

B'S'D'  
INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON VAYESHEV - SHABBOS CHANUKA - 5761

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[http://www.torahweb.org/torah/1999/moadim/rhab\\_chanu.html](http://www.torahweb.org/torah/1999/moadim/rhab_chanu.html) [From last year]

RABBI YAAKOV HABER

Wisdom for a Purpose

One of the most frequently asked questions concerning Chanuka addresses the issue of exactly which miracle does the holiday celebrate. On the one hand, the "al hanisim" prayer, inserted into the 'Amida and Birkat Hamazon, focuses on the Chashmonaim's victory over the mighty Greek armies. In the G'mara Shabbat (21b), the miracle of the Menora is highlighted. Which is the main focal point of the holiday?

The Maharal (Chiddushei Aggadot, Shabbat 21b) writes that the primary celebration is over the military victory. However, one might have mistakenly assumed that this was not miraculous. Oftentimes, a small, indigenous band of guerrillas can oust a larger, more heavily armed army. The neis nigleh -- open miracle -- of the Menora shed light on the neis nistar -- hidden miracle -- of the victory over the Greeks and demonstrated that the Ribono Shel 'Olam brought about both miracles.

Perhaps we can suggest a further connection between the two miracles. Our answer will also attempt to develop a connection between Chanuka and the Parshiot Hashavua, VaYeishiv and Mikeitz, which largely deal with the life of Yosef, that we read and will read on Chanuka. The Midrash (B'raishit Rabba 2:5) comments that the Greeks told the Bnei Yisrael to "write on the horn of an ox (shor) that they have no share in the G-d of Israel." Rav C. Y. Goldwicht zt"l, the former Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh, elucidated this rather cryptic passage as follows. The Greeks symbolized the height of wisdom and culture. Their advances in philosophy, medicine, science, art as well as their strategies of war and conquest were world renowned. However, their great wisdom did not lead them to a moral, G-d fearing life. The greatest philosophers and scientists of the Greek Empire could and did lead lives filled with debauchery. Torah, by stark contrast, teaches that all wisdom must ultimately lead to a refinement of the person's personality both in terms of his middot (character traits), his system of thought, and his actions. "Tachlis Chochma T'shuva U'Ma'asim Tovim" -- "the goal of all wisdom is to lead to repentance and good deeds." Wisdom that does not lead to a transformation of the individual is worthless.

The Greeks attempted to force the Jewish people to adopt their attitude toward wisdom, one which divorces wisdom from moral actions. They turned to the Biblical "shor" -- Yosef Hatzaddik -- who is referred to as "B'chor Shor" (D'varim 33:17) by Moshe Rabbeinu. Yosef, in Egypt, became at different points in his life a financial planner (head of Potiphar's household), prison warden (when he was jailed), dream interpreter, economist, and chief statesman of the Egyptian Empire. "Look at Yosef," said the Greeks symbolically, "he engaged the other wisdoms of the world besides Torah and he was successful!" This is what is meant by "write on the horn of the shor." Of course, their true motivation was to undermine the Torah and its observance entirely -- "you have no share in the G-d of Israel." Indeed, the Greeks initially were greatly successful by attracting thousands of Hellenized Jews to

their ranks. The victory of the Chasmonaim, besides its immediate benefit of allowing the Jewish people to serve G-d without restrictions, also served to teach all future generations that even when Bnei Yisrael engage the world, and learn other wisdoms, this cannot and should not lead to an abrogation of the Torah's dictates. All wisdoms should be and must be utilized in the service of Torah. All must lead to a greater awareness of the Creator of the universe and ultimately of all wisdoms. If such study does not achieve these results and certainly if it serves to lead one astray from Torah observance and belief in G-d, then the study must be abandoned. Yosef, the master of all wisdoms, never forgot his allegiance to the G-d of Israel. He demonstrated this by reminding his father, Ya'akov Avinu, before their reunification, of the last Torah lesson they had shared together before their separation -- that of 'Egla 'Arufa (see Rashi, B'raishit 45:27). Even after engaging the world, he remained the same Yosef, always dedicated to his Creator and His Torah.

Perhaps we can suggest in the same vein, that the neis of the Menora highlighted this idea as well. As several Rishonim point out, the seven branches of the Menora represent the seven true wisdoms (e.g. see Rabbeinu B'chaye, Avot, end of Chapter 3) that were studied by humanity. All of the branches, i.e. all of the wisdoms, "must face the middle branch" (Shmot 25:37), which symbolizes Torah wisdom. All of intellectual endeavors must be utilized in the service of Torah and 'Avodat Hashem in order for them to be meaningful. Hashem thus placed his stamp of approval on the victory of the Chasmonaim, which represented the idea that wisdom must be utilized for Divine service and not merely to satisfy curiosity, by bringing about a miracle through the medium of the Menora which symbolizes these ideas.

The Halakhic parameters of the study of other wisdoms as well as the unquestionable primacy that must be granted to Torah study itself are clearly beyond the scope of this article (see for further reference Encyclopedia Talmudit, "Chachmot Chitzoniot"; "Sha'arei Talmud Torah", Chapter 7, by Rav Yehuda (Leo) Levi; etc.). But certainly, we glean from the dual nissim of Chanuka that all of human study and achievement must have a higher purpose.

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From: [yated-usa@yated.com](mailto:yated-usa@yated.com) Yated Neeman USA Columns IV  
Kortz un Sharf-Short and Sweet Chanuka Vertlach by SHAYA  
GOTTlieb

What is the big 'chiddush' about the miracle of Chanuka? In the Bais Hamikdosh there was no paucity of nissim!! (See Mishnayos Avos for the list of ten miracles in the Bais Hamikdosh.) The meforshim ask, "Why do the chachomim make such a big deal about the miracles that took place during Chanukah? We find in Medrash Tanchuma that Rav Chanina Segan Hakohanim related, "In the Bais Hamikdosh, the golden menorah was lit on Rosh Hashonoh and burned until the following year." In the times of Shimon Hatzadik, the ner hamaarovi also burned without being extinguished, to show that the Divine Presence rests amongst Klal Yisroel. Therefore, the miracle of Chanukah is not such a chiddush! This can be answered with another question by the Ibn Ezra. Why doesn't the possuk speak of the great miracle that Yocheved gave birth to Moshe Rabenu at the age of 130 years, while the birth of Yitzchak when Soroh was 99 was such a big deal? The Dubna Maggid replied, "in the times of Egypt, when the women experienced great miracles, it was no chiddush that a woman gave birth at the age of 130. But during Soroh's time it was a great chiddush. Thus we can answer the first question. When Klal Yisroel was living in serenity, obeying the word of Hashem, and the Kohen Gadol was pious, the Divine Presence rested on the Bais Hamikdosh, and miracles were a commonplace occurrence. However, in the times of the Yevanim there were wayward Jews who defiled the Bais Hamikdosh and the avodah was disturbed. Under such circumstances, the miracle of the oil was miraculous indeed. The miracle took place in the merit of the brave chashmonaim who were prepared to sacrifice their

<http://www.yu.edu/riets/torah/halacha/chanuka1.html>

MEHADRIN

by RABBI ELI BARUCH SHULMAN

i. The Gemara in Shabbos, 21b, contains the following passage: "Our Rabbis taught [in a Baraisa]: The [basic] mitzvah of Chanuka is [that one should light] one candle for each household; those who [wish to] embellish (mehadrin) [the mitzvah light] one candle for each person; and those who [wish to] especially embellish (mehadrin min hamehadrin) [the mitzvah do as follows:] Beis Shammai say that the first day [i.e. night] he lights eight [candles], and from there on he decreases [the number of candles by one each night], but Beis Hillel say that the first day (i.e. night) he lights one [candle], and from there on he increases [the number of candles by one each night]."

