

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON MIKETZ SHABBOS CHANUKA - 5758

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Chanukah 1.96 Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZT"L on Inyanei Chanukah

The Rav noted that the Gemara (Shabbos 21b) asks "Mei Chanukah?". Rashi interprets the question as "for which miracle was it established". The Gemara continues to discuss the prohibition of fasts or eulogies during the 8 day period because after the Macabees defeated the Greeks they found that they had defiled all the oil in the Mikdash except for one flask that was hidden and with the seal of the Kohen Gadol and that oil burned for 8 days till they were able to press new pure olive oil for the Menorah. The following year they established this 8 day period as one of Hallel Vhodaah. The Gemara in Shabbos mentions only the miracle of the Menorah as the basis for Chanukah.

The Rambam (Hilchos Chanukah 3:1-3) mentions that the Jews were successful in ousting the Greeks from the temple and restored the Jewish monarchy for an additional 200+ years. This victory took place on the 25th of Kislev. He then mentions the miracle of the oil, as mentioned in the Gemara. The Rambam then says that there are 2 manifestations to Chanukah:

1) Yemay Hallel Vsimcha - days of praise to Hashem and happiness. This is the reason that fasts and eulogies are not permitted on Chanukah, similar to Purim;

2) 8 days that we light candles to reveal and to demonstrate the miracle that Hashem did for us.

It is interesting to note that the Rambam mentions that these days are called Chanukah when he mentions that these are days of Simcha Vhallel in that they are forbidden to fasts and eulogies. For some reason he did not mention it in reference to the lighting of candles.

The Rama (Hilchos Chanukah 2) quotes Reb Avraham from Prague who held that there is a Ketzas Mitzvah to have a Seudah on Chanukah, however this would only be a Seudas Reshus. The reason for this is that the Chanukas Hamizbeach took place on those days. According to some opinions one would be required to eat Pas on Chanukah to fulfill the obligation of Seudah. (To say that there is a requirement to eat Pas on Chanukah, would be sensational, as it would make Chanukah stricter than Seudah Shlishis on Shabbos.) The Rambam says that these are days of Simcha, not Seudah. There is a negative manifestation (forbidden to fast and eulogize) and a positive side, to be happy.

The Rav explored the reason for requiring a Seudah on Chanukah. In the Midrash on Parshas Bhaaloscha, it says that the original date for the dedication of the Mishkan was supposed to be the 25th day of Kislev. However Hashem changed it to the first of Nissan, preceded by the 7 preparatory days beginning with the 23rd of Adar. Kislev had a complaint as to why it lost out on this great honor. The Midrash says that Hashem, Kivayachol, consoled Kislev saying that in years to come there will be another dedication held in Kislev during the time of the Chashmonaim. Therefore on Chanukah we celebrate both the dedication of the Mizbeach in the time of the Chashmonaim and the original intended day for the dedication of the Mishkan.

The Gemara in Shabbos mentions only the aspect of Chanukah that relates to the lack of pure oil after the Greeks were ousted. However the Gemara elsewhere (Yoma 16a) talks about the fact that the stones of the Mizbeach were defiled by the Greeks. So there were other problems after the ouster of the Greeks, besides the lack of oil for the Menorah. The Mizbeach itself needed to be rebuilt in order that sacrifices could be brought.

The Rambam is of the opinion that the Halacha of Chanukas

B'S'D' Hamizbeach is a Horaas Shaah, and the requirements stated in the Torah for the dedication of the Mishkan do not apply for all subsequent generations. However the Chanukas Hamishkan was a period of Yom Tov. The Ramban says that according to Rabbeinu Yonah there is a Mitzvah Ldoros to dedicate the vessels of the Mikdash through Avodah, There should be Meluim when a Mizbeach is dedicated and there is a Yom Tov associated with that period. This aspect of Yom Tov does not apply to the dedication of all vessels. But it does apply to the Mizbeach. The sacrifices that were brought in the Mishkan during its dedication were a Horaas Shaah. However the obligation to perform the dedication applies for all time. Hashem told Kislev that it will not lose the Yom Tov that was originally scheduled for its 25th day. The Chanukas Hamizbeach that will take place in the times of the Chashmonaim will be a Yom Tov as well, since it will be the day in which the Mizbeach will be dedicated and will make up for the moving of Chanukas Hamishkan from Kislev to Nissan.

On Chanukah, the Krias Hatorah that we read is from the dedication of the Mishkan by the Nessiim. If Chanukah was simply a commemoration of the miracle of the oil and Menorah, then we would be hard pressed to see the connection between the reading from the Torah and Chanukah. We should have read from Parshas Tsav or one of the Parshios that talk about the Menorah.

However if we view Chanukah from the perspective of the day on which the dedication of the Mizbeach took place, the intended day in the time of the Mishkan and the actual day of dedication in the times of the Chashmonaim, then the connection is obvious. Each day of Chanukah was part of the dedication process. Each day is connected to the other days of Chanukah in that it was one of the days that comprised the Chanukas Hamizbeach. The day(s) of Chanukas Hamizbeach (are) is indeed a Yom Tov. The Krias Hatorah is confined to the dedication of the Mizbeach only. However, on Shabbos, both aspects of Chanukah are mentioned: the Krias Hatorah mentions the dedication aspect and the Haftorah mentions the Menorah.

As the Rambam says, the reason these days are called Chanukah is because they were the days of Simcha Vhallel associated with the dedication of the Mizbeach. For this reason, fasting and eulogizing are forbidden. These days also commemorate the miracle of the oil that burned for 8 days. The term Chanukah has nothing to do with the candles. Rather it is associated with the Chanukas Hamizbeach.

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**Haaros Chanukah 5758** We know that the Chanukah candles remind us of the miracle of the Menorah in the Bais Hamikdash. However, there have been many miracles performed for the Jewish People. Why, specifically, do we have a reminder of the miracle of the Menorah? Of course, we have various holidays and reminders, but, for the most part, the miracles we commemorate with specific mitzvos represent complete salvation. (See Sheetos B'halachah, vol. 2). For example, Purim reminds us of how the Jews were saved from destruction. A miracle occurred regarding the gallows, but we have no mitzvah to specifically remind us of the gallows. Pesach reminds us of the complete freedom granted to the slaves. There were Asarah Makos (ten great plagues), but we don't have mitzvos to remind us of the ten; only the tenth and final one -- Makas Bechoros (death of the first-born, which symbolized the actual freedom). Kedushas Levi explains that there was something unique regarding the miracle of the Menorah. The Menorah in the Bais Hamikdash was in itself a mitzvah -- a commandment. This was not a 'typical' miracle, but came about through observance of a commandment.

Regarding the Chanukah candles, one needn't add a fresh candle every day. According to the law in the Talmud, one candle would technically be sufficient each day. But -- the Talmud states -- there are degrees in the performance of the mitzvah: The Mitzvah itself, Mehadrin (preferable) and Mehadrin Min HaMehadrin (best). Why, specifically in regard to Chanukah,

does the Talmud discuss these levels? (We don't find them elsewhere!) The Kedushas Levi says that this is again due to the unique nature of the miracle of the Menorah, where the miracle came about through observance of a commandment. (See Kedushas Levi, Kedushah Chamishis.) The Pachad Yitzchak showed that the battles of the Chanukah story were not in defiance of idolatry, but in order to keep commandments. As we wrote last week, the Syrian-Greek invaders outlawed Chodesh (sanctification of the new moon), Shabbos, and Bris Milah. Ordinarily, a Jew doesn't endanger his life in order to fulfill commandments, but the time of Chanukah was a `shas hashmad' -- time of forced conversion -- where the law mandates that any commandment take precedence. (Pachad Yitzchak, Chanukah.) Thus, we see how the dedication of the Chanukah story was in connection to mitzvos -- commandments. Mishley (Proverbs 6:23): Ki Ner Mitzvah, V'sorah Or -- "The Mitzvah is like a candle, the Torah is light." By maintaining the commandments, the Torah will continue to illuminate throughout the generations. At Pesach, too, miracle came about through mitzvos. The Pesach lamb, to be eaten with matza and morror, was a command. It, too, represented self-sacrifice: The lamb was worshipped by the Egyptian rulers, and by taking the lambs publicly and placing the blood on the doorways, the Jews were at risk. However, here the Jews were defying idolatry. At Chanukah, the battle was for mitzvos in general... Chanukah is one of the few celebrations that occur during Rosh Chodesh (new moon). One aspect of the symbolism of the moon is that it constantly fades and is renewed. "Chodesh" (moon, month) actually means renewal. Chanukah, the rededication of the Bais Hamikdash, is a time of renewal, a time of renewed attachment...

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yomtov@torah.org 12/20/95 YomTov - "Mehadrin" : An Understanding of the Concept I would like to thank Rabbi Eli Shulman (shulman@yu1.yu.edu) for preparing the discussion that follows on the concept of "Mehadrin," and for making it available to the YomTov subscribers.

#### On Mehadrin

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 fulfill 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 fulfill 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 fulfill mehadrin. Beis Yosef sides with the anonymous "great man"; Rema (ibid:3) holds with Terumas HaDeshen.

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 fulfill 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'gufo) 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.

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About these Shiruim by Dr. Moshe Sokolow

MIKETZ AND CHANUKAH

I. MESSAGES IN SPECIFICITY & STRUCTURE OF THE TORAH'S

DESCRIPTIONS Preface: Last week we noted that Nehama wrote an essay devoted entirely to the story of Yosef and his brothers. [Nehama Leibowitz: "How to Read a Chapter of Tanakh," Torah Insights (Jerusalem, 1995), 163-176.] This week we shall continue to derive some of our sources and inspiration from that same essay.

