the simple tailors are like!" (Chaim Sheyash Bahem)

Maoz Tzur - The Roses Behind The Jug Of Oil

"V'Nakeh Lo Yinakeh", and acquit Hashem does not acquit (Ki Sisa 34:7). This pasuk is the source of the Midas HaDin and all the troubles that seem to befall us in life. The Gaon HaKadosh MiKozhnitz tells us that if you take the words V'Nakeh and Yinakeh, and remove the letters Kuf and Nun from each of these words, the remaining letters are the Shem HaShem.

This is the meaning of the mishna in Pirke Avot (4:27), "Al Tistakel B'KanKan Eleh B'Ma SheYesh Bo", don't look at the jug, only what is in it. Kan and Kan are the exterior of our Tzarot. We tend to focus on our pain rather than the underlying issue. The Mishna tells us when we are in a situation of Nakeh Lo Yinakeh, we

should not focus on the facade which is the Kuf Nun Kuf Nun, but rather the remaining letters of Hashem. We must realize that within this ordeal, Hashem is close to us and holding our hand. Everything is directed by Hashem for a good reason and we should use it to get close to Him.

Rav Yehuda Asad says that this is what we say in Maoz Tzur, "UMiNosar Kankanim Naaseh Nes LaShoshanim". From the Shem Hashem that stood behind the wars and the tzaros of Antiochus, which were merely empty jugs testing our resolve, Naaseh Nes LaShoshanim, a great miracle occurred for those who passed the test and came out smelling like roses.

Chanukah: Some Hidden Secrets Of The Dreidel

The simple story of the Dreidel or Sivivon is that it was a decoy used by the little children learning the Aleph Bet in case the Yivanim caught them. The Bne Yisaschar brings some deep remazim regarding the dreidel.

The four sides of the dreidel have the letters, Nun, Gimel, Shin, Hey. These stand for the four forces in a person. Nefesh or spirit-Nun, Guf or physicality-Gimel, Sechel or intellect-Shin, and a higher spirit combining the other three, HaKol-Hey. The four nations of Bavel, Yavan, Rome, and Madai each opposed a specific one of these forces. Mashiach, whose gematria is 358 the same as Nun, Gimel, Shin, Hey, will annul these forces forever. Then Hashem's reign will be accepted by all. Hashem Melech, Hashem Malach, Hashem Yimloch L'Olam Va'ed also equals 358 like our dreidel and Mashiach.

The dreidel spins on its point. All these nations on each side of the dreidel all focus on Bne Yisrael. The four side gradually decrease and disappear into this point, as the four nations will disappear and become batel to Am Yisrael.

POUR LES FRANCOPHONES

Les Lumières du Judaïsme

Notre paracha s'ouvre sur une sombre image. Yossef atsadik est enfermé dans la prison royale d'Egypte. Malheureusement pour lui, cette

situation n'est pas récente. Depuis douze ans, il attend une solution pour retrouver sa liberté. Une question brûle les lèvres de chaque juif: est-ce ainsi qu'on récompense celui qui accomplit la volonté divine? Souvenez-vous, il avait fui devant la femme de son maître, en abandonnant ses vêtements entre ses mains. Après un an de harcèlement, ce jeune homme de dix sept ans, seul dans un pays étranger, avait décidé de tout perdre: son honneur, son travail... afin de ne pas fauter. Il avait surmonté une des plus grandes épreuves de toute la Torah, et le voici coincé ici! Pourquoi Hachem n'a-t-il pas accompli un miracle en faveur de Yossef afin de le sauver de ce funeste sort?

Afin de répondre à cette question, intéressons-nous au commencement de cette histoire, la vente de Yossef. Lorsque ses frères voulurent le tuer, la Torah témoigne que Réouven entendit leur projet et le sauva. "Ne versez pas le sang", ordonna-t-il, "jetez-le dans ce puits." Puis Yéhouda ajouta: "que gagnerons-nous à le tuer, vendons-le à des Yichmaélites." Alors il le sortit du puits et le vendit.