ii. A homeless person is not obligated to light Chanuka candles. Someone who does not own his own home, but lodges at the home of another person, is obligated; he can, however, discharge his obligation by becoming a partner in his landlord's candles by paying him some token amount for a share in them. The same applies to a traveller who is away from his own home. The Gemara (ibid, 23a) records the following teaching: "Rav Zeira said: Originally, [before I was married], when I was a lodger [during the time that I studied] at the Academy I would participate with a perutah [a small coin] with my landlord. After I married I said: Now I am certainly not required to do so, since [my wife] lights for me at home.

iii. From Rav Zeira's teaching it emerges that someone who is away from home and whose wife lights on his behalf at home has fulfilled his obligation. Now, as we have already seen, those who wish to embellish the mitzvah (mehadrin) are enjoined to have a separate candle for each and every member of the household. The question arises: If someone is away from home and his wife lights for him at home, but he wishes to fulfil the embellishment of the mitzvah of mehadrin, should he light a candle for himself at his place of lodging?

[We assume, for simplicity's sake, that the traveller is only interested in fulfilling mehadrin, but not mehadrin min hamehadrin; thus, at most, he would light a single candle for himself. Obviously, if he wished to fulfil mehadrin min hamehadrin too he would also have to light additional candles for each of the nights of Chanuka that have gone by.]

This question is raised by Resp. Terumas HaDeshen (101, cited by Beis Yosef, Orach Chaim 677), who quotes an anonymous "great man" to the effect that the traveller need not light a candle for himself; indeed, if he does so the candle that he lights does not have the status of a Chanuka candle at all (and he would not be allowed to recite the blessing on it). This authority, writes Terumas HaDeshen, reasoned that mehadrin must be governed by the guidelines set forth in the Gemara; since this form of mehadrin finds no precedent in the Gemara it is not considered a valid expression of mehadrin.

Terumas HaDeshen himself disagrees with this ruling and holds that the husband ought to light his own candle in order to fulfil mehadrin. Beis Yosef sides with the anonymous "great man"; Rema (ibid:3) holds with Terumas HaDesehn.

iv. The view of this anonymous authority and of Beis Yosef seems difficult. Were the husband at home presumably he and his wife, if they wish to fulfil mehadrin, would each light their own candle. Why shouldn't they do the same when the husband is away from home? On the contrary, the fact that the husband is away should all the more mandate that he light for himself; in any event, there certainly doesn't seem to be any less reason for him to light.

Furthermore, the rationale offered by this authority, that this type of mehadrin finds no precedent in the Gemara, is difficult as well. Surely the Gemara need not enumerate every possible situation in which the

members of the household may find themselves; it should suffice that the Gemara says that every member of the household lights.

v. Pri Megadim (Mishbetzos Zahav, ibid, 1) suggests that this authority exempted the husband from mehadrin not because he is away from home but because a husband and a wife are deemed a single entity (ishto ke'gufu) and are not reckoned as separate members of the household. According to this interpretation, the husband and wife would share a single candle even when they are both at home.

Although this is, indeed, the view of Mahrshal (Resp. 85), it does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation of the view of Terumas HaDeshen's "great man". This authority argued from the fact that this form of mehadrin is not mentioned in the Gemara; but a husband and wife are simply an instance of two members of the household and should not need a special mention in the Gemara.

vi. From the language of the Gemara ("one candle for each person") it is not clear whether mehadrin means that each member of the household should light a candle himself or, rather, that whoever is lighting (usually the head of the household) light as many candles as there are people in the house. For example: If there are five people in the household, does mehadrin require that each person light one candle or that the head of the household light five candles?

Rambam's position on this question is quite clear: "One who seeks to embellish the mitzvah lights as many candles as there people in the house" (Hil. Chanuka 4:1). This could not be more explicit; according to Rambam, one person lights all the candles of mehadrin.

However, Rema (Orach Chaim 671:2) writes that every member of the household should light on his/her own. The commentators discuss why Rema differs with Rambam on this point. (See Beis HaLevi, Kuntres Chanuka, 23a; Chidushei HaGriz, Hil. Chanuka; Aruch HaShulchan, ad loc.)

vii. Rambam's view seems somewhat difficult. If mehadrin means that every person lights his own candle, then one can easily understand why this is deemed an embellishment of the mitzvah; the very fact that the mitzvah is not delegated to one person but is performed by each and every person on his/her own is an embellishment of the fulfilment of the mitzvah. But if the head of the household lights all the candles anyway, as Rambam holds, then what embellishment is there in having the same number of candles as there are people in the house; why is this something desirable?

The obvious answer would seem to be that the element of embellishment here lies in the multitude of candles; there is a greater "pirsumei nisa" (publication of the miracle) in having many candles than in having only one. But then why stop at the number of people in the house? Why not simply light as many candles as one can afford? What reason is there to peg the number of candles at the number of people in the house?

viii. Apparently Rambam holds that while it is desirable to have many candles, it is necessary that all the candles have standing as Chanuka candles; otherwise the additional candles are mere decoration and have no halachic significance. In order to have standing as a Chanuka candle, a candle must serve to discharge a halachic obligation. The maximum number of candles that can be said to do this is the number of people in the household.

The logic of this limit is as follows: Each member of the household is by himself sufficient to obligate the house in one chanuka candle. Thus, if there are five persons living in the house, there are five obligations, each one for one chanuka candle. Of course, all these five obligations can be discharged with a single candle; indeed, that is the basic mitzvah: "One candle for each household". Still, the fact remains that the house carries five obligations. Therefore, up to five candles can have standing as chanuka candles; each candle then discharges one obligation. Any candles beyond that number are halachically meaningless.

The logic of Rambam's position is thus apparent. Mehadrin consists

of having as many candles as possible. But the maximum possible number of candles is the number of people in the household, since that is the maximum number of candles that have can have standing as Chanuka candles.

(The careful reader may object that the Gemara allows for more candles than there are people in the house, in the fulfilment of mehadrin min hamehadrin, in which one adds a candle for each night that has gone by. How do these additional candles have standing as Chanuka candles? The answer is that these candles publicize the fact that the miracle grew greater each night; thus, each additional candle serves as a "pirsumei nisa" (a publication of the miracle) in its own right. Since "pirsumei nisa" is the very essence of the obligation to light Chanuka candles these additional candles automatically have the status of Chanuka candles.)

ix. We are now in a position to understand the view of the "great man" of the Terumas HaDeshen. From our analysis of Rambam's view it emerges that the idea of mehadrin is not that each person should light on his own but, rather, that there should be as many candles as possible; a blaze of light, rather than a single gleam. Therefore, reasons this authority, mehadrin is only fulfilled when all of the candles are lit in a single home, forming one pageant. But if a traveller's wife lights for him at home and he lights again for himself at his place of lodging, each candle stands alone; this, in his view, is not mehadrin at all.

x. There remains one problem to be addressed. Granted that, according to the this view, the traveller cannot fulfil mehadrin by lighting a candle in his place of lodging; as we explained, since his candle and his wife's candle are in different houses they cannot form the single pageant that is mehadrin. But let the traveller fulfil mehadrin by having his wife light two candles: one for herself and one for him? After all, Rambam states clearly that all the candles of mehadrin are lit by one person; although this is usually the master of the house, there is no reason that it could not just as well be the mistress of the house or, for that matter, any member of the household.