Part One: Yosef Takes No Credit Read--carefully, of course--Chapter 41 verses 25-36, as Yosef discusses Pharaoh's dream in a relatively long speech. Note, exactly, where the name of God appears. QUESTION: If we were to analyze the structure of Yosef's speech, what would we obtain? ANSWER: We would obtain a pyramid-type structure in which God's name is inserted in an increasing sequence, as follows: 25 (this verse contains God's name) 26-27 28 (this verse contains God's name) 29-30-31 32 (this verse contains God's name) 33-34-35-36 QUESTION: What does this structure signify? ANSWER: Yosef cites God at the beginning and between each of the parts of his interpretation. In fact, in verse 32 he names God twice--against the laws of Biblical syntax, since the subject has not changed in the interim. QUESTION: What does this show us? ANSWER: That Yosef carefully sculpted his reply to Pharaoh in order to emphasize the central role of God in the interpretation of his dream. QUESTION: Does Pharaoh's reply (verses. 38-39) seem to reflect this? ANSWER: Yes. Pharaoh appears to be so impressed with Yosef's deference to God that he refers to it not once, but twice. As Nehama writes: Yosef, at every moment of trial or transition, carries the name of God as a flag, repeatedly emphasizing in an idolatrous world: To Whom does man sin? [Referring to 39:9] Who interprets people's dreams? Who foretells future events? Who declares and does? He does this without explaining details, just by repeating a word. Pharaoh grasped the point and replied accordingly: 'Can such a man be found, a man in whom there is the spirit of God?' (verse 38) And again: 'After God has informed you of all this...' (verse 39).

[Lingering, momentarily, with structures, Nehama calls our attention to the fact that the brothers' first visit to Egypt and their return to their father also follows a detailed, symmetrical, structure: Joseph and his brothers converse Yaakov and sons converse Interlude of the three-day imprisonment Lengthy interlude They converse, again They converse, again EXTRA: She also notes that "The second visit, 43:15-44:34, also has an interesting and deliberate symmetrical structure, though differing from this one." QUESTION: Can you discern the pattern of that second visit?]

Part Two: It's All a Question of Perspective Read the first six verses of chapter 42. QUESTION: In how many different ways does the Torah refer to the same subject, Yosef's brothers? ANSWER: Four. They are: Yaakov's sons (verse 1); Yosef's brothers (3, 6); Binyamin's brothers (4); The sons of Israel (5). QUESTION: What do these different designations signify? ANSWER: Different perspectives. Yaakov speaks to "his sons" and sends them on the errand to Egypt, but the moment they the word "Egypt" sounds Scripture prepares us for the encounter by transforming them into "Yosef's brothers." Not sending Binyamin with "his brothers" insinuates the same discrimination which Yaakov earlier practiced with Yosef, while from the perspective of

the Egyptians watching them arrive, they are "Israelites," a purely ethnic designation. Also note RASHI (42:3) Yosef's brothers descended: It doesn't say "Yaakov's sons." This informs us that they experienced remorse over his sale and made up their minds to treat him fraternally and redeem him at whatever price would be demanded. [Additional examples in Bereishit of the use of different designations for the same person or people, reflecting the different perspectives of the participants and/or Scripture, are: 14:12-16, re: Lot, and 21:9-20, re: Yishmael. EXTRA: Examine those verse and see if you can spot, and interpret, the differences.]

Part Three: When "Down" Isn't a Direction, but a State of Mind Nehama, in an essay devoted to Rashi's criteria for citing Midrashim, remarks: RASHI makes sparing use of those Midrashim that explain metaphorically or figuratively expressions which can be readily understood literally (according to their Peshat). Where he does use them, there is generally a linguistic reason. Many Midrashim interpret the words "ascending" and "descending" in a non-literal sense, as indicating spiritual elevation or demotion, or even fluctuating social or economic circumstances. Let us look at several such comments in RASHI and see if we can establish a pattern of usage--as Nehama suggests. Let us first compare a pair of related verses in Shemot, to a pair in Devarim: (1) Shemot 32:7, "Go! Go down!" (LEKH Reid): Descend from your greatness, for I only granted you greatness for their sake [i.e., the people]. (2) Shemot 33:1, "Go, ascend from here" (Leikh `Aleh): Since the Land of Israel is higher than all other countries it says: 'ascend'. Alternately, since God, in anger, told Moshe: 'Go down!', now that He is appeased He said 'Go up'. On the other hand, the next two verses occasion no comment from RASHI, although they are interpreted metaphorically in the Midrash: (3) Devarim 32:49, "Ascend (`Aleh) these heights of Avarim": The SIFREI comments: "This is an ascent and not a descent." (4) Devarim 34:1, "Moshe went up (Vaya' al) ... to Mount Nevo": In the SIFREI: "It is an ascent and not a descent." QUESTION: Why did RASHI cite the Midrash in the pair of verses in Shemot, but not in the pair from Devarim? ANSWER: The reason--as Nehama indicated--is linguistic. The first verse in Shemot utilizes an "auxiliary" verb: Lekh (go), which already indicates activity. Since Moshe was atop a mountain, he could only have gone down if told: "Go!", so adding the direction "down," if not metaphorical, is superfluous. Regarding the second verse, the route from Egypt to Israel consists of mostly level country (before any mountains are encountered), so RASHI cites both a Peshat and a Drash.

The next set of verses utilizing "up" and "down" are drawn from the Sidrah we are studying: (5) 42:2, "Go (Redu) down there" (6) 42:4, "Yosef's brothers went down" (Va-yeredu) (7) 43:15, "they went down (Va-yeredu) to Egypt" (8) 43:20, "We indeed came down" (Yarod Yaradnu) QUESTION: On which does RASHI offer commentary? Is it literal or metaphorical? ANSWER: RASHI comments only on the last verse, saying--metaphorically: "It is a come down for us. We who are accustomed to supporting others now need your support." QUESTION: Why does he comment only on that verse? ANSWER: Applying Nehama's criteria, RASHI was probably troubled by the repetition of the verb YR'D, which justifies non-literal interpretation.

Part Four: Introducing.... Super-Commentary! Rashi's commentary on the Torah stimulated almost as much subsequent interest as the Torah itself. Hundreds (literally!) of later scholars have sought to explain or elaborate upon his interpretations, probing his motives and cross-examining his prooftexts. Their works are known, generically, as "super-commentaries," essentially commentaries on a commentary. The best known are the ones composed by Rabbi Eliyahu MIZRAHI (Turkey, 16th century) and the Maharal of Prague (entitled: GUR ARYEH, 16th century). Here is what they have to contribute to the commentary we have just introduced. MIZRAHI: RASHI does not base this on the use of the expression "came down" since the Land of Israel is higher than the surrounding countries and whoever enters it--goes up, and whoever leaves it--goes down [cf. RASHI on 45:9]. Hence, the statement "they went down to Egypt" (no. 7) arouses no comment. What prompted RASHI was the expression "we indeed came down" (no. 8), just as the Talmud [Bava Metzia 31b] treats other duplications as redundancies... The principle that "the Torah expresses itself in normal human language" is applied only where there is no basis for a homily, but where there is--we apply one. In other words, the MIZRAHI does not distinguish between the question, "What motivated the Midrash?", and the question, "Why did RASHI choose to cite it?" He merely observes that there is no textual requirement for this Drasha. Contrast the approach of the GUR ARYEH (43:20): "It is a come-down for us:" As I have already written above, whenever the language of descent appears in the first person -- it calls for a Drasha, for the speaker need not speaking of himself as descending. When the [3rd person narrative] text uses it, however, there is nothing special about it.

II. WHY YOSEF ACCUSED THE BROTHERS WISELY In his grand plan to bring Binyamin to Egypt (and have all the brothers bow down before him, thus actualizing the dream, according to many commentaries, led by Ramban), Yosef accuses his brothers of being spies. Why did Yosef choose this particular crime of spying, and not some other crime? He could have just as easily have accused his brothers of being thieves, and would have achieved precisely the same results, vis a vis the panic and fear of the brothers. Why this specific offense? Nehama explains that if the brothers had been accused of any other crime, then it would have been natural for the brothers to begin to inquire about this strange and unfair Viceroy of the King. They

would have investigated who he was, and would almost certainly have uncovered what was now a famous story in Egypt: that this was a lowly Hebrew slave, who, through the power of his dream interpretation, immediately rose to power. The brothers would then have understood that his man had to be their brother Yosef who had dreams and who was sold as a slave. Were this to be discovered, Yosef's plan to bring Binyamin (and test the brothers) would have been foiled. Yosef, anticipating and understanding this possibility, had to insure that his identity remain secret until he himself would reveal it later on. Since by its very nature, a spy asks many inquisitive questions, any question by the brothers about the Egyptian ruler, would confirm the suspicion that they were indeed spies. Therefore, once accused of spying, the brothers COULD NOT possibly ask any questions about the Egyptian ruler. Therefore, Yosef HAD to accuse them specifically of this crime to protect his identity from his brothers.

III. A SLIGHT SWITCH IN ORDER REVEALS THE TRUE MEANING The next to last verse in our Parsha ostensibly discusses the guilty reaction the brothers felt about the discovery of the cup in Binyamin's sack. Speaking to the Egyptian ruler (in reality Yosef), Yehuda admits his guilt, as it says: "And Judah said, What shall we say to my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found" (Genesis 44:16). The simple reading seems to be that Yehudah was willing for himself and his brothers to become slaves as a punishment for stealing the cup (even though they knew they did not actually steal it). However, Nehama explains that the deeper (and more correct) meaning of the verse has nothing at all to do with the stolen cup. Yehuda understood, on some level, that their entire predicament was related to and as a result of the sale of their brother as a slave many years earlier (perhaps because it is perfect measure for measure as they now would have to become slaves for making their brother a slave). Thus, Yehudah is actually saying that he is willing to be a slave now as retribution for his previous sin of selling his brother into slavery. But how does Nehama know this to be the true meaning of the verse? If Yehuda were actually referring to the punishment for the stolen cup, then logically Yehuda would have first said that Binyamin will become a slave ("he also with whom the cup is found") and only then be willing to commit himself and his brothers to be slaves ("we are my lord's servants"). Certainly the person who actually did the act of stealing (from the Egyptian ruler's perspective) should first be offered up as a slave. But here the order is reversed. First Yehudah offers himself and his brothers as slaves, and only then Binyamin. Therefore, since he put his own guilt first, it is clear that Yehudah is not referring to the crime of stealing the cup, but some other crime, where he and his brothers are the true guilty parties (He offers up Binyamin only as an afterthought, because he was there in Egypt now, and not because he was involved in the original sin of selling Yosef). Thus, the switch in order in the verse seems to tell us what Yehuda was really saying, and not what it seems on the surface.