Le rav Yéhouda Tsadka zrouto yagen alénou soulève une difficulté dans ce passage. Les sages nous disent que ce puits n'était pas vide, qu'il était plein de scorpions et de serpents. S'il en fut ainsi, pourquoi la Torah a-t-elle attribué ce sauvetage à Réouven? Au contraire, celui-ci ne l'a-t-il pas mis en danger en le plaçant là-bas? Encore plus étrange, la Torah condamna l'acte de Yéhouda alors que c'est lui qui a tiré Yossef du puits!

Ce rav explique que même si Réouven avait mis en péril le corps de son frère, en le plaçant dans ce trou, cette solution permettait à Yossef de conserver son intégrité morale. Alors, qu'à l'inverse, Yéhouda avait sauvé Yossef d'une mort matérielle mais l'avait condamné spirituellement. En effet, cette caravane d'Arabes se dirigeait vers l'Egypte, la capitale mondiale de l'inceste et des mauvaises mœurs. Voilà pourquoi le sauvetage de Yossef fut attribué à Réouven et non à Yéhouda.

La Torah, à travers cet épisode, nous dévoile une notion fondamentale du judaïsme. Un juif doit se servir du matériel afin d'effectuer son service divin, mais celui-ci doit rester un moyen et non un but. L'objectif principal de notre venue sur Terre n'est pas de nous ménager une situation confortable ou de préparer un bel héritage à nos enfants. Nous sommes ici pour accomplir la volonté de notre Créateur et pour nous parfaire

spirituellement par l'intermédiaire des mitsvot et de la Torah. Pour cela, il est vrai que nous devons travailler, nous marier, manger, dormir... Mais ne perdons pas de vue où est l'essentiel et où est le superficiel. Lorsque nous choisissons un conjoint, des études pour nous ou nos enfants, une maison ou un travail, il faut toujours chercher ce qui nous permettra de vivre notre religion au mieux. Voilà le message de ce sauvetage.

Grâce à cet enseignement, nous pouvons comprendre pourquoi Hachem n'a pas fait de miracle pour Yossef. La prison royale était l'endroit le plus adapté à sa sauvegarde spirituelle. Même si les conditions d'incarcération étaient très dures, cet endroit restait la meilleure récompense. Car qui sait combien de temps Yossef aurait résisté dehors, au milieu des femmes et des mauvaises fréquentations?

Nous célébrons actuellement la fête d'Hanoukka. La mitsva principale consiste à allumer des bougies pendant huit jours. Pas de repas, de galette ni de loulav: le symbole de cette période est la lumière. En effet, nous commémorons la victoire spirituelle de la Torah sur l'idéologie grecque fondée sur le culte du corps et les plaisirs. Nos ennemis ont voulu déraciner notre foi et Hachem nous a sauvés. Pourtant, nous voyons davantage que l'allumage de simples bougies. Les juifs, aux quatre coins du monde se rassemblent, chantent et dansent, s'offrent des beignets et des cadeaux. "Savez-vous pourquoi?" demande la chanson. La réponse semble évidente: nous témoignons notre gratitude envers Hachem de nous avoir élevés grâce à ses mitsvot et de nous avoir donné la Torah. Eclairés par les lumières des bougies, nous sommes fiers d'être juifs et d'avoir une part dans le Di-u d'Israël. Nous prouvons ainsi que nous avons assimilé le message de notre paracha, et que l'essentiel de notre vie est notre judaïsme.

Comme L'eau Renvoie le Reflet de Celui Qui la Regarde

Nous entamons cette semaine, dans la paracha Vayéchév, le début de la descente de nos ancêtres en Egypte. Yaacov Avinou réside désormais en Israël avec ses douze fils. La Torah témoigne que Yaacov accorda un peu plus d'affection à Yossef, ce qui entraîna la jalousie de

ses frères. Il faut bien faire attention, lorsque nous traitons ces passages, au fait que ces douze enfants ressemblaient à des anges. En conséquence, ce que la Torah nous décrit comme des fautes serait considéré, pour nous, comme des Mitsvot. Chacun de leurs actes était pour l'amour d'Hachem, sans aucune once d'intérêt personnel. Cependant, l'erreur est humaine. Et, dans leur volonté de faire le bien, la Torah nous montre qu'ils firent de mauvais choix. Un jour, Yaacov Avinou ordonna à Yossef de rejoindre ses frères qui faisaient paître les troupeaux. Celui-ci partit et croisa sur son chemin l'ange Gabriel.