Furthermore, from the fact that Terumas HaDeshen takes issue with this anonymous authority and rules that the traveller is obligated to light a candle of his own in order to fulfil mehadrin, it seems that he too accepts the premise that it is the traveller who must light the candle of mehadrin for himself; his wife cannot light an extra candle for him.

We must conclude that, in fact, both the Terumas HaDeshen and his "great man" do not follow Rambam; in their view, each of the candles of mehadrin should be lit by the member of the household whom it represents, not by the head of the household. Thus, this responsa of the Terumas HaDeshen is a source for Rema who, as we have seen, also differs with Rambam on this point and rules that, in order to fulfil mehadrin, each member of the household should light his own candle.

This does not contradict our premise that the Terumas HaDeshen's "great man" agrees with Rambam that the idea of mehadrin is to have as many candles as possible. This authority, however, holds that since, in the final analysis, each candle represents the obligation of a different member of the household, as we explained earlier, it is that person's obligation that is being discharged with that candle and he should light it himself, rather than delegate the lighting to the head of the household, under the general principle that a mitzvah should not be delegated, where possible (see Kidushin, 41a). Rambam apparently holds that the entire household's obligation is discharged collectively with all of the candles.

xi. Rema (671:7) rules that, for reasons unrelated to our discussion, it is preferable that each member of the household light in a different place in the house. In the light of the above, this ruling is consistent with the fact that Rema himself (677:3) holds with Terumas HaDeshen that a lodger should light a candle on his own in order to fulfil mehadrin; in this view, mehadrin can be fulfilled with candles that are distant from each other, or even in different houses. But, as we have seen, in the view of Beis Yosef and of Terumas HaDeshen's anonymous great man, all of the candles of mehadrin need to form a single spectacle and cannot be lit

in separate houses; it seems logical that, in this view, the candles of mehadrin should lit together.

Mehadrin - Rabbi Eli Baruch Shulman

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Vayeishev-Chanukah December 23, 2000

Sponsored by The Verschleisser family in honor of the birthday of father Shmuel Verschleisser

The Vogel family on the yearzeit of mother Miriam bat Yehuda Laib a"h (Mary Kalkstein)

Today's Learning: Yevamot 12:6-13:1 Orach Chaim 351:3-352:1 Daf Yomi (Bavli): Sotah 2

"When the Greeks entered the sanctuary, they defiled all of the oil that was within. When the House of Chashmonai overpowered [the Greeks], they inspected [the Bet Hamikdash] and found only one small flask of oil, which had been left with the seal of the Kohen Gadol. There was only enough oil in that flask to light [the menorah] for one night, but a miracle occurred and they lit from it for eight nights." (Shabbat 21b)

R' Avraham Yitzchak Kook z"l (1865-1935; first Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Eretz Yisrael) describes the inner meaning of the Chanukah story as follows:

Regarding the relationship between Israel and the nations of the world, their wise men, their customs and their etiquette - our Sages have already commented on the seeming contradiction between the rebuke (Yechezkel 11:12), "[F]or you acted according to the laws of the nations who are around you," and the rebuke (Yechezkel 5:7), "[Y]ou did not act according to the laws of the nations around you." Our Sages (Sanhedrin 39b) explain G-d's complaint to be: "You did not act like the civilized nations around you. Rather, you acted like the uncivilized nations around you."

However, writes R' Kook, one who follows even the civilized ways of the nations must take care not to absorb that which is uncivilized. And, while one may sometimes adopt superficially that from among the nations which is good, one's inner spirit must be strong and faithful only to Hashem, the G-d of Israel, and His Torah. When the spirit of Greece, the symbol of that which is best among the nations, enters the deepest sanctuaries of Israel's holiness and attempts to change Israel's basic character, then all of the oils in the sanctuary become defiled. Not only the Jewish ideas and beliefs that came into contact with Greek culture became contaminated when the Greeks entered the sanctuary, but all good deeds and teachings absorbed a ta'am lifgam / "bad taste" [a Talmudic expression borrowed from the laws of kashrut].

This, continues R' Kook, is the most horrible sorrow that could affect the soul of the Jewish nation. However, it is Hashem's design that even if one's basic Torah values have been contaminated by contact with the Greeks, nevertheless, just as the kohanim are set aside to teach Hashem's laws to the nation, so every person has a little bit of "kohanim" in himself. (Thus it is written in Shemot 19:6, "You shall be to Me a kingdom of kohanim.") Very deep in the heart is the light of the Jewish soul -- there is hidden the tie that connects the Jew to his fundamental faith in Hashem, the G-d of Israel. This hidden aspect is reminiscent of the Kohen Gadol's entrance into the hidden Holy of Holies on that holy day [Yom Kippur]. Thus, that little flask of oil bearing the seal of the Kohen Gadol the Greeks could not defile; they could not uproot the deeply hidden ties between the Jewish people and Hashem.

Of course, one little flask of oil cannot give much light. However, the wonder of the hidden light within the Jew is that Hashem fans the little spark which the oil fuels until it burns out all of the foreign ways. There was only enough oil in that flask to light the menorah for one night, but a miracle occurred and they lit from it for many nights. (Ain

Ayah)

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<http://www.jpost.com/Editions/2000/12/21/Columns/Columns.17774.html>

Thursday, December 21 2000 11:06 24 Kislev 5761

SHABBAT SHALOM: Brotherly hate

BY RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

(December 21) Parshat Vayeshev Genesis 37:1 - 40:23

Maimonides, the great 12th-century halachic codifier and philosopher, concludes his Laws of Hanukka in a rather stirring but strange fashion.

He begins by expressing the significance of the Hanukka lights: "The commandment of the Hanukka lights is extremely beloved; every individual must take great care [in its performance] in order to publicize the miracle and to intensify our praise and gratitude to G-d for the miracles He has wrought for us.

"Even if he has nothing to eat except from charity, he must borrow or sell a garment to purchase oil and candles for the kindling [of the lights]... Even if he has but one coin, he must first purchase oil to kindle the Hanukka lights which take precedence over the purchase of wine for the sanctification of the Sabbath... it is more important to first perform the Hanukka precept because it contains the remembrance of the miracle..." (Chapter 4, Laws 11, 13)

However, he concludes the laws of Hanukka with a resounding declaration concerning the command to kindle Sabbath candles: "If a person must choose between [purchasing] candles for the Sabbath or candles for Hanukka [when they come out on the same evening, as this evening], or between Sabbath candles or Kiddush wine, Sabbath candles take precedence because of the household peace...

"Great is peace because the Torah was given only in order to make peace in the world, as it is written: 'Its paths are paths of pleasantness, and all its roads lead to peace.'" (Chapter 4, Law 13)

Why conclude the laws of Hanukka with this particular concept? Maimonides is hinting at the deep, dark secret of Hanukka, a secret which contains the seeds of the eventual collapse of the Maccabean revolution with the fall of the Second Commonwealth, barely 200 years after the Hasmonean rededication of the Holy Temple.

A careful reading of the Apocryphal Books of the Maccabees and the history of Josephus reveals that the initial stage of the Hasmonean revolt was not against the Greek-Syrians - who were renowned for their tolerance - but against the assimilating Hellenistic Judean ruling class, against the High Priest Menelaus (he who wanted to transform Jerusalem into a Greek city-state and sponsor Olympic games dedicated to one of the gods of Mount Olympus).

The masses of the religionists rebelled against the autocratic and elitist assimilationist-Hellenists, and when the Hasmoneans appeared to be winning, the High Priest called in the Greek-Syrians for help.