A CHANUKKAH NOTE FROM NEHAMA LEIBOWITZ In 1935, Nehama Leibowitz published a series of articles in HED HA-HINUKH, an Israeli journal of Jewish education, on the subject of: "Active Learning in the Teaching of Jewish History in Elementary and Secondary Schools." The first installment of that series, entitled: "The Activities of the Men of the Great Assembly" (ANSHEI KENESET HA-GEDOLAH), deals with the Maccabean revolt against the Greeks which is the historical setting for Hanukkah. Here is an excerpt from that essay (which was published, in English translation, in 1989, by the Torah Education Network):

"Let me stipulate that the purpose of the lesson is to impart to the students a concept of the activities of the Men of the Great Assembly, and to demonstrate that they desired to educate the people through worship and deed, to realize the ideals of Torah in their national life in such a manner that Judaism would no longer be monopolized by a few but would become the possession of the general public in a form that each and every person would find suitable. When students are learning new material, it is good to first pose a question to them and then present the new material as an answer to that question. Otherwise we teachers appear, all too often, as someone trying mightily to solve a great problem for a friend while the friend doesn't feel it problematic at all. It is even better if the teacher doesn't actually pose the question but directs the class in such a way that the question arises by itself. Although, in truth, it is the teacher who is stimulating the questioning, the students will still feel as though it were their own and that will arouse their interest. For this purpose it is good, perhaps, to begin this lesson... by reading Nehemiah 12:15-16 (which begins): 'In those days I saw people in Judea threshing wheat on Shabbat', etc... Immediately thereafter the teacher should read aloud the following passage from 1 Maccabees 2: 32-41: [The Greeks] arose, suddenly, to fall upon them on Shabbat saying to them: How long will you refuse to obey the king?... And the men in their midst did not raise their hands to hurl a stone or to silence them... and they fell upon them on Shabbat and killed all those in the cave."

In essence, the question Nehama would have the students pose is: What brought about such an about-face in the people's attitudes towards the observance of Shabbat? How did they go--in a relatively short time--from public profanation of Shabbat in Jerusalem, to a situation in which they would not desecrate the Shabbat even to save their own lives? Her answer--and the focus of the article--are the ordinances (TAKKANOT) which were promulgated by the Men of the Great Assembly,

specifically in the area of Shabbat observance. As she concludes: [They] tried to bring all the people--not just certain elements--nearer to a life of Torah, and to have a knowledge and love of Torah penetrate each and every home, and they are the ones who fashioned the practices which are most characteristic of the religious Jewish experience down to our own day.

**WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5758 SELECTED HALACHOS  
RELATING TO PARSHAS MIKETZ** By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt

A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

**SHABBOS CHANUKAH** Lighting Chanukah candles on erev Shabbos and on motzaei Shabbos entails halachos that do not apply on weekday nights. The following is a summary of the special halachos that apply to Shabbos Chanukah.

**PREPARATIONS:** If possible, Friday's Minchah should be davened before lighting Chanukah candles(1). There are two reasons for davening Minchah first: 1) The afternoon Tamid sacrifice, which corresponds to our Minchah service, was always brought before the lighting of the Menorah in the Beis ha-Mikdash(2); 2) Davening Minchah after lighting Chanukah candles appears contradictor, since Minchah "belongs" to Friday, while the Chanukah candles "belong" to Shabbos(3). But if no early minyan is available, then it is better to light first and daven with a minyan afterwards(4). The oil or candles should be able to burn for at least one hour and forty-five minutes(5). If the oil and candles cannot possibly burn that long, one does not fulfill the mitzvah even b'dieved. Enough oil (or long enough candles) to burn for at least one hour and forty-five minutes must be placed in the menorah before it is lit. If one neglected to put in enough oil and realized his error only after lighting the menorah, he may not add more oil. He must rather extinguish the flame, add oil, and then re-kindle the wick. The blessings, however, are not repeated(6). One who does not have enough oil for all the wicks to burn for an hour and forty-five minutes must make sure that at least one light has enough oil to burn that long(7). [If there is enough oil for only three lights to burn for the required length of time instead of the four that are required on Friday night this year, for example, some poskim maintain that only one should be lit, while others hold that two should be lit(8).] Since it is customary in most homes that children under bar-mitzvah light Chanukah candles, too, this custom should be observed on erev Shabbos as well. If possible, the child's menorah should also have enough oil (or long enough candles) to burn an hour and forty-five minutes. If, however, it is difficult or impractical to do so, a child may light with the blessings even though his lights will not last for the full length of time(9). The menorah should be placed in a spot where opening or closing a door [or window] will not fan or extinguish the flame(10). A guest who is eating and sleeping over, lights at the home of his host even if his own home is in the same city. Preferably, he should leave his home before plag ha-Minchah(11).

**THE TIME OF LIGHTING ON EREV SHABBOS:** All preparations for Shabbos should be completed before Chanukah candles are lit so that all members of the household - including women and children - are present at the lighting(12). There are two points to remember about lighting Chanukah candles on Friday afternoon: 1) Chanukah candles are always lit before Shabbos candles; 2) Chanukah candles are lit as close as possible to Shabbos. The procedure, therefore, is as follows: L'chatchillah, Chanukah candles are lit immediately before lighting Shabbos candles. B'dieved, or under extenuating circumstances, they may be lit at any time after plag ha-Minchah. This year, plag ha-Minchah on Erev Shabbos Chanukah is 67 minutes before sunset. In most homes, where the husband lights Chanukah candles and the wife lights Shabbos candles, the correct procedure is to light Chanukah candles five minutes or so(13) (depending on the number of people in the house who are lighting Chanukah candles) before lighting Shabbos candles. As soon as Chanukah candles have been lit, the wife lights the Shabbos candles. If many people are lighting and time is running short, a wife does not need to wait for everyone to finish lighting Chanukah candles; rather, she should light her Shabbos candles

immediately(14). [If sunset is fast approaching, the wife should light Shabbos candles regardless of whether or not the Chanukah candles have been lit by her husband. If she sees that her husband will not light his menorah on time, she should light Chanukah candles herself, followed by Shabbos candles.] In a home where the man lights both the Chanukah and the Shabbos candles [[e.g., the man lives alone; the wife is away for Shabbos] the same procedure is followed. If, by mistake, he lit Shabbos candles before Chanukah candles, he should light his Chanukah candles anyway [as long as he did not have in mind to accept the Shabbos]. In a home where the woman lights both Chanukah and Shabbos candles [e.g., the woman lives alone; the husband is away for Shabbos], she must light Chanukah candles first. If, by mistake, she lit Shabbos candles first, she may no longer light Chanukah candles. She must ask another person - a man or a woman - who has not yet accepted the Shabbos to light for her. The other person must recite the blessing of lehadlik, but she can recite the blessing of She'asah nissim [and shehecheyanu if it is the first night](15). A person (or a family) who is embarrassed because he has failed to light Chanukah candles by sunset, may ask a non-Jew to light the Chanukah candles for him(16). This may be done until 30 minutes past sunset. No blessings are recited(17). If, after lighting the candles but before the onset of Shabbos, the candles blew out, one must rekindle them. One who has already accepted the Shabbos should ask another person who has not yet accepted the Shabbos to do so(18).

**ON SHABBOS:** The menorah may not be moved with one's hands for any reason, neither while the lights are burning nor after they are extinguished(19). When necessary, the menorah may be moved with one's foot, body or elbow(20) after the lights have burned out. If the place where the menorah is standing is needed for another purpose, a non-Jew may be asked to move the menorah after the lights have burned out(21). If Al hanisim is mistakenly omitted, the Shemoneh Esrei or Birkas ha-Mazon is not repeated. Children should be discouraged from playing dreidel games on Shabbos, even when playing with candy, etc(22). A dreidel, however, is not muktzeh(23). Oil may be squeezed out of latkes on Shabbos, either by hand or with a utensil(24). Chanukah gifts may not be given or received, unless they are needed for Shabbos use(25). In the opinion of some poskim, women are obligated to recite Hallel on Chanukah.

**ON MOTZAEI SHABBOS:** Candle lighting must take place as close as possible to the end of Shabbos(26). Indeed, some have the custom of lighting Chanukah candles even before havdalah, while others light them immediately after havdalah. All agree that any further delay in lighting Chanukah candles is prohibited. Therefore: One should hurry home from shul and immediately recite havdalah or light Chanukah candles. A Shabbos guest who lives nearby and must go home immediately after Shabbos is over, should light in his home(27). If, however, he does not leave immediately after Shabbos, he should light at the home of his host(28). Preferably he should also eat melaveh malkah there(29).