Yossef lui demanda où se trouvaient ses frères. "Ils ne veulent pas être ton frère, ils veulent te tuer", répondit l'ange selon l'explication de Rachi zal. Yossef Atsadiq ne renonça cependant pas à rejoindre ses frères et, finalement, sera condamné à mort, puis acheté par des commerçants arabes qui le vendront comme esclave à un Egyptien du nom de Potifar.

Comme nous le savons, les Mitsvot nous ont été données pour vivre et non pour mourir. C'est pourquoi, si un homme est en danger de mort, il lui est permis de transgresser Chabat ou de ne manger pas cacher, par exemple. Si c'est ainsi, comment comprendre le comportement de Yossef Atsadiq? Même s'il devait accomplir l'ordre de son père d'aller voir ses frères, à partir du moment où il apprenait qu'ils voulaient le tuer, n'aurait-il pas dû rentrer chez lui?

Pour répondre à cette question, nous allons nous servir d'une histoire que le Rav Zonnelfeld raconta au rav Moché Blow, qui l'écrivit. Le rav Zonnelfeld l'entendit du rav Nahoum Chadiker qui en fut le témoin oculaire. Dans une ville, en Allemagne, vivait un délateur. Cet impie obligeait les juifs de sa commune à lui donner de l'argent en les menaçant de les accuser, vis-à-vis des non-juifs, de ne pas payer leurs impôts... Un jour, un homme recouvert de résidus d'œuf alla voir le rav de la ville. Celui-ci lui demanda de lui expliquer ce qui s'était passé. "Je suis vendeur d'œufs, cvod arav. J'achète les œufs dans les villages avoisinants, puis je les revends en ville. Lorsque j'arrivai en ville sur ma calèche, je croisai le délateur. Il me demanda de mettre tous mes œufs dans sa maison. J'exécutai sa demande et vidai ma cargaison chez lui. Lorsque je lui demandai de me payer, il s'énerva, prit une barre de fer et cassa tous mes œufs. Je suis venu au

Bet Din pour porter une plainte contre lui." Ce rav, qui était un des grands de sa génération, n'eut pas peur de ce renégat et envoya son chamach pour l'inviter à se rendre au Beth Din. Le délateur refusa de venir. Le rav renvoya son chamach et le menaça d'être excommunié. Encore une fois, il refusa et frappa le chamach. Le jeudi matin, le délateur se rendit à la synagogue comme tous les jours. Le gabay lui donna la troisième montée de la Torah. Celui-ci monta à la Torah. Avant qu'il eût prononcé ses bénédictions, le rav se dressa face à lui et dit: "Insolent, descends de là tout de suite." Le délateur s'enfuit de la synagogue et décida de se venger du rav.

Après quelques jours, on demanda au rav d'être le Sandak dans un village voisin. Celui-ci prit avec lui deux élèves dont le Rav Nahoum Chadiker. Alors qu'ils étaient dans une plaine déserte, le rav Nahoum vit au loin le délateur qui chevauchait un cheval et qui se dirigeait vers eux. Ce dernier avertit le rav. Les élèves virent alors quelque chose d'étonnant. Le rav ferma les yeux et se concentra. Lorsque le délateur arriva, il dit:

- " Ah, rav, permettez-moi de frapper vos élèves"
- Sûrement pas!
- Alors laissez-moi leur cracher dessus.
- Jamais!

Il demanda alors au rav de lui pardonner de ne pas l'avoir écouté. Celui-ci répondit: " Je te pardonnerai lorsque tu paieras ce que tu dois au vendeur d'œufs et que tu arrêteras d'être un délateur. Le voyou sortit de sa poche une somme d'argent, la versa au rav et s'enfuit.