Mirabile dictu, wondrous to record, the Maccabees won nevertheless: "The many in the hands of the few, the mighty in the hands of the weak, the wicked in the hands of the toilers in Thy Torah."

BUT WHEN our Sages eternalized the victory, they opted for recording the struggle only from the time they fought against the Greek-Syrians - in order to play down the civil-war aspect of the revolt. They also made the symbol of the victory not weapons of war, but rather the menorah of lights - a religious symbol of peace and unity.

Light has always symbolized peace (as in the case of the Sabbath lights for the sake of shalom bayit (familial wholeness), and the seven arms of the menorah are linked to the Hebrew word for seven, which means fullness and completion, wholeness and harmony.

Our Sages were ashamed of the fact that the Maccabees had not convinced the ruling class with inspiration, but had rather coerced them

with arms. Unlike Ezra, who in an earlier generation had publicly read from the Book of Deuteronomy on Rosh Hashana, thereby inspiring even the most errant Israelites to banish their gentile wives.

The fratricidal hatred continued into the generations of the Hasmoneans themselves, with Hyrcanus fighting against Aristobulus, leading to the surrender of Jewish national sovereignty to Rome.

Fascinatingly enough, the brotherly strife between Joseph and his siblings (in this week's Torah portion of Vayeshev) foreshadows the causeless, fratricidal hatred which continues to threaten our existence. Only when Joseph is able to forgo his dreams of economic and cosmic domination and accept the fact that he must use his gifts to help Judah convey the tradition and disseminate ethical monotheism, can peace descend upon the great-grandchildren of Abraham.

In effect, the self-righteous brothers must learn that Joseph's heterodox dreams of Egypt, agriculture and universalism do not justify crimes against his person, and Joseph must learn to harness his gifts of charm and culture, not to the arrogance of self-aggrandizement but to the service of G-d and Torah.

Through the mode of celebrating Hanukka, the Torah teaches us the tragic folly of brotherly strife, which can only lead to destruction.

Shabbat Shalom

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From: Torah and Science[SMTP:torahandscience@mail.jct.ac.il]  
To: pr@mail.jct.ac.il Subject: Dvar Torah Umada - Chanukah  
CHANUKA HELLENISM AND JUDAISM

RABBI S.R. HIRSCH

The twenty-fifth day of Kislev ushers in the festival of the Maccabees. Brilliant lights radiating from the windows of Jewish homes at nightfall herald its arrival. If at this time of the year you were to stroll through the streets of towns and villages where Jews live, you could readily tell in which houses there still glimmers the spark of the old Jewish spirit of the Maccabees. It justifies the hope that once again the Jewish light will penetrate the heathen darkness and that these houses will continue to radiate light until the ancient saying will be fulfilled: "And all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings" (Exodus 10:23).

Chanuka represents the clash of two doctrines, two views, two civilizations, capable of molding opinions, training and educating those who until this very day compete for the mastery of the world. Hellenism and Judaism: These are the two forces whose effect upon the nations mark the historical development of mankind, and which surfaced in Judea for the first time in the days of Matityahu. Hellenism and Judaism: when examined in depth they are the two leading forces which today again are struggling for mastery in the Jewish world.

There is an old prophecy, to our knowledge the oldest prophetic vision: "G-d will open the mind of Yefet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" (Genesis 9:27). If we grasp the meaning of the prophecy, it proclaims nothing less than that G-d will give Yefet mastery over the minds of men (Yefet is hiph'il of "Ptah") but only Shem will build homes where G-d's glory will find its dwelling place on earth. Yefet blossomed into the Greeks, the Hellenistic nations, whose mastery of all that is gracious and beautiful conquered the hearts of men. ["Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all ye know on earth and all ye need to know" (John Keats, "Ode to a Grecian Urn") - Y.L.] Shem blossomed into Ever, the Hebrew nation which erected homes for G-d, and became the foundation of G-d's holy Law, of right and of love. Both were charged to cover the animal nakedness of mankind, and were called upon to elevate man to rise to the divine. B

The history of the world to this day is a fulfillment of these prophetic words. On the stage of history only two elements have appeared to dominate man's intellectual development and actions: Hellenism - the blossoming of the spirit of Yefet which found expression in Greek

culture, and Judaism - the spirit of G-dly teaching lived and fulfilled by Israel.

This ancient proclamation, however, predicts the blessing, the victory and the fulfillment of the perception of G-d as proclaimed by Shem. The domination of minds by Yefetic culture would only be the groundwork for the houses of men into which the G-d portrayed by Shem would move and find His place on earth. At first minds would be receptive to Yefetic culture and then Shem's G-d will enter into the tents of man. While all others are subdued by Yefet, Shem will overcome Yefet.

The pre-hellenic culture of non-Jewish nations taught man primarily to regard the phenomena of the world as manifestations of supernatural forces, whose might and strength is symbolized by images, before whom man is expected to kneel in fear and trembling, and bring sacrifices to soothe their anger and to court their favor. Before this overwhelming might, man himself and a multitude of other creatures are reduced to insignificance and only selected priests and kings remain upright, using these symbols as the backbone of their authority.

The Hellenistic mind directs the gaze of man not to the outside world but to himself. It makes him conscious of himself, shows him, in this inner self, G-d's perfection and beauty which all can achieve, pictures mankind's perfect human ideal as the highest in the realm of all creatures, and makes even his gods the product of the achievement of the greatness of man. B

Hellenistic culture knows how to arouse the desire for ennoblement of man's character and life. But its measure for this ennoblement is only sensual beauty based on the symmetry of harmony and beauty. This search for self-ennoblement is motivated solely by a delight in one's own personality, by satisfaction with its improvement and by the pleasure derived from the awareness of a nobler existence. It limits itself to a superficial polishing and smoothing of the raw surface of one's personality and life-style. Under the polished surface of a refined culture remains hidden the desire for pleasure and material gratification.

Hellenistic culture makes man conscious of his sublime worth, his equal rights, his nobility, and his inalienable claim to equality of birth. < Hellenistic culture is a protector of rights and freedom. These concepts, however, are applied only to those who are educated; they are subject to an arrogance which claims that the rights of human beings begin only after they have attained a certain level of culture. Therefore, sensitivity and concern regarding one's own self, and those close to oneself, are paired with an enormous callousness, with an utmost cruelty, which assumes that the inferior "uneducated masses" lack genuine feelings of honor or a sensitivity for freedom or human rights. Attica, so vainglorious about its rights and liberties, saw no contradiction in the fact that three-quarters of its inhabitants lived in servitude and slavery. Thus, history teaches us that the "educated" were able to tolerate public tyranny and accept the rule of force, provided it was applied only to the lower "uneducated" masses and left the rights of the "cultured" untouched. B

The spirit of Shem as disseminated by the Jewish people has made its impact upon mankind as no other force before it. Though it is only a tiny spark, it has wrought a mighty change in man's thinking and feeling. Ever since Shem proclaimed the name of the "Only One" in the world, darkened minds have become enlightened, cobwebs of error and illusion have begun to disappear, and a true understanding of man's task in this world has become evident everywhere.