**FOOTNOTES:** 1 Mishnah Berurah 679:2. Many working people, though, are not particular about this practice, since it is difficult to arrange for a minyan on such a short day. 2 Sha'arei Teshuvah 679:1 quoting Birkei Yosef. 3 Sha'ar ha-Tziyun 679:7 quoting Pri Megadim. 4 Birkei Yosef 679:2; Yechaveh Da'as 1:74. 5 Beir Halachah 672:1. The breakdown is as follows: 20 minutes before sunset, 50 minutes till the stars are out, and an additional half hour for the candles to burn at night. Those who wait 72 minutes between sunset and tzeis ha-kochavim, should put in oil to last for an additional 22 minutes at least. 6 O.C. 675:2 and Mishnah Berurah 8. 7 Mishnah Berurah 679:2. 8 See Mishnah Berurah 671:5 [based on Chayei Adam and Ksav Sofer] and Beis Halevi, Chanukah who maintain that when the "correct" number of candles is not available, only one candle should be lit. Harav E.M. Shach (Avi Ezri, Chanukah), however, strongly disagrees with that ruling. 9 Based on Igros Moshe O.C. 3:95 and Y.D. 3:52-2. 10 O.C. 680:1. 11 See Chovas ha-Dar 1:12. 12 Mishnah Berurah 672:10. See also Chovas ha-Dar 1:10. 13 For one half hour before this time, it is not permitted to learn or eat. 14 Ben Ish Chai, Vayeishev 20. 15 Mishnah Berurah 679:1. 16 See Mishnah Berurah 261:16. [See also Da'as Torah 673:2 that one can fulfill his obligation through the lighting of a non-Jew. See Har Tzvi O.C. 2, pg. 258.] 17 See Rambam (Chanu kah 4:9) and Ohr Gadol (Mishnayos Megilah 2:4). 18 Mishnah Berurah 673:26, 27. 19 O.C. 279:1. 20 Mishnah Berurah 308:13; 311:30; Igros Moshe O.C. 5:22-6. Chazon Ish O.C. 47:13, however, does not agree with this leniency. 21 Mishnah Berurah 279:14. 22 See Mishnah Berurah 322:22. 23 See Igros Moshe O.C. 5:22-10. 24 Mishnah Berurah 320:24,25. 25 Mishnah Berurah 306:33. 26 Those who wait 72 minutes to end Shabbos all year round, should do so today as well - Igros Moshe O.C. 4:62. But those who wait 72 minutes only on occasion but at other times they do not, should not wait 72 minutes on this night - Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Shevus Yitzchak, pg. 75). 27 Chovas ha-Dar 1 note 65. 28 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Piskei Teshuvos, pg. 498).

29 See Teshuvos v'Hanhagos 1:391.

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## YESHIVAT HAR ETZION ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VBM

Ha-neirot Halalu Kodesh Hem by Rav Yair Kahn

"What is Chanuka? Our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth of Kislev begin the eight days of Chanuka; we may not eulogize on these days nor may we fast on them. When the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oil in the Temple. And when the royal house of the Chashmonaim prevailed and were victorious over them, they searched and found only one vial of oil which still had the stamp of the Kohen Gadol intact, and it contained enough to light for only one day. A miracle occurred and they used this oil to light for eight days. The next year, they fixed this date and made it a festival, celebrated with praise and thanks." (Shabbat 21b) Everyone knows that the definition of Chanuka as a festival is based on the miracle of the cruse of oil. But what is common knowledge even to young children is questioned by many historians. This doubt arises from the absence of the story of this miracle from all early sources dealing with the Hasmonean victory. If Chanuka was indeed established as a festival because of this miracle, why is there no mention of it in the Sifrei Makkabim, in the beraita dealing with Chanuka, or in the special prayers recited on Chanuka? Why is this miracle mentioned for the very first time in a statement of the Amoraim? Moreover, many greater and more publicly visible miracles were performed for our ancestors, but no festival was established in their honor. What, then, is the special significance and importance of the miracle of the cruse of oil?

**MIRACLES IN THE TEMPLE** In order to appreciate the nature of this miracle, we should examine other, similar miracles. Let us begin with the first mikdash - the mishkan. The parasha of the mishkan does not conclude with the finishing touches to the construction of the edifice and its vessels, nor even with the commencement of the sacrifices during the seven days of "milu'im." The whole enterprise peaks on the eighth day, "for today God is revealed to you" (Vayikra 9:4). Without this eighth day, the entire construction of the mishkan is meaningless: "For all seven days of milu'im ... the Shekhina did not rest there, and benei Yisrael were saddened and said to Moshe, 'Moshe Rabbeinu, all the labor that we performed [was] in order that the Shekhina should dwell amongst us...' (Rashi). Even after Benei Yisrael had completed all the preparations as commanded, the mishkan remained an empty shell until the moment of revelation: "And a fire came out from before God and consumed the burnt offering and the fats, and the entire nation saw and they rejoiced, and they fell upon their faces" (Vayikra 9:22). Correspondingly, we find in the case of the first Beit Ha-mikdash: "And when Shlomo had finished his prayer, the fire descended from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of God filled the House ... and all of Benei Yisrael saw the descent of the fire and the glory of God upon the House, and they prostrated themselves upon the floor, and bowed and thanked God for He is good, for

His mercy is forever" (Divrei Ha-Yamim II 7:1-3). So long as God's glory is revealed in the mikdash, it is not permissible to enter the Kodesh at will. It is instructive that immediately following the divine revelation in the mishkan, at the moment Nadav and Avihu sacrificed their 'strange fire,' "a fire came out from before God and consumed them" (Vayikra 10:2). However, after the destruction of the Beit Ha-mikdash, when God's glory is no longer apparent ("for Mount Tzion which is desolate; foxes walk there" - Eikha 5:18), strangers enter the mikdash without suffering any harm ("For she has seen Gentiles coming into the mikdash - those concerning whom You commanded 'They shall not come into your congregation'" ibid 1:10).

How remote is the era of the destruction from that eighth day when Aharon's sons were punished! Hashem's glory, which was once manifest so clearly, is perceptible no longer. For this reason, when the nation returned from Babylon to build the second Temple, once again some sign was required to indicate that the Shekhina, as it were, had returned. In Sefer Makkabim II (2:1) we read as follows: "And now that our hearts desire to celebrate the day of the rededication of the altar ... you shall celebrate it, like the day upon which Nechemia found the holy fire when he returned to build the mikdash ... For when our fathers were exiled, the holy kohanim secretly took the fire and hid it ... and it came to pass after many days that the king sent Nechemia to Jerusalem ... they could not find the fire, and found only freezing water instead ... and it happened that when they offered God's sacrifice, he commanded them to sprinkle some of the water on the wood and on the sacrifice which was upon the altar, and they did so. When they had finished, and the sun shone upon the earth and the clouds were scattered, behold a heavenly fire ignited the sacrifice, and the entire nation surrounding it was astonished, and the kohanim and all the nation fell upon their faces ... and the kohanim sang praise and thanks to God." Aside from this miracle which took place at the time of the rededication of the mikdash, the gemara describes another miracle which occurred daily in the mikdash and which was similar to the miracle of the cruse of oil both in terms of form as well as character: "It was testimony to the entire world that the Shekhina rested with Israel. What was this testimony? Rav said: This refers to the western lamp (the western-most light of the menorah in the Beit Ha-mikdash), which received the same amount of oil as all the other lamps, and from which the kohen would light the others, and it lasted the longest." (Shabbat 22b) According to the gemara (Yoma 39a), this miracle occurred even during the period of the Second Temple, up until the death of Shimon Ha-Tzaddik. In all of the above cases, the significance of the miracle is that it bears testimony to the fact that the Shekhina dwells amongst Israel. The necessity of the sign comes about as a result of the nature of the Divine Presence in general. In order to clarify this issue, let us turn our attention to the sphere of prophecy.

**PROPHECY** The Rambam in Moreh Nevukhim (2:32) maintains that although a person may have reached the spiritual level necessary for prophecy, "it is still possible that he does not actually prophesy, and this because of the will of God." The Rambam, as opposed to the philosophers, removes prophetic revelation from the purely intellectual sphere and defines it as an act of Divine will. A person has to prepare himself to attain prophecy; he must labor and strive to attain revelation of the Shekhina, but the level attained by finite man nevertheless cannot and does not obligate a revelation of the Infinite. A person cannot "force" a prophetic revelation by natural means; the revelation depends upon God's grace. On the national level, as well, the revelation of the Shekhina in the Beit Ha-mikdash is not a natural phenomenon. The construction of the mikdash by the nation of Israel, corresponding to the preparations of the prophet for prophecy, allows for - but does not obligate - revelation of the Shekhina. Ultimately, this revelation depends on God's will. It is in light of this principle that we may understand the words of the Sifri: "'But only to the place which the Lord your God shall choose from among all your tribes' - [this means that you shall] inquire of the prophet [as to the exact location]. Perhaps this means that you should wait until a prophet comes and tells you [where the place is]? This cannot be the case. Therefore the Torah teaches, 'You shall inquire as to His dwelling, and you shall come there' - first [make the effort

to] seek it and find it, and thereafter the prophet will tell (confirm)." (Sifri, Re'eh) The nation of Israel is obligated to "seek out the mikdash," to yearn for revelation of the Divine, but the mikdash is only built following the revelation of God's will by the prophet.