Les élèves du rav n'en croyaient pas leurs yeux. Par quel miracle le rav fut-il sauvé? Celui-ci leur répondit:

" Comme l'eau renvoie le reflet du visage de celui qui la regarde, de même est le cœur de l'homme envers son prochain" Michlé (27, 19).

Ce délateur me déteste car moi aussi je le haïs. Je le déteste, car il est délateur, il fait du mal...Lorsqu'il venait vers nous, je me suis demandé: " comment faire pour qu'il cesse de me haïr?" Puis j'ai eu cette idée. Si j'arrive à remplir mon cœur d'amour pour lui, alors de même que l'eau renvoie le reflet de celui qui s'y regarde, alors lui aussi m'aimera! Seulement, comment aimer un tel homme?

J'ai commencé à le juger de manière favorable. Peut-être que ses parents ont été mauvais avec

lui. Sûrement qu'il fut influencé par de mauvaises fréquentations.... Peu à peu, j'ai enlevé ma haine. Mais je n'arrivais pas encore à l'aimer. Puis je me suis souvenu du jour où je lui ai dit de descendre à la synagogue. Il aurait pu me frapper, quelle âme pure!! Il aurait pu répondre avec effronterie mais il s'est tu: quelle grande âme possède cet homme... Plus je l'aimais, et plus le cœur de cet impie s'adoucit et accepta mes paroles.

Dans le livre Pé Kadoch, du Rav Itshak de Vologin, il est écrit au nom de son père Rav Haïm : c'est une chose testée et approuvée: si un homme est haï par un autre, il peut le transformer en ami s'il le juge de manière favorable. Désormais, nous pouvons répondre à notre question. Lorsque Yossef apprit de l'ange que ses frères voulaient le tuer, il décida de continuer sa route car il pensait pouvoir les changer. Il était sûr que s'il remplissait son cœur d'amour pour eux, il arriverait à enlever cette haine de leur cœur. Hélas, son plan échoua. Car la Torah enseigne que ces frères "le virent arriver de loin et complotèrent afin de le tuer." Avant même qu'il ne commence à les aimer, ils rajoutèrent de la haine pour lui.

Nous devons retirer de cette parasha une leçon très importante. Très souvent, nous sommes confrontés, dans nos familles, dans notre travail ou dans notre communauté à des gens qui ne nous apprécient pas. Si nous fouillons en nous-même, nous pouvons voir qu'il existe aussi une inimitié. Pour transformer ces ennemis en amis, nous devons remplir notre cœur d'amour et commencer à les regarder d'un oeil bienveillant.

REFLEXION SEMANAL

(Rav Yonatan Gefen)

Los Sueños de Yosef

La parashá de esta semana comienza con el relato del deterioro de la relación entre Iosef y sus hermanos. Los dos sueños de Iosef jugaron un papel muy importante en el aumento del resentimiento de los hermanos hacia él. Un análisis más detenido de estos sueños puede darnos un mejor entendimiento de por qué causaron semejante pelea entre los hermanos. El Bet Haleví, Rav Iosef Soloveitchik ⁽¹⁾, nota que después del primer sueño, la Torá nos dice que

los hermanos “odiaron a Iosef”, mientras que después del segundo, no dice que lo hayan odiado, sino que “estuvieron celosos” ⁽²⁾. ¿A qué se debe la diferencia?

El Bet Haleví responde analizando cuidadosamente los sueños. En el primero, Iosef dijo que él y sus hermanos estaban en el campo y que las espigas de ellos se reverenciaban ante la de él. No dijo que los hermanos mismos se reverenciaban, sino sus espigas. En contraste, en el segundo sueño Iosef comparó a sus hermanos con las estrellas y dijo que éstas se reverenciaban ante él. En este sueño las estrellas representaban a los hermanos y el hecho de que ellos mismos se reverenciaban ante Iosef ⁽³⁾.