Shem's revelation of this new Name deepened the awareness of the world having been fashioned by a single Almighty Creator. It became clear to thinking minds that all events were the product of a specific thought. By probing further they came closer to the Master's ideas as revealed by His works, and sensed in the smallest as well as in the greatest creation a logical wisdom and order. Only the torch lit by the spirit of Shem made possible the miracle of human insight which modern science celebrates. < Every new truth discovered by an atheistic scientific

study is a tribute to the "G-d of Shem". Every scientific inquiry must ultimately acknowledge the Creator. (Ed. Note: see the R.S.R. Hirsch Commentary to Genesis 2:19)

Ever since Shem proclaimed the name of the "One G-d" to all the nations did it become possible to consider all mankind as one community, one family, moved by a common spirit originating from a common source, working to reach a noble goal and developing toward a great future.

Only since then could the attempt be made to trace the unity of the human spirit among the numerous languages of the world; only since then could one begin to comprehend a common purpose in the diverse events of world history. Only since then as one advanced from the study of tribal to national history and then to the history of mankind - could one discern in history the plans and thoughts traced by the providential Hand of the "One G-d".

The future prospects of ruthless violence and tyranny were obliterated by Shem's proclamation to mankind of the name of his "One G-d". < In the anguished cry of every oppressed human being the voice of the "One G-d" is heard, Whose call of "They are My children" counters the imminent attack of selfish brutality and so-called civilization. B

Ever since Shem implanted the name of his "One G-d" in the minds and hearts of mankind has there blossomed a love which reaches out to the poor and the sick, to the unhappy and the destitute. It finds fulfillment in feeding the hungry, in clothing the naked, in helping the unfortunate, in comforting the suffering: < Be merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful.

However, only a fraction of Shem's teaching was successfully conveyed to mankind. Even this portion was garbled, confused and weakened to suit the Yefetic whim, leaving the enlightenment of mankind as an unfinished goal. Only the theory was revealed to mankind while the "Law" was omitted; the one factor was withheld on which the redemption and the harmonious organization of all mankind is based. (Ed. note: This is a reference to the Church and its influence.) Theory, even in its purest, un mutilated form, only enlightens the mind; it is unable to redeem the "tents" of earthly existence and to achieve the perfection and purity of life itself. G-d's glory is not confined to men's minds and hearts alone, but yearns for the dwellings of mankind which are erected in the Divine spirit "It will dwell in the tents of Shem." It is the Law alone which teaches mankind how to prepare its dwellings to welcome the splendor of G-d.

Only a fragment of the concept of G-d as promulgated by Shem was accepted [by the Church] and His Law was misjudged, cast away and scorned as an inferior ideology. It abandoned the reality of earthly existence, and emphasized the "next world". Thus, the doctrine of Shem was coupled with a delusion, against which century after century the legitimacy of physical existence as represented by Yefetic culture has had to struggle.

Only when the teaching of the G-d of Shem in unabridged and unadulterated form becomes the property of all mankind will the shadows of error and delusion disappear and truth illuminate the minds and hearts of mankind. Only when the Law of Shem's G-d builds the dwelling of man, when His word enlightens the mind and warms the soul; when His Law becomes the yardstick for the fulfillment and progress of human existence on earth, only then will bliss and freedom, joy and pleasure enter the souls and the homes of mortals on earth.

Selected from Rabbi S. R. Hirsch, Collected Writings II, pp. 199-206, with minor modifications, based on the German original.

Published by: < Department of Public Relations Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev 21 Havaad Haleumi St., POB16031 Jerusalem, 91160 ISRAEL

Senior Editor: < Prof. Leo Levi, Rector Emeritus, Jerusalem College of Technology - Machon Lev Junior Editor: < Avi Polak Translation: << Eliyahu Weinberg <http://www.jct.ac.il> If you would like to support the

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From: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND ryfrand@torah.org  
"RavFrand" List - Rabbi Frand on Parshas VaYeishev -  
These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi  
Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion:  
Tape # 262, Yichud And The Open Door Policy. Good Shabbos!  
Dedicated This Year Le'eluy Nishmas Chaya Bracha Bas R.  
Yissocher Dov - In memory of Mrs. Adele Frand

Reb Elchanon Sees Blood Libels Foreshadowed In This Week's  
Parsha

One of the overriding themes of the book of Genesis is that the actions of the forefathers foreshadow events that will happen to their descendants (ma'aseh avos siman l'banim). The blueprint of Jewish history is contained in this first book of the Chumash. This week's parsha is no exception to that rule.

Last week's parsha (recounting Yaakov's meeting with Eisav) represented the paradigm of how Jews must deal with the non-Jewish world. This week's parsha foreshadows the ways Jews act among themselves. Unfortunately, parshas Vayeshev has become the blueprint for intra-Jewish relations.

Unfortunately, the undeserved hatred, jealousy and divisiveness that existed between Yosef and his brothers set the tone for thousands of years of Jewish history. Of course, we need to preface our remarks with the disclaimer that when we speak about the actions of the patriarchs and the founders of the Tribes, we cannot superimpose our petty jealousies and sibling rivalries on these holy individuals. But nevertheless, if one wonders why the Jewish people have always been so argumentative, why the Second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed because of undeserved hatred, one has to only look at this week's parsha to see from where the die was cast.

Rav Elchanon Wasserman (1875-1941) carried this idea one step further with the following very scary thought.

For thousands of years, Jews have always suffered from blood libels. Many thousands of Jewish lives have been lost because of them. As recently as the 1930s there was also a blood libel in the state of New York.

A blood libel was the absolutely ludicrous charge that somehow or another the Jews needed the blood of Christian children as an ingredient in the baking of Matzah for Passover. Anyone who knows the slightest thing about Judaism knows that the Torah is replete with exhortations warning us against the consumption of blood. We must salt our meat to remove the blood. We must salt our chicken to remove the blood. We are not allowed to drink any kind of blood. It is absolutely incongruous that the Jews would have anything to do with blood, let alone human blood. So how and why did this falsehood get started?

Rav Elchanon says that the history of blood libels all started with the fact that Yosef's brothers slaughtered a goat, and dipped his coat in its blood -- in order to deceive their father into thinking that a wild animal killed Yosef. This is the Ma'aseh Avos Siman L'Banim. The foreshadowing of patriarchal actions can work in a positive fashion, and it can also work in a negative fashion.

We are still suffering from the ramifications of the argument between Yosef and his brothers, up until this very day.

There Is A Time For Compromise and A Time For Remaining Firm

When we learn about the incident of Yosef and his brothers, how should we judge the actions of Yehudah who, in effect, saved Yosef's life? ("What good is it that we should kill our brother? Let us sell him to the Ishmaelites." [Bereshis 37:26-27]) Was Yehudah's act laudable or

was it an act to be condemned? Was it something to commend or something to condemn?

The Talmud answers this question [Sanhedrin 6b]. "Rabbi Meir teaches that any person who praises the compromise of Yehudah is committing blasphemy." This was a terrible act of Yehudah's to have offered such a compromise.

The Medrash teaches a similar idea in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: "Whoever begins to do a mitzvah but does not complete the mitzvah, will in the end bury his wife and children... as we see from what happened to Yehudah." Yehudah should have carried Yosef on his shoulders back to their father. Since Yehudah only went part of the way, he suffered a 'measure for measure punishment' by having to bury his own children. It was a measure for measure punishment in the sense that since he only did half a job in the mitzvah that he fulfilled, Heaven only allowed him half the job of raising his children -- and only allowed him half the lifetime that he would have wished to spend with his wife.

These ancient sources notwithstanding, we need to understand -- why was Yehudah's action so terrible? Doesn't the Talmud praise the institution of compromise? [Sanhedrin 6b] The first thing a judge is supposed to ask the litigants is "will you accept compromise?" Yehudah advanced a compromise here. What was his great sin?