**GOD'S PRESENCE** Thus the miracle which follows the construction of the mikdash expresses the same Divine will which stands at the foundation of "and I shall dwell amongst them." It is only through this miracle which testifies that the Shekhina dwells amongst Israel that there is any significance to the command "Let them make Me a mikdash." At the beginning of the period of the second Beit HaMikdash, the 'western light' bore faithful testimony that the Shekhina dwelt amongst Israel. But once Shimon HaTzaddik died and the Hellenist culture began infiltrating the nation, sometimes the light would remain lit and sometimes it would be extinguished (Yoma 39). This situation deteriorated until the point when the Hellenists gained the upper hand, desecrated the mikdash and disqualified the testimony of the light. When God took pity on His nation and the Chashmonaim prevailed, they purified the mikdash and rededicated the altar. But where was the testimony? Where was the Shekhina? If there were no heavenly sign, what would all the efforts of the Makkabim be worth? In this context, the significance of the miracle of the cruse of oil becomes apparent. After the mikdash had been defiled, this tiny cruse bore witness that the Shekhina dwelt amongst Israel. In light of the above it becomes clear that although the actual event which was celebrated was the rededication of the altar, our Sages understood that the significance of this rededication rested on the miracle of the cruse of oil. This miracle returned the glory of the nation to its stature from the days of Shimon Ha-Tzaddik. In the words of the Penei Yehoshua (Shabbat 21b): "Therefore it would seem that the crux of the miracle was that it was performed only to show God's love for them ... For this reason this miracle, too, was performed for them concerning the lights, which was testimony for Israel that the Shekhina dwelt amongst them, as we have explained with regard to the western light. But after the death of Shimon Ha-Tzaddik, even the western light sometimes was extinguished. Therefore a miracle was performed regarding this exact matter, at that time which was a time of Divine favor, in order to show that they had returned to their original status of being beloved in God's eyes. This appears to me the correct interpretation." Hence, it is not surprising that the story of the miracle of the cruse of oil is absent from the Sifrei Makkabim. For it was not for this miracle that Chanuka was established, but rather for the rededication of the actual altar. But following the desecration of the mikdash by the wicked Antiokhus, the miracle of the oil represented the awaited signal from God which imbued the dedication of the altar with its significance. A close inspection of Sifrei Ha-Makkabim reveals an emphasis of these motifs - the desecration of the mikdash by the Hellenists and its purification by the Chashmonaim. Sefer Makkabim II opens with the story of the miracle in the days of Nechemia, during the time of the dedication of the second Beit Ha-mikdash, which bore testimony to the Shekhina's presence. Thereafter we read the story of Heliodoros who was sent to steal God's treasure from the mikdash: "And he saw the glory of God, Lord of the winds, in a terrible vision ... and he fell upon the ground and fainted ... for the hand of God had struck him ... and the entire nation praised God, for He had given honor to His mikdash ..." (Makkabim II, chapter 3). In contrast, during the time of Antiokhus, God's glory is absent from the mikdash: "And Antiokhus destroyed all the holy vessels with a wicked hand ... and were it not for God's anger against His nation because of their many sins, the hand of God would have struck him as it did Heliodoros when he went, by order of Silikus, to rob the treasury of the Temple. But because God did not choose His nation because of His city, but rather chose His city because of His nation, and because He watched over His nation, therefore He watched also over the Temple." (ibid, chapter 5) And with the victory of the Chashmonaim, they returned and purified the Temple and rededicated the altar, and for this reason Chanuka was established: "From God this thing came about, to purify the Temple on the very day upon which the gentiles had defiled it, which was the twenty-fifth day of the month of Kislev. And they celebrated a festival of

eight days to God ... and sang songs of praise and thanks to God Who gave them salvation, to purify His Temple. And a decree was sounded throughout the cities of Judea, to celebrate this festival each year." (ibid., chapter 10) Chanuka celebrates not merely the rededication of the altar, but also the glory of God which once again became manifest in the Beit Ha-mikdash. This is why Sefer Makkabim II (ch. 1) compares it to the day of the dedication of the mikdash in the time of Nechemia, when the miracle of the hidden fire occurred. On Chanuka the Chashmonaim regained the same level of God's love as they had enjoyed at the beginning of the period of the second Beit Ha-mikdash. The conclusion which arises from the above discussion is that there is no contradiction between Sifrei Ha-Makkabim and the version recorded by the Sages. Sifrei Ha-Makkabim make reference to the historical event upon which Chanuka was established. From this perspective, Chanuka was indeed in honor of the rededication of the altar by the Chashmonaim, but our Sages perceived the profound significance of the moment. After the defilement of the mikdash by Antiokhus, this rededication would have been hollow without that essential heavenly signal - the miracle of the cruse of oil, which bore testimony to God's Presence amongst Israel. May our eyes merit seeing the return of God to Tzion with mercy, and the fulfillment of God's promise: "And I shall build it with fire, as it is written, 'And I shall be unto her (Jerusalem) a wall of fire round about, and My glory shall be within her'" (Bava Kama 60b). Copyright (c) 1997 Yeshivat Har Etzion.

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The Weekly Daf Shabbos 23-29 22-28 December 1997 (Parshas Miketz)  
By Rabbi Mendel Weinbach, Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Since the dates for those pages of the Talmud dealing with Chanukah this year come so close to the days when we celebrate this miracle, we shall dedicate this week's selections to Chanukah topics.

**A Tale of Two Miracles** Even though the general rule is that women are exempt from time-related mitzvos, women are obligated in the mitzvah of Chanukah lighting, declared Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, because they too were involved in the miracle. Rashi seems to combine the following explanations of Rashbam and of Tosafos regarding why women are obligated in time-related mitzvos, such as reading the Megillah on Purim and drinking four cups of wine on Pesach Eve. Rashbam's approach is that the women were the catalysts for these miracles -- Esther for Purim, Yehudis for Chanukah and the righteous women of Israel for the miracle of the Exodus from Egypt. Tosafos takes a different line and stresses the fact that women were as exposed to danger from the enemy decrees as were the men, and must therefore equally celebrate the miracle which redeemed them.

Rashi cites both the evil decree of the Greeks affecting the purity of Jewish women on the threshold of marriage and the fact that a miraculous victory over the Greeks was sparked by a woman. The difficulty with understanding either approach is that on daf 21b the gemara explains that the miracle for which the holiday of Chanukah was established was that a one-day supply of olive oil lasted for eight days of Menorah lighting in the Beis Hamikdash until the victorious Maccabee forces could secure a new supply of uncontaminated oil. If this was the miracle, why is the woman's connection to the Chanukah miracle discussed in terms of spiritual danger and redemption from it? In the "Al Hanisim" praise we add to our prayers and grace after meals on Chanukah, we stress the miracle of the military triumph over "the mighty by the weak and the many by the few," while the miracle of the oil is merely hinted at. The inescapable conclusion is that Chanukah is a celebration of both the military miracle and that of the oil. We will mention but one of the explanations how each of these miracles complements the other. Military victories over superior forces have been ascribed by historians to the brilliance of generals and the fighting ability of soldiers, and their purpose was political independence. Such explanations might have been given for the triumph of the Maccabees had the miracle of the oil not delivered a Divine message that it was only a Heavenly miracle, whose purpose was to achieve spiritual security. Shabbos 23a

Which Comes First In every eight days of Chanukah there

must be at least one Shabbos. Before that Shabbos begins we have two mitzvos related to candles -- Shabbos lights and Chanukah lights. Which comes first in importance and which in order of performance? The issue of relative importance arises in a situation where one has limited funds and can afford to buy only candles for Shabbos or Chanukah. Which deserves priority? Resolution of this issue, declared the Sage Rava, is a simple matter. Shabbos candles take priority because of "Shalom bayis" (the family is uncomfortable sitting in the dark -- Rashi). This ruling, codified in the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 678:1), is modified by the later authorities who write that although it is proper to light at least two candles in honor of Shabbos, in a case of limited funds it is preferable to make do with only one Shabbos candle and to use the remaining funds to purchase a candle for Chanukah. When there are sufficient funds for both, but it is only a question of the order of performance, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 579:1) rules that the Chanukah candles should be lit before the Shabbos ones. The reason for this is because there is a halachic opinion that once you light the Shabbos candles you have accepted upon yourself the sanctity of the Sabbath and are now forbidden to light the fire necessary for the Chanukah lights. Since a man does not customarily light the Shabbos candles, his lighting them by mistake before the Chanukah ones will not prevent him from subsequently lighting the Chanukah candles unless he expressly thought of accepting the sanctity of the Sabbath. If it is a woman lighting the Chanukah candles because her husband is away, we consider her lighting of Shabbos candles as an acceptance of Sabbath sanctity just as it is every erev Shabbos throughout the year. If she mistakenly lights the Shabbos candles first she should therefore ask someone else to light the Chanukah ones for her, and also to say the first blessing upon them. She herself should say the other one (or two if it's the first night of Chanukah). Shabbos 23b

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## INSIGHTS INTO THE DAILY DAF brought to you by Kollel Iyun Hadaf of Har Nof Rosh Kollel: Rabbi Mordecai Kornfeld [All Relevant to Chanuka!]