El Beit Haleví explica que los dos sueños representaban dos áreas separadas en las que los hermanos serían inferiores a Iosef y le servirían. Las espigas del primer sueño representaban la futura superioridad de Iosef sobre los hermanos en este mundo (*olam hazé*), indicando que dependerían de él para su sustento físico. Sin embargo, el éxito en el mundo físico no hace que una persona sea intrínsecamente superior a las demás; sólo significa que tiene más posesiones. Es decir, una persona rica no está en un nivel superior a una pobre. Basado en esto, el Beit Haleví explica que, en el primer sueño, que representaba la *gashmiut* (materialismo), los hermanos mismos no mostraban servidumbre a Iosef, sino que sus posesiones eran descritas como inferiores a las de su hermano. En contraste, el segundo sueño se refiere a la futura superioridad espiritual de Iosef sobre sus hermanos. Los logros espirituales sí definen la grandeza intrínseca de una persona. Consecuentemente en el segundo sueño, que representaba la *rujaniut* (espiritualidad), los hermanos mismos se reverenciaban ante Iosef, indicando la superioridad espiritual de Iosef sobre ellos.

Con este entendimiento, el Beit Haleví responde nuestra pregunta inicial, respecto a por qué los hermanos reaccionaron diferente ante cada sueño, odiándolo después del primero y sintiendo celos después del segundo. El odio aparece cuando una persona resiente las acciones de las demás, mientras que los celos aparecen cuando alguien se siente inferior a su prójimo. Los hermanos odiaron a Iosef después del primer sueño, porque este implicaba que lo necesitarían para su sustento y legislaría materialmente sobre

ellos. Sin embargo, no sintieron celos por su futura riqueza, dado que eso no los haría sentir inferiores. Entendían que los logros materiales son externos a la persona y que no es algo por lo que valga la pena sentir celos. En contraste, sí estuvieron celosos después del segundo sueño, porque este implicaba que Iosef sería espiritualmente superior a ellos, lo cual sí despertó sus celos.

Hay dos enseñanzas sumamente importantes en la explicación del Beit Haleví. Primero, aprendemos que las posesiones materiales de una persona no son resultado de su verdadera grandeza. Puede que una persona rica merezca respeto ⁽⁴⁾, pero nadie debería envidiar su riqueza, porque esta no es un barómetro de su valor real. Sólo el nivel espiritual de una persona determina su grandeza real, y sólo eso merece ser envidiado de forma sana.

Es muy posible que una persona perciba su importancia en base a sus posesiones materiales. Una forma mediante la cual es posible conservar una perspectiva correcta sobre las posesiones materiales es dar un vistazo a qué es lo que define a una persona grandiosa en el mundo de Torá. La riqueza no tiene relevancia para determinar quién es *gadol be-Israel* (un término empleado para describir a los más grandes eruditos de Torá); de hecho, muchos *guedolim* fueron extremadamente pobres. Lo que es importante, de acuerdo a la definición de la Torá, es la grandeza espiritual a la que esa persona llega. Recordar las cualidades de nuestros *guedolim* puede ayudarnos a conservar una perspectiva precisa sobre la importancia de la riqueza en la verdadera grandeza de la persona.

Una indicación de que una persona está muy apegada a sus posesiones materiales es que las ve como parte de su propio ser. Por ejemplo, puede que una persona aprecie tanto sus posesiones que llegue a considerar cualquier daño a ellas como si le hubiese ocurrido a su propio cuerpo. Otra consecuencia negativa de esta actitud es que una persona tan apegada al mundo material puede volverse esclava del mismo, al punto de regir su vida de manera nociva. Esto fue lamentablemente evidente en Alemania en los años previos al Holocausto. Con el deterioro de la situación del pueblo judío en Alemania, muchos judíos se volvieron cada vez más conscientes de la necesidad de escapar. Sin embargo, algunos de los judíos más ricos tuvieron

gran dificultad para abandonar sus preciosos hogares y posesiones. Consecuentemente, la proporción de judíos pobres que dejaron Alemania fue mucho mayor a la de ricos. El apego a las posesiones materiales demostró ser fatal en este caso ⁽⁵⁾.

Aprendemos de los sueños de Iosef que la única grandeza real son los logros espirituales, y no la riqueza material. Que todos ameritemos reconocer y lograr la grandeza genuina.