Rav Avigdor Nevintzal provides the following explanation. There are many occasions when compromise is appropriate, but there can be no compromising the truth. When the brothers said, "Yosef is deserving of death", they issued that ruling based on the conclusion that Yosef had the law of a 'pursuer' (rodef) who according to Jewish law is deserving of death. If their conclusion was correct, then Yosef should have been killed. If their conclusion was wrong, then Yosef did not deserve to be sold as a slave either. The truth was either with the brothers or with Yosef -- there was no room for compromise. From Yosef's perspective a compromise that sold him into slavery was a travesty of justice. He claimed that he was innocent, a Tzaddik!

Yehudah had the opportunity to do what was right. Unfortunately, he did not seize the moment.

We see this concept still more dramatically from the Medrash in the Book of Exodus, Shemos. The Medrash says that when the brothers went to try to comfort their father, he refused to accept consolation. The brothers then blamed Yehudah: "Had Yehudah asked us not to sell Yosef, we would not have sold him, just like we listened to him when he asked us not to kill Yosef."

Yehudah was the future monarch. Monarchs are supposed to lead, not follow. If Yehudah believed that the brothers were correct in their analysis of Yosef's character, then he should have supported their position. If he believed that they were wrong, then there was no moral basis for compromise. Yehudah was to be the King. He had an obligation to lead. The brothers themselves testified (in the Medrash) to the fact that they would have listened to him.

Yehudah compromised in a situation where he had the opportunity and the ability and the duty to do what was right. For this he was condemned.

There are certain occasions in life when one cannot compromise. In situations where we are supposed to compromise, the evil inclination comes and whispers in our ear "Do not compromise. Stick to your guns." On the other hand, in situations where we are supposed to be firm and stand up for principles, the evil inclination comes and whispers "compromise."

The Chofetz Chaim (1838-1933) once organized a campaign against a group of merchants in Radin that began to keep their stores open on Shabbos. He spoke to them privately and he spoke publicly about the issue. Finally, the merchants agreed to keep their stores closed on Shabbos. They only had one request from the Chofetz Chaim. "We expected to be open for Shabbos and on that basis greatly increased our inventory of perishable items. If we close for the next two Saturdays we

will take a severe loss. Just let us stay open these two weeks to unload our extra merchandise, and then we will stay closed for Shabbos after that."

The Chofetz Chaim responded, "I am sorry gentlemen, but it is not my Shabbos." In other words, I am not the owner of the institution of Shabbos that I have the license to grant you compromise on this issue. Shabbos belongs to G-d. There is no way that I am justified in compromising.

Here too, it was Yosef's life at stake. Yehudah had no right to make compromises with it.

There are times in life when compromise is necessary and there are times when it is unacceptable. Our challenge is to figure out when we must compromise and when we must stand our ground.

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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] \* TORAH WEEKLY \*  
Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Parshat Vayeshev -- Shabbat Chanukah

#### MASTER OF WAR

Yosef said to the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers: "If only you would think of me... and mention me to Pharaoh, then you would get me out of this building." (40:14)

Something very strange happens on the twenty-fifth of the Hebrew month of Kislev. Two completely different festivals are observed. One festival celebrates a military triumph by a small group of brave partisans who managed to overcome vastly superior forces and restore Jewish statehood to Israel. The other commemorates a supernatural victory against powers of darkness that wished to adulterate the Jewish People and their Torah.

Oddly, both these festivals have the same name. They are both called Chanukah.

The secular version of the Chanukah story makes Mattityahu and Yehuda Maccabee sound like characters out of a Cyborg movie. True, there's an eight-branched candelabra somewhere at the back of the set, but Chanukah is really a nationalistic shoot-em-up where the good guys win and the bad guys lose and G-d got written out of the plot at the first script meeting.

The other version focuses on the supernatural events that surround Chanukah: The miracle of the oil lasting eight days; of a small minority who manage to hold on to their Judaism against the blandishments of materialism and hedonism. True, there's a military victory somewhere in there, but it's a miraculous victory against impossible odds, a victory which is no more than the revelation of G-d's providential Hand.

There's a fine line between faith and folly. There's an equally fine line between thinking that the Jewish People win wars because we have the best tanks, planes and training and thinking that we have Divine help.

In 1967, the Six Day War opened with a blistering attack on the Egyptian airfields by the Israeli airforce. Israel managed to knock out 90% of the Egyptian planes while they were still on the ground. Now, 90% is an interesting statistic -- because it can happen. Warplanes under fire-bombing a tiny ground target can achieve 40% -- maybe 50%. But 90% doesn't happen.

When the Six Day War ended, you couldn't buy a pair of tefilin in

the whole of Eretz Yisrael. There were appeals in the United States for anyone who had a spare pair to send them. The Jewish People realized that G-d had given them a miraculous victory against five Arab armies on four fronts, and the upswell in Jewish observance was remarkable. Equally remarkable -- and predictable -- was the short-lived nature of this awakening. Nothing much had changed in 3,000 years, and just as the Jewish People were capable of cavorting around a golden calf a few weeks after they had witnessed the splitting of the sea and all the miracles in Egypt, so the Jewish People very soon forgot Who it is who fights our wars. Soon they were bragging about the "invincible" Israeli army.

So, as it were, to give us a little reminder of Who's really running things, some four years later the Arabs attack again. This time they manage to make deep inroads into the heartland of the country. But the Arabs make a fatal mistake. They decide to attack on Yom Kippur when everyone is weak from fasting.

They forget two things: One strategic and the other supernatural. Strategically, the most difficult thing about starting a war without a large standing army is to mobilize. The major problem is to find everyone. However, on Yom Kippur -- you can find everyone. Because almost everyone is in shul (synagogue). So all you have to do is to drive from shul to shul and call out the names at the back. Also, the roads are empty so you can mobilize your army in about half the time it would normally take. Secondly, the Arabs forgot to read their history books. If they'd paid closer attention, they'd have realized that traditionally, the Jewish People always used to fast before going into battle, to purify themselves before G-d. And even in the secular State of Israel, anyone with the remotest connection to his Judaism is davening his heart out in shul. Not a good day to attack, really...

With the close of the Yom Kippur war, the same thing happens: A realization of a the miracle, followed by a return to "with my own power and the strength of my own hand" kind-of-thinking.

So next time, G-d, as it were, says: "So you think it's your army that's winning these wars? I'll tell you what. Next time, your army will sit on its benches, and I will send the largest and most powerful Navy in the world steaming half way around the world and your army and your navy and your airforce will do absolutely zero." That's exactly what happened in the Gulf War.

I remember sitting in a taxi at the time, and this totally secular taxi driver was quoting me a verse, I think it was from the Prophet Yeshayah, all about how G-d will tell us to go into a sealed room for a little while until the danger passes...

"Who is like Your people Israel?! One nation in the land!" Even the taxi drivers quote you the prophets!

I also remember the day the Gulf War ended. It just happened to be Shushan Purim. I went into my own sealed room, ripped the plastic off the window and threw the window open wide to let in the sweet air of freedom wafting in the holy city of Jerusalem. If I live to a hundred and twenty, I don't think I'll ever have a Purim like that one.

And now, that same holy air is filled with the sounds of jihad, the smell of tear gas and the sound of distant, and not-so-distant, gunfire. Isn't it clear the message that Hashem is sending us?

"If only you would think of me...and mention me to Pharaoh, then you would get me out of this building." In this week's Torah portion, Yosef asks the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers twice to intercede on his behalf to Pharaoh. By his lack of trust in Hashem --by asking the Chamberlain twice -- Yosef languished two further years in jail.