Shabbos 21b 4) "MEHADRIN MIN HA'MEHADRIN" [I] QUESTION: The Gemara gives three levels for the performance of the Mitzvah of kindling Chanukah lights. The third level is "Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin," or the best way to beautify the Mitzvah, in which there is an additional candle each night (either in progressive order, according to Beis Hillel, or in regressive order, according to Beis Shamai). The BRISKER RAV (Chidushei ha'Griz, Hilchos Chanukah) asks how could the Sages make an enactment of Hidur Mitzvah, beautifying a Mitzvah, by lighting an additional flame each day? The Gemara in Bava Kama (9b) says that one is obligated to perform Hidur Mitzvah up to a maximum expense of one-third of the cost of the Mitzvah itself. Here, though, the Hidur Mitzvah is much more than one-third of the Mitzvah itself (a total of 36 lights instead of 8)! ANSWERS: (a) RASHI explains that "Mehadrin" does not mean "Hidur" (beautifying), but it refers to those who "pursue" Mitzvos. Its root is the \*Aramaic\* "Hadar" (which is equivalent to the Hebrew "Chozer"). The Sages established that there are \*three\* distinct ways to fulfill the Mitzvah, and not that the second and third ways are merely embellished ways of performing the Mitzvah. (b) RABINU CHANANEL, however, compares this Hidur Mitzvah to the one discussed in Bava Kama. The Brisker Rav in Hilchos Chanukah says that the Hidur Mitzvah in Bava Kama refers to the \*obligation\* (that the Sages enacted) to spend money for the sake of beautifying a Mitzvah. The Sages only obligated one to spend up to a third of the total cost of the Mitzvah. Here, though, there is \*no obligation\* to spend more money to do the Mitzvah in a nicer way. Rather, the Sages established that if one \*desires\* to do the Mitzvah in a nicer way, this is how he should do it. [II] QUESTION: Why, though, should there be such a large (albeit voluntary) Hidur Mitzvah for this particular Mitzvah, when normally Hidur Mitzvah is only until one-third of the cost of the Mitzvah? ANSWER: THE BEIS HA'LEVI suggests the following answer. The question of the Beis Yosef is well known -- why do we celebrate eight days of Chanukah if the miracle was only for seven days, since there was already enough oil in the jar to last for the one day? One answer is that the miracle indeed occurred each day for eight days, because each day only 1/8th\* of the jar of oil was poured into the Menorah, yet it lasted for the entire night. However, since they were required to pour in enough oil to kindle the Menorah for the entire night, how could they pour in only an eighth of the normal amount? The answer is that they also made the wicks thinner, 1/8th of their normal size. If so, what was the miracle that 1/8th of the oil was able to make the Menorah burn the entire night? If the wick is 1/8th of its usual size, and the oil is 1/8th of the usual quantity, of course it will burn for the normal amount of time! The miracle, explains the Beis Ha'levi, was that even though the quantity of oil was less, and the size of the wicks were decreased, the flame that burned was as large and beautiful as always. Since the miracle involved a \*beautification\* of the flame of the Menorah, rather than the existence of the flame itself, the Rabanan established a special Hidur Mitzvah in their enactment to kindle Chanukah lights, to commemorate the miracle that occurred.

5) ADDING A CANDLE EVERY DAY [I] OPINIONS: Beis Hillel maintains that the

"Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin" way to perform the Mitzvah of kindling the Chanukah lights is to "add progressively" ("Mosif v'Holech"). What exactly does this mean? (a) THE RAMBAM (Hilchos Chanukah 4:1) says that one who acts like the Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin lights an added candle for \*each person\* in the house each night (for example, if there are ten people in the house, on the second night of Chanukah the head of the house lights 20 candles). (b) TOSFOS (DH v'ha'Mehadrin) asks that the whole purpose of adding extra candles is to create a feature that shows that an additional day of miracle occurred. If one sees 20 candles in someone's house, and 30 candles in someone else's house, it is not recognizable that there was an additional day of miracle. Therefore, Tosfos understands that Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin means that the head of the house lights \*one\* candle for each day of Chanukah that has already passed (according to Beis Hillel), and not one for each person in the household. [II] How can we answer Tosfos' question (mentioned in (b), above,) on the Rambam's ruling? The VILNA GA'ON (OC 671) points out an oddity in the RIF in our Sugya. The Rif's style is to write only Halachic conclusions and rulings. Here, however, he records the story in the Gemara of the two elders of Sidon, one of whom practiced like Beis Hillel, and one of whom practiced like Beis Shamai, who gave reasons for Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai. Why does the Rif record this story when it does not seem to have anything to do with the Halachah (it merely expresses the \*reasons\* for the Halachah, but it is not the style of the Rif to record reasons). The Vilna Ga'on explains that Tosfos' proof for adding on by one candle per day per household, is based on the \*first\* of the two reasons suggested by the Gemara for the Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin: in order to create a feature in the lighting that shows that an additional day of miracle occurred. According to the second reason suggested by the Gemara (Ma'alain b'Kodesh...), there is absolutely no reason to limit the addition to one candle/day/household. The Rif understood that the two reasons given for the Mehadrin Min ha'Mehadrin actually were arguing Halachically over the question of how to light the extra lights -- should it be done like Tosfos (one candle/day/household) or like the Rambam (one candle \*for each member of the household\*/day/household). The conclusion of the Gemara can be inferred from the story of the elders in Sidon, which is a "Ma'aseh Rav" (a practiced Halachah, which carries more weight than a theoretical one). Since the elder in Sidon ruled that the additional candle is because of Ma'alain b'Kodesh, we should rule like the Rambam and add another candle for each member of the household each day. This explains why the Rif quoted the story of the two elders (since it affects the Halachic practice), and why the Rambam was not bothered by Tosfos' question (since we rule like the elder of Sidon)!

7) THE DURATION OF THE MIRACLE OF CHANUKAH QUESTION: The Gemara says that the jar of oil contained enough oil for one day. If so, we should have only \*seven\* days of Chanukah, because the first day was not a miracle. Why do we celebrate \*eight\* days of Chanukah? (BEIS YOSEF, OC #670 -- this is the famous "Beis Yosef's question.") ANSWERS: The Beis Yosef (670) offers three answers to his question: (a) They divided the oil into eight parts, so that a miracle indeed occurred every day, when 1/8th of the oil lasted for the entire night. (b) When they poured out the oil from the jar it remained full, so the miracle was noticeable even on the first night. (c) After the first night, although they poured all the oil into the Menorah, none of it burned and the Menorah remained full of oil for all eight days. The Acharonim challenge each of these three answers. (a) How could they divide the oil into eight parts and use one-eighth every night? We are required to put in the Menorah enough oil to last the \*entire night\* (and they did not know that a miracle was going to occur, nor would they have been permitted to rely on a miracle occurring?) (b) If the jar remained full when they poured the oil, on the eighth night there was no miracle because on the eighth night they emptied the jar. (c) The oil that had miraculously lasted for seven nights was finally consumed on the eighth night. If so, on the eighth night there was no miracle! The TOSFOS HA'ROSH himself asks the question of the Beis Yosef and gives the \*same answers\*, but makes slight additions in order to avoid the questions of the Acharonim. (a) The requirement to put in enough oil to burn the entire night is only if one has enough oil. If one does not have enough oil, it is better to put in a little each night and not use it up in one night. (b) The miracle is that the oil which is burning in the Menorah is "miracle oil." Consequently, there was a miracle on the eighth night as well, since the oil that burned on the eighth night was oil that existed only as a result of a miracle. Although, according to this, on the first night there was no miracle with the oil itself, because the oil itself burned, nevertheless, the fact that the oil did not disappear made the miracle-to-be \*apparent\* already on the first night. (c) Actually, even though they filled up the Menorah, only a small amount of the oil (1/8th) burned each night. The Menorah remained lit for the entire night, yet the rest of the oil was not consumed. So on the eighth night as well a miracle was experienced, since the Menorah was aflame the entire night even though only 1/8th of the required amount of oil was left. Other Rishonim suggest other answers to "the Beis Yosef's question": (d) The ME'IRI says that the first day of Chanukah was established to celebrate the redemption from our enemies, and the miracle that a jar of oil was even found. (e) The SHE'ILTOS (Parshas Vayishlach) and SEFER HA'ESHKOL (Hil. Chanukah) answer that the amount of oil that was found was \*not even\* enough for one day. They had the word "Afilu" ("even") instead of "Ela" ("except") in the sentence of the Gemara: "There was not [oil] in it \*even\* to light for one day." (Literally hundreds of other answers to the Beis Yosef's question are discussed by the Acharonim.

Shabbos 22b 2) HALACHAH: IS THE "KINDLING" THE MITZVAH, OR IS THE "PLACING" THE MITZVAH QUESTION: The Gemara says that if a person lights his Chanukah Menorah inside his home and then he brings it outside, he does not fulfill the Mitzvah. The reason is either because the kindling is the Mitzvah ("Hadlakah Oseh Mitzvah"), and since he kindled it in a place that is not fit for the Mitzvah of lighting (i.e. inside), he does not fulfill the Mitzvah, or because the placing of the Chanukah Menorah is the Mitzvah ("Hanachah Oseh Mitzvah"), but someone who sees him bring the Menorah outside will think that he lit it inside for his own personal use and not for the sake of a Mitzvah. The RIF, ROSH (2:7) and Tur (OC #675) rule that the \*kindling\* is the Mitzvah. They also rule that if one lights it inside and brings it outside, he does not fulfill the Mitzvah "because someone who sees him will think that he lit it for his own personal use." Why do they give this reason of "someone who sees"? If they rule that the kindling is the Mitzvah, it is not necessary to give this reasoning, for we rule that the kindling is the Mitzvah. If so, the kindling itself must be done in a place that is fit for the performance of the Mitzvah (as is clear from our Sugya)! ANSWER: The BACH answers that even though the reason of "someone who sees" is not really necessary, the Rif, Rosh, and Tur mentioned it because sometimes the first reason that he does not fulfill his obligation (that the kindling must be done in a



place that is fit for the Mitzvah) does not apply. For example, nowadays, lighting inside is the accepted practice, and one fulfills the Mitzvah by lighting inside. If so, when one lights inside and brings it outside, he "has" lit in a place that is fit for the Mitzvah, so he should indeed fulfill his obligation even though he takes it outside. Therefore, they recorded the second reason mentioned in the Gemara, that someone who sees might think that he lit the candles for his own personal use.

The authorities rule in accordance with the answer of the Bach (see MISHNAH BERURAH 675:5). The MISHNAH BERURAH (ibid., apparently based on the words of the Vilna Gaon ad loc.) adds that this Halachah will also apply if a person lights the Chanukah Menorah "outside" and then brings it "in"; the concern of "someone who sees" still applies (even though people do not usually kindle lights for personal use outside), and one does not fulfill the Mitzvah.

Shabbos 23 1) A BLESSING FOR A "SAFEK" OPINIONS: The Gemara concludes that according to Rava, a doubt in a Mitzvah d'Rabanan (that is, if someone is in doubt whether or not he fulfilled his obligation to do a Mitzvah instituted by the Rabanan) requires another blessing to be recited. The only reason why a blessing is not recited when separating Terumah from Demai is because most people (including Am ha'Aretz) do indeed separate Terumah. As RASHI (DH Rava Amar) explains, separating Terumah from Demai is not really due to a doubt, but it is a "Chumra b'Alma," a stringency.