Notas: 1) Rabino del siglo XIX, ancestro de la famosa dinastía Brisk. 2) Bet Haleví, Parashat Vayéshev. 3) El Bet Haleví escribe que las estrellas representan los *mazalot*, que son esenciales para el funcionamiento del mundo. 4) La Guemará declara que Rebi le daba honor a la gente adinerada. 5) Oído de Rav Aarón Lopiansky *shlita*.

Saliéndonos de Nuestro Propio Mundo

Hacia el final de la parashá, Iosef se encontraba en una situación desesperada: llevaba 10 años en prisión y no habían perspectivas de una pronta liberación. Pero en ese momento ocurrió el incidente de la interpretación de los sueños de los ministros del Faraón, el cual dio comienzo al proceso de su meteórico ascenso que culminó con su nombramiento como virrey de todo Egipto.

Hay un versículo en particular que señala el comienzo del drástico vuelco de la fortuna de Iosef. Después de tener sus respectivos sueños, ambos ministros estaban muy apesadumbrados por no saber sus significados. En ese momento, Iosef vio sus rostros alicaídos y les preguntó: "¿Por qué sus rostros están decaídos hoy? ⁽¹⁾". Esta pregunta, que pareciera irrelevante, llevó a la interpretación de los sueños que eventualmente resultó en la liberación y el increíble ascenso al poder que vivió Iosef.

Si Iosef nunca les hubiera preguntado por qué estaban alterados, entonces los ministros probablemente nunca le habrían contado sus problemas y Iosef hubiese perdido la gran oportunidad para ser liberado.

Pareciera que el pequeño acto de consideración que tuvo Yosef no es particularmente destacable. Pero la verdad es que, considerando su situación en ese momento, sí lo es: Iosef llevaba 10 años viviendo en pésimas condiciones y no tenía una posibilidad realista de ser liberado. Por lo tanto, tenía todo el derecho a estar absorto en su propia situación y consecuentemente a no advertir las

expresiones faciales de quienes lo rodeaban. Es más, Iosef debía servir a los dos ministros, quienes eran personas muy importantes en Egipto, y por lo tanto es muy probable que ellos lo hayan tratado con desprecio y que no le hayan prestado nada de atención. Sin embargo, él se sobrepuso a todos esos factores y mostró interés por ellos.

Es muy tentador vivir absortos en nosotros mismos y no reconocer las necesidades de los demás. Una de las claves para ser verdaderamente generosos es superar nuestra absorción en nosotros mismos y advertir el mundo que nos rodea. En ocasiones, esto requiere incluso que ignoremos nuestras propias necesidades por el bien de los demás.

El ejemplo más obvio de esto lo encontramos un poco antes en nuestra misma parashá, cuando Tamar estaba siendo llevada a la hoguera. Ella podía perfectamente salvar su vida si decía que los ítems que estaban en su posesión eran de Yehudá. Sin embargo, ella le dio más importancia a la vergüenza que sentiría Yehudá si lo delataba y por eso no lo hizo ⁽²⁾.

La Guemará aprende de esto que una persona debe dar su vida antes de avergonzar a alguien ⁽³⁾. Esto nos enseña que hay ocasiones en las que estamos obligados a darle más importancia a los sentimientos de los demás que a los propios.

Los hombres rectos personifican esta capacidad para dejar de lado las necesidades propias en favor de los demás. En una ocasión, un estudiante iba a llevar a Rav Moshe Feinstein en su auto. Cuando el rabino estaba subiendo al auto, el estudiante cerró la puerta e inadvertidamente le apretó los dedos, ante lo que Rav Moshe permaneció completamente silente como si nada hubiera pasado. Un confundido observador le preguntó por qué no había gritado, a lo que el rabino le respondió que el estudiante se hubiera avergonzado mucho por haberle causado dolor y, por lo tanto, lo mejor era controlarse y permanecer en silencio. Esta es una historia muy conocida, pero vale la pena analizarla: Rav Feinstein demostró la capacidad para ignorar sus propios sentimientos con el objetivo de evitar el sufrimiento de otro judío.