Rabbi Chaim of Brisk once asked Rabbi Shimon Shkop how long Yosef would have been kept in prison if he had only asked the Chamberlain once to help secure his release. Reb Shimon replied that if Yosef had asked only once, he would have spent only one year in prison.

Reb Chaim disagreed. "He would not have had to spend any more time in prison at all. To try to secure his release by asking once is

considered to be hishtadlut -- the human effort that Hashem expects of each of us. To ask twice showed a lack of trust in Hashem. So it would have been two years or nothing."

The Jewish People are faced yet again with the threat of war. Again there are those who rise, as they do in every generation, wishing to annihilate us. We must fight. And we must fight with everything we have. With our bodies. With our minds. But mostly we must fight that little voice inside us that tells us that we ourselves are doing all this. The greatest fight is the fight to remember that whatever we do -- there is only one Master of War.

HAFTARAH: Zechariah 2:14 - 4:7

#### AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHT DAYS

Ma'oz Tzur, sung by Jews worldwide after lighting the menorah, relates the four exiles to which the Jewish people have been subjected -- Egypt, Babylon, Medio-Persia, and Greece -- and of their joyous endings. At the Pesach Seder we do not sing about Chanukah and on Purim we don't mention Egypt. Why is Chanukah the time to learn about Jewish history?

In the haftara for the Shabbat of Chanukah, the Prophet Zechariah's vision flickers between the attempt to rebuild the Second Temple, and the euphoria that will accompany the rebuilding of the third Temple in the future. Then Zechariah sees a seven-branched menorah, above which is a large oil container with seven pipes feeding olive oil to each of the seven lamps of the menorah. Zechariah is told that this menorah is a message to Zerubavel, who was instrumental in rebuilding the second Temple: "Not by strength or by might," says G-d, "but with my spirit."

Consider the shape of the menorah, seven lights branching forth from a central stem. The word menorah can also be read as "m'nurah" -- from the fire. The menorah shows how light spreads forth from the "fire" of Torah and illuminates the world. If we learn to trace everything back to its Divine source, then G-d will channel His benevolence upon us from above, just as Zechariah's menorah was fueled from above. On Chanukah we sing about all the exiles, for all those exiles could end only when the Jewish People learned the lesson of the menorah. And when we take this message to heart, then our final exile too will end, and the crown will be returned to its former glory.

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From:RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY rmk@torah.org Subject: Drasha - Parshas Vayeishev -- Dad Silence

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Subject: Drasha - Parshas Vayeishev -- Dad Silence Volume 7 Issue 9

The struggle between Yosef and his brothers, their internal and external conflicts, are not easily or summarily dismissible as classic sibling rivalry. There was much more going on than who gets privileges, who gets the window seat, and whom does Dad favor. Their arguments were fundamental differences in the view of leadership for their family at present and their descendants in the future. And so, when Joseph dreams of stalks and stars bowing down to him, the brothers were naturally upset. Here he is, the second to youngest in the family, fantasizing about leadership over his elder siblings. In addition, when he related the dreams to his brothers in front of his father, the Torah tells us that, "his father scolded him, and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamt? Are we to come -- I and your mother and your brothers -- to bow down to you to the ground?" (Genesis 37:10) But the Torah tells us that despite the open rebuke, Yaakov knew that there was some method to the marvel. The Torah ends the dialogue with the words, "his brothers were jealous of him, but his father watched the matter" (ibid v. 11)

Rashi, along with a variety of Midrashim, interpret the word shomar, watched. Rashi says that Yaakov awaited and looked forward to the time when this would come to pass, while others interpret that Yaakov went so far as to write down the time and the place that Yosef would emerge.

The word shomar that describes Yaakov's halting silence seems peculiar. If the Torah means to say he waited in anticipation for it to occur, it could have written, Land Jacob anticipated. The word watched connotes that Yaakov knew a secret

truth that he was not to share. What is the point in telling us that? Is there a point in discussing, a awareness, or feeling that was not acted upon? Perhaps the Torah tells us something else in describing Yaakov's prescience, while withholding his belief, as well.

About thirty years ago, young Mark Honigsfeld accompanied his parents on a trip to Israel. Mark, was excited about the wonders and beauty of the Holy Land, was invigorated and enthused about every site they visited, from Masada to the various museums. But one visit to Yeshivas Har Etzion in the Old City of Jerusalem left an eternal impact on his soul and a gaping hole in his heart.

At Yeshivas Har Etzion there is a Holocaust museum with an exhibit memorializing the six million. Many of the tiniest shtetls have memorial plaque, the only Jewish commemoration of their mortal existence and the declaration that these towns, still with muddy roads and ramshackle huts, were once beacons of spirituality and Torah life. Mark's father, Paul Honigsfeld found a plaque memorializing his native city Belgitz, a small community in Poland, and asked the curator if he, like many of the survivors who visited the museum, could add the names of family members who had once lived in that city and who were killed by the Nazis with Mark watching in the background, his father sat with the curator and gave names. "Please list my mother Sarah D'vorah. I want you to memorialize my father Ephraim Fishel, and my sisters and brothers."

Suddenly he beckoned Mark to leave the room. A bit perturbed, Mark sauntered from the dark memorial room, his mind wondering why in the world he was asked to leave. Suddenly, he heard his father begin to cry. Sitting outside the room, he cried too, and then he heard his father say a name a very close relative he had never known existed.

"Add my son, Ephraim Fishel ben Chaim Peretz. Please make a plaque for him too."

Mark could not imagine who Efraim Fishel was. Mark had two older sisters, and he could not imagine that a child was born between his sisters and himself. When his father left the museum, Mark gently confronted him. "Dad, did I have a brother? Was his name Efraim Fishel? When? Where? Why did you never tell me?"

Reluctantly, his father told him that he was married before the war and had a wife and son who were killed by the Nazis. Then he added, "You know Mark, not everything that happens does a child have to know immediately. Sometimes a father has to watch what he tells his children before he determines the impact it will have on them. Forgive me for never telling you that you had a brother, but there are just some things a father must guard until the right time"

Perhaps, in relating those few words, defining Yaakov's reaction, or perhaps inaction, the Torah is telling us a lesson in parenting. Yaakov felt that one day in the future it would surely happen. Yosef's brothers would bow to him. Yet he never revealed his premonitions. Instead, he watched them. He may have thought that there was true substance to Yosef's illusions. But he held back, because outspoken notions can raise sore emotions, while words we withhold can, like silence, be gold. Good Shabbos 1 2000 Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

Dedicated in memory of Yitzchak Chaim Ben Yosef Leslie Zukor ob"m By Zev & Aviva Golombeck and family

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From: RABBI YISROEL CINER ciner@torah.org Parsha-Insights - Parshas Vayeishev

This week's parsha, Vayeishev, contains many fascinating episodes. Figuring prominently amongst them is the sale of Yosef {Joseph} and the many subsequent hardships he endured.

Yosef was first thrown into a pit filled with snakes and scorpions. From there he was sold to Yishmaelites, who in turn sold him to Midianites, who sold him down to Mitzrayim. In Mitzrayim he was bought by a family where he rose to prominence but, based on the false accusations of the woman of the household, he was imprisoned for years.

We can only imagine the emotional agony that Yosef must have endured, his own brothers tearing him away from his beloved father and his subsequently being subjected to such humiliation.