(a) The RAN points out that according to Rava, if there would be a real doubt, such as in a case when one is unsure whether he performed a Mitzvah d'Oraisa or not and therefore he has to do the Mitzvah again, one would be required to recite a new blessing. Only when there is no real doubt does Rava say that one does not recite a blessing. This also seems to be the intention of Rashi (DH Rava Amar). The RA'AVAD rules like this (Hilchos Milah 3:6), and so does RABEINU YONAH (Berachos 21a). However, this ruling applies only when one is in doubt whether he did the Mitzvah or not. If one knows that he did the Mitzvah but is in doubt if he recited the blessing, then he does "not" recite the blessing again. (b) The RAMBAM (Hilchos Milah 3:6, Hilchos Tzitzis 3:9), however, writes that one does "not" recite a new blessing when one performs a Mitzvah that he was in doubt whether he had performed. The Poskim rule in accordance with the opinion of the Rambam.

Shabbos 23b 3) HALACHAH: THE CHANUKAH LIGHTS TAKE PRECEDENCE QUESTION: The Gemara says that the buying Chanukah lights takes precedence over buying wine for Kidush, because the Chanukah lights involve publicizing the miracle of Chanukah (Pirsum Nes). The RAMBAM takes this one step further and rules that one should even sell his clothing in order to buy the materials needed for kindling the Chanukah lights. The Rambam writes, "The Mitzvah of the Chanukah lights is a most beloved Mitzvah, and one must be very prudent in its fulfillment in order to publicize the miracle and to increase the praise of G-d and gratitude to Him for the miracles that He wrought for us. [Therefore,] even if one [is so poor that he] has nothing to eat except for what he takes from charity, he should borrow money or sell his clothing in order to buy oil and candles to light" (Hilchos Chanukah 4:12). What is the Rambam's source for this ruling?

ANSWERS: (a) The MAGID MISHNAH explains that the Rambam's source is our Gemara, which says that the publicizing of the Mitzvah of Chanukah makes the Chanukah lights more important than Kidush. We find with regard to the Four Cups of wine of the Seder night that if someone cannot afford to buy wine, he should take charity in order to buy wine and fulfill the Mitzvah. The Four Cups, says the Gemara (Pesachim 112a), also serve to publicize a miracle. If one must take from charity to fulfill the Mitzvah of the Four Cups, all the more so must one take from charity or sell one's clothing to fulfill the Mitzvah of the Chanukah lights. (The LECHEM MISHNAH asks why the Magid Mishnah says "all the more so" regarding the Chanukah lights. Why should the Mitzvah of the Chanukah lights be more stringent than the Four Cups, if they are both Mitzvos of Pirsum Nes? He concludes that the Rambam's ruling can be learned from a "Hu ha'Din" from the Four Cups, but not from a "Kol she'Ken.")

(b) The VILNA GA'ON (B'UR HA'GRA OC 671) says that the source for this Halachah is as follows. The Gemara in Pesachim (112a) says that even a poor person who is already supported by the communal charity collection should take more charity to provide a minimal amount of food in honor of Shabbos. The RASHBAM, commenting on the Mishnah in Pesachim (99b), says that taking from charity means even hiring oneself out or selling one's clothing. The Gemara (Pesachim 105b) says that one must rely on charity if he does not have enough money to buy wine for Kidush. Since our Gemara says that the Chanukah lights take precedence over Kidush, then certainly one must sell his clothing to buy Chanukah lights. (c) The ROGATCHOVER GA'ON (TZAFNAS PANEI'ACH) says that it is not necessary to prove from the Gemara in Pesachim that one is required to sell his clothing to buy wine for Kidush, since it is an explicit Gemara. The Gemara in Megil ah (27b) relates that some of the Amora'im sold their clothing to buy wine for Kidush. Since our Gemara says that the Chanukah lights take precedence over Kidush, then certainly one must sell his clothing to buy Chanukah lights.

Shabbos 24 2) SAYING "AL HA'NISIM" IN BIRKAS HA'MAZON QUESTION: The Gemara asks whether we recite "Al ha'Nisim" in Birkas ha'Mazon on Chanukah. Both RASHI and TOSFOS explain that the Gemara did not ask whether we recite "Al ha'Nisim" in Shemoneh Esreh, because it was obvious to the Gemara that we do (as Rav Sheshes says at the end of the Sugya). Rashi and Tosfos seem to argue, though, "why" we recite "Al ha'Nisim" in Shemoneh Esreh. Rashi says that we say "Al ha'Nisim" in Shemoneh Esreh because "[the days of Chanukah] were established as days of praise and thanksgiving, as the Gemara said earlier (21b)" (and therefore we obviously make mention of Chanukah in our Shemoneh Esreh). Tosfos, however, says that it is because "Shemoneh Esreh is recited in public where there is Pirsum Nes (publicizing the miracle of Chanukah), so Al ha'Nisim is recited. But Birkas ha'Mazon is recited individually in one's home where there is no Pirsum Nes."

Furthermore, Rashi and Tosfos argue concerning another point. In the end of the Sugya, Rav Sheshes says, "Just like Al ha'Nisim is recited in the Hoda'ah (thanksgiving) section of Shemoneh Esreh, so, too, it is recited in the Hoda'ah section of Birkas ha'Mazon." Rashi explains that the reason why "Al ha'Nisim" is mentioned in the Hoda'ah section of Birkas ha'Mazon (and Shemoneh Esreh) is because the entire institution of Chanukah is for the sake of giving thanks (Hoda'ah), so, naturally, we recite "Al ha'Nisim" in the blessing of giving thanks. Tosfos, though, writes that we recite "Al ha'Nisim" in Hoda'ah because the style of the "Al ha'Nisim" addition is that of thanksgiving (thanking Hashem) and not of prayer (making requests of Hashem). Had it been written in the style of a prayer, it would have indeed been placed in "Boneh Yerushalayim," where all other special days are mentioned. What is the basis of the argument between Rashi and Tosfos? ANSWER: When the Gemara answers, "If one wants to

say Al ha'Nisim, he may say it in Hoda'ah," Tosfos understands that the reason to say "Al ha'Nisim" is the same reason for saying any other special paragraph for a special day (like Shabbos, Rosh Chodesh, or Yom Tov); the Rabanan established that on special days, one should make mention of that day in Birkas ha'Mazon. Rashi argues. Rashi understands that the Gemara's reason for saying "Al ha'Nisim" is not because of the concept of making mention of the special day in Birkas ha'Mazon (because we only make mention of festivals that are mid'Oraisa, and Chanukah is mid'Rabanan). Rather, the reason for saying "Al ha'Nisim" in Birkas ha'Mazon is because of the unique obligation to give thanks to Hashem on Chanukah (because that is the whole purpose of Chanukah, as the Gemara says earlier, "Hallel v'Hoda'ah"). This difference in understanding the essential nature of "Al ha'Nisim" explains why Rashi and Tosfos give different reasons for reciting it in Shemoneh Esreh, and different reasons for reciting it in the section of Hoda'ah. (RAV Y.D. HOMNICK IN SEFER NACHALAS YAKOV)

3) HALACHAH: SAYING "AL HA'NISIM" IN BIRKAS HA'MAZON QUESTION: The RAMBAM (Hilchos Berachos 2:6) rules that one says "Al ha'Nisim" in Birkas ha'Mazon. This is also how the SHULCHAN ARUCH (OC 682:1) rules. Why is saying "Al ha'Nisim" obligatory? Our Gemara seems to say that it is optional ("Rav Huna said that one does not mention Al ha'Nisim, but if one wants to mention it, he says it Hoda'ah")! ANSWERS: (a) The ROSH YOSEF gives three answers. First, the simple understanding of Rav Sheshes, in the end of the Gemara, is that he is saying that one "must" say "Al ha'Nisim" and he is arguing with Rav Huna. This is indeed how RABEINU CHANANEL seems to explain the Gemara (although his text had the name "Rava" instead of "Rav Sheshes"). (b) Since the Jews accepted upon themselves to say "Al ha'Nisim" in Birkas ha'Mazon, it has become obligatory (like the Ma'ariv Shemoneh Esreh). (c) The Yerushalmi says that "Al ha'Nisim" is obligatory, and if one forgets to say it, he must "repeat Birkas ha'Mazon". Since the Bavli and Yerushalmi are arguing, the Rambam rules that we must be stringent in accordance with the Yerushalmi and require that "Al ha'Nisim" be said in Birkas ha'Mazon. However, one does not repeat Birkas ha'Mazon if he forgets to say "Al ha'Nisim," because doing so would be a Berachah le'Vatalah according to the Bavli. (ROSH YOSEF, citing the LECHEM MISHNAH)

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Shabbos 17b: Tum'ah of a liquid that touched a Rishon

Rabbi Eli Shulman <[shulman@ymail.yu.edu](mailto:shulman@ymail.yu.edu)> asked: The Gemara (17b) states that in order to make up the 18 decrees R' Meir counts food and utensils that were contaminated by liquids as a single decree, whereas R' Yose counts them as two decrees. Now the Gemara earlier (14b) said that the decree of foods contaminated by a liquid must not refer to a liquid that was a Rishon Mi'de'oraisa (Baim Machmas Sheretz), since such a liquid contaminates food Mi'de'oraisa and there is no need for a decree. Rather, the decree applies to liquid that came into contact, for example, with unwashed hands (Baim Machmas Yadayim); the decree is that the liquids revert to a Rishon and can then turn the food into a Sheni (Sheni Oseh Sheni Al Yedei Mashkin).