Pero no es sólo en tiempos de dolor que deberíamos enfocarnos en los demás. Rav Aharón Kotler fue con su hijo Rav Shneur a ver a Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer (el suegro de Rav Aharón) para saludarlo antes de viajar a Israel

para la boda de Rav Shneur. En lugar de escoltarlos a la calle cuando se iban, Rav Isser Zalman se detuvo a mitad de camino, en medio de la escalera. Cuando le preguntaron por qué se detenía, él explicó: "Mucha de la gente que vive en esta zona tiene nietos que fueron asesinados por los nazis, *imaj shemam*. ¿Cómo podría yo bajar a la calle y abrazar a mi nieto, haciendo públicamente alarde de mi alegría, cuando esta gente no puede hacer lo mismo? ⁽⁴⁾".

Estas demostraciones sobrehumanas de generosidad pueden servirnos como inspiración. Hay muchos ejemplos en los que podemos superar nuestra absorción en nosotros mismos y ser conscientes de las necesidades de quienes nos rodean. Cuando caminamos por la calle, tendemos a estar absortos en nuestros propios pensamientos, pero es bueno advertir a la gente que tenemos alrededor; puede que haya alguien que esté llevando una carga pesada y que apreciaría nuestra ayuda ⁽⁵⁾.

Hay muchas ocasiones en las que, a pesar de no estar sintiendo una gran alegría o dolor, tendemos a enfocarnos en nuestras propias vidas y no en las de los demás. Por ejemplo, en la *leshivá* Torá Vedaas había ocasiones en las que no había suficientes sillas en un aula, por lo que los estudiantes tenían que traer sillas desde otra. Rav Shraga Feivel Mendelowitz, el fundador de la *leshivá*, solía decir que quien traía sólo una silla para sí mismo era meramente un *shléper* (alguien que se gana la vida llevando cosas), mientras que quien traía dos, una para sí y una para un amigo, era un *báal jésed* (una persona bondadosa) ⁽⁶⁾.

Hay numerosos ejemplos de pequeños actos de consideración que pueden traerle alegría a la gente. Además, aprendemos de Iosef que nunca podemos saber las consecuencias que tendrá un acto de bondad. El Alter de Slobodka zt"l dice que tampoco podemos saber la magnitud de la recompensa que recibimos por un pequeño acto de bondad. Él cuenta sobre la vez en que Yaakov quitó la piedra de la boca del pozo para que todos pudieran beber agua; este pequeño acto de bondad no parecería ser muy importante en comparación a las muchas mitzvot que hizo Yaakov en su vida. Sin embargo, es una fuente de gran mérito para el pueblo judío. Cada año recitamos una plegaria especial para la lluvia, *Tefilat Guéshem*. En esta plegaria mencionamos algunos de los grandes actos de los patriarcas, como cuando Yaakov venció al ángel de Esav. Sin embargo, también recordamos cuando Yaakov

quitó la piedra: "Él [Yaakov] dedicó su corazón e hizo rodar una roca [para retirarla] de un pozo de agua". Todo acto de bondad que es hecho de todo corazón tiene un valor incalculable.

Espero que todos podamos aprender de nuestros patriarcas y llegar a ser realmente bondadosos.

(1) Vaiéshev 40:7. (2) Vaiéshev 38:25. (3) Baba Metzía 58b. (4) Kaplan, *Major Impact*, p.53. (5) Esto está muy relacionado a la mitzvá de *priká* (bajar de un animal su pesada carga) y pese a que puede que no constituya el cumplimiento técnico de la mitzvá, ciertamente refleja el cumplimiento del espíritu de la misma, que es preocuparse por el malestar de otro. (6) Oído del Rav Isasjar Frand Shlita.

NAHALOT

Nahala of The "Sede Chemed" Sunday the 24th of Kislev

Rav Chaim Chizkiyahu Medini, the Sdei Chemed (1832-1904). Rav Chaim was born in Yerushalayim and was married at 18. After his father was niftar two years later, Rav Chaim's cousins in Constantinople offered to support his learning if he moved there. After 13 years in Turkey, he took a position of Rav in the small city of Karasubazar in Crimea. He served there for 33 years, fighting the forces of the Kariites, before moving back to Yerushalayim. He lived there for 2 years, then moved to Chevron, where he was appointed Rav of the city in 1880. His Sdei Chemed is a monumental, universally-acclaimed 18-volume Talmudic and halachic encyclopedia.