However, the passuk {verse} teaches us that it wasn't all that bad. "And behold, a caravan of Yishmaelites was coming from Gilaad and their camels were carrying

spices, balm and ladanum (a grass root) down to Mitzrayim. [37:25]"

Why did the passuk deem it necessary to detail the merchandise of the caravan that carried Yosef down to Mitzrayim? Rashi explains that such caravans were usually carrying malodorous loads. However, Hashem made sure that this group would be carrying fragrant spices since they would be transporting a tzaddik {righteous individual} such as Yosef. As such, Yosef wasn't harmed or bothered by any bad smells.

Incredible! Yosef is being brought to a foreign country to be sold as a slave—who really cares about the smell of the wagon? Imagine hearing on the news: A tourist fell off the Empire State Building today but we are happy to report that the band-aid on his left pinky did not, I repeat, did not fall off!

From this, the Zichron Meir writes, we can garner a foundation in the way Hashem runs this world. Any pain and suffering that a person endures is precisely measured. Once the measure has been filled, that line isn't crossed even by a hairs-breadth. Many people, he writes, are so overwhelmed with their major problems that they tend to overlook the smaller hardships they're enduring. Hashem doesn't. Yosef needed to endure the humiliation and anguish of slavery but not of a bad smell. Hashem therefore summoned a special caravan to ensure that he wouldn't suffer an iota more than he needed. Nothing gets overlooked.

Nevertheless, the question remains: Why was and is there a need for any suffering?

Let's continue a bit further into our parsha. Immediately following the sale of Yosef, Yehuda leaves the rest of his brothers and gets married.

The Medrash [Medrash Rabbah 85:1] offers a fascinating glimpse into the heavenly orchestration that accompanies our earthly actions:

"Rabi Shmuel Bar Nachman, when expounding on our parsha would open his words with the following verse from Yirmiyahu [29:11]: 'The thoughts that I'm thinking on them, says Hashem, are thoughts of peace and not evil, in order to give a future and a hope.' The tribes were involved in the sale of Yosef, Yosef was involved in his sackcloth and his fasting, Reuven was involved in his sackcloth and his fasting, Yaakov was involved in his sackcloth and his fasting, Yehuda was involved in finding himself a wife while Hashem was involved in creating the light of the Moshiach {Messiah}."

Fascinating. We're mourning that which appears to be destruction while it is, in fact, Hashem's creation.

The Maggid of Dubno writes that we find two methods through which Hashem deals with the world. At times, Hashem showers down good in the guise of wealth, honor, property, etc. Other times, the blessings come filtered through situations which appear to be for our detriment—difficulties, poverty, pain, etc.

He compares the second method to a tailor producing a garment. Upon receiving uniform pieces of expensive silk, the tailor attacks the silk with large scissors, cutting it into different sizes and shapes. An unknowledgeable onlooker would think that he's performed an act of destruction. A wiser person understands that these preliminary destructive actions are necessary in order to produce a garment that will far surpass the silk material in both beauty and usage.

Through the difficulties and mourning that Yaakov endured, Hashem was laying the foundations for the construction of Klal Yisroel {the Nation of Israel}. An enormous gift and merit was being granted to Yaakov in that the foundation was being laid through him. In order to receive the Torah, enter Eretz Yisroel {the Land of Israel} and have the Shchinah {Divine Presence} rest amongst us, we first needed to endure the pain of enslavement. Yosef's presence in Mitzrayim brought Yaakov and his family there, allowing the enslavement to begin. The exodus from Mitzrayim {Egypt} is a step along the way to the ultimate redemption. That will come through the Moshiach, the descendant of Yehuda, the result of his having been involved in finding a wife.

We mourn while Hashem creates light!

Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust relates the following story told by a Mr. Slucki.

When the Germans occupied my town, I hid my young sister from them, working hard to provide food for an additional mouth.

One day, as I was returning home, an eerie silence hung over the street, the silence that followed the death wrought by the German Aktions. When I got home, I saw that the door had been broken, the apartment had been looted and my sister was gone. The neighbors told me that the Gestapo had taken her.

Without thinking I ran to the Gestapo headquarters. Walking in, I was greeted by a young soldier. "What's your wish Jew? To be shot right now?"

"You took my sister!" I said. "Give her back to me."

The German burst into wild laughter. "What strange ideas Jews have these days," he choked. Suddenly he stopped laughing. "You know Jew, I will let your sister go on one condition. If right now you will grow hair on the palm of your hand."

I opened the palm of my hand—it was covered with black hair. The Gestapo

man's face twisted into a terrible grimace. He began to shout hysterically, "You Jewish satan, devil, take your sister and run." He went to the next room, brought my sister and pushed her toward me, all the while continuing to scream. We ran out and didn't look back.

When Mr. Slucki had been a young man he had worked in a factory and his hand was caught in a machine. They managed to save his hand by grafting skin from another part of his body. When he reached his teens, hair began to grow on the palm of his hand.

The miracle didn't occur in the Gestapo headquarters. It occurred when he nearly lost his hand. Everyone was mourning as Hashem was creating light!

The miracle of Chanukah was preceded by incredible darkness and persecution. Once again, Hashem was preparing the miracle that was later publicized by our kindling the Chanukah lights.

May we merit seeing how all of our present difficulties are illuminating the path for Yehuda's great, great grandson, bringing to us the ultimate redemption, speedily in our days.

Good Shabbos and a joyous Chanukah, Yisroel Ciner  
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From: Ohr Somayach[SMTP:ohr@ohr.edu] To: dafyomi@ohr.edu  
The Weekly Daf #358 Nazir 62 - Sotah 3 Issue #358 Parshat Vayeshev  
By RABBI MENDEL WEINBACH, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions  
THE "BASHERTE" MATE

Many traditional Jews refer to the woman whom a man marries as his "basherte" -- the one predestined by Heaven as his mate.

The background for this term is the statement which Rabbi Yehuda made in the name of the Sage Rav: "Forty days before the child is formed, a Heavenly voice proclaims that the daughter of a designated person will be his wife, that a designated house will be his home and that a designated field will be his source of livelihood."

In his eight chapter introduction to Mesechta Avot, Rambam raises a challenge to the concept of "basherte." Since a man has free will and Hashem does not interfere with his ability to decide against doing what is right or electing to do what is wrong, how can it be predestined whom he will marry, since this implies that he must indeed fulfill the mitzvah of getting married in order to produce children? Since this freedom of choice can just as well lead him to marrying a woman forbidden to him by the Torah, can we logically say that this woman was predestined for him?

Rabbi Yaakov Emden agrees with Rambam's premise that there is no such concept as "basherte" meaning that a man must indeed end up marrying the woman predestined for him. A person certainly has the free will to refrain from marrying altogether, or to marry a woman forbidden to him. What our sages meant by the Heavenly pre-natal announcement was that if a man decides he wants to do the will of Hashem and to marry the right woman in fulfillment of Hashem's mitzvah, then Hashem will provide him with the ideal mate designated for him if he takes that proper course.

Tosefot raises the problem of our gemara, which establishes the idea of predestination as absolute in regard to man's first marriage partner, being inconsistent with the gemara in Mesechta Mo'ed Katan (18b) which seems to indicate that even in regard to the first marriage this predestination can be altered through prayer. We may suggest that perhaps the gemara there did not resort to the distinction made here between the first and second marriage because it wishes to teach us that even in regard to the first marriage there is no absolute predestination. Just as a man has free will to not marry, or to marry a forbidden woman, he has the ability to pray to Hashem to alter the predestination to enable him to marry the woman he feels is best for him. (This in accordance with Ritva in Kiddushin, but Rashi in Mo'ed Katan has a different interpretation.)

\* Sotah 2a

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