Why Chanukah Gelt?

What's the deeper meaning of money and what does it have to do with Chanukah?

(By Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf)

The Code of Jewish Law states: "*It is forbidden to derive any benefit from the lights of the Chanukah menorah... even to use the light to count your money.*"

When Jewish law wants to illustrate the prohibition against deriving benefit from the menorah, the example used is "don't count your money." It could have said don't write a letter by the light of the menorah, or don't let your children do their homework by the light of the menorah. But of all things, it says, don't count your money by the light of the menorah.

And on top of all this, Chanukah is the only holiday that has a custom centered on money, the giving of Chanukah gelt.

What's the deeper meaning of money? And what is the relationship between Chanukah and money?

The History of Money

It is impossible for us to imagine a world without money, but once upon a time that's the way it was. In a moneyless world, how would you buy a shovel? Simple. You'd take your extra hammer, and find someone with an extra shovel who just happened to need a hammer. Swap your hammer for his shovel – and presto! Everyone's happy.

A tedious, inefficient and bothersome way to execute transactions? Now you know why money was invented...

There was a time when a U.S. dollar was backed by a dollar's worth of gold. But that is no longer the case. Today our money is a symbolic representation of value. The difference between money and actual goods is that one has intrinsic value, while the other has representative value. A lawnmower is valuable because it cuts grass. But a twenty-dollar bill, a personal check or a plastic credit card can't be used for too much. But you can transform it into almost anything you desire...

One person looks at a hundred-dollar bill and sees a CD player. Another sees a watch, and yet another sees a bicycle for their niece's birthday. Money, in and of itself has virtually no value, but its potential is almost limitless.

Money represents potential.

Jacob and the Jars

In the formative years of Jewish history, Jacob had a bully for a brother named Esau. Eventually the situation became so bad at home that Jacob had to run away from his brother, who wanted to kill him. Years later, Esau and his thugs finally caught up with Jacob. During the night before their fateful reunion, Jacob quietly moved his entire family across the river near where they had camped. Then, Jacob went back to the other side of the river.

The Midrash says two amazing things:

1) Jacob went back to the other side because he forgot some small jars. This teaches us that the righteous care more about their money than their own lives.

2) "Therefore," said G-d, "because you took the risk of going back for a few jars, I will repay your children with a small jar that will be found by the Maccabees."

Think about it. Jacob goes back to retrieve some small jars and somehow that act is so significant that

it enables the Maccabees, over 1,000 years later, to find the one remaining jar of oil that would be the source of the Chanukah miracle. Additionally, we learn from this episode how important money is to righteous people.

Jacob, the father of the 12 tribes, understood the power of potential.

Chanukah Money

On the surface, it was preposterous for the Jews to resist the Greeks. Hellenism was the wave of the future and militarily no one could stand in the Greeks' path, certainly not a band of renegade Jews.

But the Jewish people knew that they were an eternal people. A people whose message of values was destined to last forever and have a world-shaping impact. A tiny and ill-equipped people was prepared to take on the superpower of its day, all because they believed in the potential of Jewish destiny. They believed that no matter how dire things looked, there exists within the Jewish soul, the ability to vanquish the mightiest of foes and fulfill their own mission of being "A light unto the nations."

"The Egyptian, the Babylonian and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away. The Greek and the Roman followed and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was; exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains." - Mark Twain

When we light our menorahs, we must look closely at those tiny flames and contemplate the world of potential. Where others see darkness, we are called to see light. We need to look at our children, look beyond the problems and the quarrels, and see potential. We need to look at one another, beyond the faults and the foibles, and see potential.

We need to look at life, beyond all the pain and struggles, and see potential. We need to look at our people, beyond the divisions and the hatred, and see potential. In everything we encounter, we need to look beneath the surface, to discover the soul, and to realize our ultimate potential.

That's Chanukah gelt.