Regarding the decree of utensils contaminated by a liquid, in contrast, there is a need for a decree even for liquids that were a Rishon Mi'de'oraisa, since Mi'de'oraisa a Rishon cannot contaminate utensils at all. Therefore the Gemara (14b) says that that decree refers to liquids contaminated by an Av (Baim Machmas Sheretz), which are a Rishon Mi'de'oraisa, and the decree was that they can contaminate utensils. The Rambam and the Raavad (Hil. Avos HaTumah 7:2) disagree regarding whether this decree applies even liquids that came in contact with a Rishon or Sheni, and reverted to a Rishon. The Rambam takes the Gemara at face value and rules that only liquids that came in contact with an Av, such as a sheretz, can contaminate utensils. The Raavad, however, brings proof against this view from a Baraisa in Berachos (52b) which says that Beis Shammai require one to wash one's hands before pouring the wine at a meal lest one's unwashed hands (which are a Sheni) contaminate liquids on the backside of the cup which will in turn contaminate the cup. Clearly even liquids that became contaminated by a Sheni can contaminate utensils. (Beis Hillel disagree with Beis Shammai for unrelated reasons.)

What I don't understand is how, according to the Rambam, R' Meir could possibly count food and utensils that were contaminated by a liquid as a single decree, when they refer to two different types of liquids: The decree of food that was contaminated by a liquid refers to liquids that came into contact with a Rishon or Sheni and reverted to being a Rishon (Baim Machmas Yadayim) (and the substance of the decree is the very fact that they so revert) whereas the decree of utensils that were contaminated by a liquid refers exclusively to utensils that were contaminated by a liquid that was a Rishon D'oraisa (Baim Machmas Sheretz) (and the substance of the decree is that a utensil can become a Sheni when contaminated by a liquid)?

Perhaps one could suggest that this is exactly the point of issue between R' Meir and R' Yose. R' Yose maintains that after they decreed that utensils could contract tumah from liquids that are a Rishon (Barim Machmas Sheretz), they then incorporated utensils in the decree that liquids that become contaminated by a Rishon or Sheni revert to a Rishon and can in turn render food (or, now, utensils) a Sheni. This therefore counts as one decree. But R' Yose maintains that even after they decreed that utensils can contract tumah from liquids that are a Rishon, they did not include utensils in the decree that a liquid can revert to a Rishon and contaminate food. Therefore these are two decrees. The Gemara (14b) which states that the decree refers to liquids that came into contact with a Sheretz follows the view of R' Yose, since the rule is that in a dispute between R' Meir and R' Yose the halacha follows R' Yose. Likewise the Rambam rules like R' Yose, as the Kesef Mishnah states in Hil. Mikvaos ch. 4.

This would solve the Ra'avad's proof against the Rambam, as well. We could say that the Baraisa in Berachos follows R' Meir's view, that utensils were included in the decree of food that was contaminated by a liquid (Baim Machmas Yadayim). But the Rambam rules like R' Yose that these are separate decrees and the decree of utensils applies only to utensils that were contaminated by a liquid that was a Rishon on a d'Oraisa level. Eli Shulman

The Kollel replies: Y'asher Kochacha! Beautiful idea. It seems, though, a bit Dochek to say that both Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai in Berachos are going according to Rabbi Meir and not according to the way the Gemara concludes le'Halachah (Tosfos discusses this question in our Masechta 14b, DH Ela b'Mashkin, and sides with the Ra'avad because of the Sugya in Berachos). The words of the Rambam are difficult to understand and require further analysis, as you mentioned.

[Didn't make into distributions:]

Shiur HaRav Soloveichik ZTL on Parshas Miketz 97-12-25 jr@sco.COM (Josh Rapps) mj-ravtorah@shamash.org Miketz.97 (Shiur date: 12/17/74)

The Rav noted that at first glance, the story of Joseph's encounter with his brothers when they came down to Egypt to purchase food seems verbose. The Torah repeats that Joseph recognized his brothers. The redundancy of the verses led Chazal (as quoted by Rashi in 42:8) that Joseph recognized them as his brothers and had mercy upon them. However they did not recognize him when he fell into their hands and did not treat him in a brotherly manner. Chazal are telling us that the first form of recognition applied to Joseph means that Joseph recognized his brothers. The second verse of Vayaker, means that Joseph gave them recognition as brothers, something that he never received from them. The Rav explained that there are 2 kinds of recognition. The first is where one recognizes and distinguishes a person from others. The other affords recognition and importance, for example when the US government recognizes a country, it imparts a degree of importance to the one that is so recognized. While they sold him into slavery and never accorded him the recognition due a brother, he accorded them the recognition due brothers and had mercy on them.

The Rav analyzed the discussion between Joseph and his brothers. The Torah mentions that Joseph accused them of being spies and they repeated twice that they are the children of a single father. Joseph says that their response corroborates his accusation that they are spies. What did Joseph hear in their response that led him to that conclusion? What did Joseph have in mind when he accused them of being spies? After all, Joseph the Tzaddik would not falsely accuse someone. What was the significance of his charging them with being spies?

We must realize that Joseph intended to test the character of his brothers to see if they had truly repented for the way they dealt with him and for selling him into slavery. The true Baal Teshuva must show that he now acts in a completely different manner compared to his previous sinful behavior. Now the brothers would have to show that they were ready to lay down their lives to protect one of their own, in order that they be considered true Baalei Teshuva. (This is part of the standard Teshuva process: for example, one who previously desecrated the Shabbos for financial reasons will not be considered a complete Baal Teshuva (as far as being acceptable as a witness) until he undergoes a test where he is forced to choose between keeping Shabbos and the loss of a large financial sum.) Their Teshuva was not only to show remorse for their actions towards him, but to stand up for another brother in a similar situation.

Yehuda was the brother who showed this aspect of Teshuva. It was Yehuda who was prepared to be Moser Nefesh on behalf of Benjamin, and to offer to serve as a slave in place of Benjamin. This is the same Yehuda who epitomized the art of compromise and that Chazal say that anyone who blesses Yehuda for this is an instigator. This was the same Yehuda who was demoted from his leadership position after the sale of Joseph, who now rose back to the fore and was willing to lay down his life for Benjamin. He again became the great leader of his brothers. The Rav noted that Rav Mendel M'Kotzk said on the verse Gur Aryeh Yehuda that even when Yehuda has fallen down, he is still a lion, for if not, Mi Yekimenu, who would be capable of lifting him up. Even after he has fallen he still has the ability to pick himself up and regroup.

(The Rav said that the preceding analysis is basically found in the Ramban on Miketz.)

The Rav explained Joseph's use of the term spies, Meraglim, in connection with his brothers. We can understand his desire to verify their Teshuva, but why did he choose to accuse them of being spies? The Torah tells us that the brothers intermingled among the multitudes that descended from Canaan to Egypt to purchase food because of the famine, just like all the others from Canaan and other lands. After all, many foreigners from Egypt itself also came to purchase food. The brothers may have thought that

they came simply to purchase food, just like all the other strangers. Joseph understood that their reason for coming was quite different from all the others: they were responsible for fulfilling the promissory note signed by Avraham many years before at the Bris Bayn Habesarim. The price for the creation of a unique, enduring Knesses Yisrael was the difficult sojourn in Egypt for 400 years. In order for them to become a great nation, Goy Gadol, they had to go through the exile experience in Egypt. As it says Arami Oved Avi Vayered Mitzraymah, Vayehi Sham L'Goy Gadol Atzum V'rav. They never would have become the great nation had they remained in Canaan. They had to pay a huge price to reach the status of Goy Gadol.

Hashem allowed the Patriarchs to spend most of their lives in Canaan, but eventually their descendants would have to make it to Egypt. The payment of the promissory note began that fateful day when Jacob sent Joseph from the valley of Hebron to search for his brothers. Rashi points out that Hebron is in a mountainous region, yet it is described as a valley because he was sent out of the depths of the idea that began with the great Tzaddik who was buried in Hebron, he was sent to begin the exile that would fulfill the contract agreed to many years before between Hashem and Avraham. We don't know why the price for their becoming a great nation was to descend to Egypt and suffer there for so long, we only know that it was the divine will of Hashem. Hashem did not wish to deal with a small insignificant nation. It was His will that in order for Bnai Yisrael to achieve the status of a great nation worthy of Hashem, they had to reach that status in Egypt.

It is interesting to note that in Parshas Vayeshev, the Torah relates the conversation between Joseph and a mysterious Ish during his search for his brothers. Why was it necessary to relate this story? Why not simply relate that Joseph found his brothers? Because this mysterious Ish, who according to Chazal was Gavriel, was sent to make sure that Joseph found his brothers in order that Bnai Yisrael would achieve their destiny as the chosen people and fulfill their covenant with Hashem. This was the all important rendezvous that would usher in the payment of the promissory note between Avraham and Hashem.

Even though the brothers were to return to Canaan several times more, their arrival in Egypt for what they thought was the purchase of food, was really the fulfillment of the divine plan as foretold to Avraham many years before, that the Jews should leave their land and enter exile. There were three parts to the exile of Bnai Yisrael in Egypt. The first was the sale of Joseph, the second was the arrival of the brothers to purchase food and the third was when the entire house of Yisrael went down. Joseph understood that they were in Egypt for a greater reason than simply to purchase food. They had come down to Egypt to begin the next phase of the exile in Egypt, another necessary step in the process of becoming a great nation. That is why the Torah tells us again that Joseph recognized his brothers. When they told him that they had simply come to purchase food, he could not believe what he was hearing. The purchase of food alone was all that brought them down to Egypt, just like all the others that came from Canaan? Joseph answered them that they were mistaken. He alone recognized their being there as a pre-requisite for the destiny of the Jewish Nation. They were there to fulfill their mission of creating a Goy Gadol, which could only be fulfilled with the exile and the back-breaking work of building Pisom and Ramses and all the other difficulties they would endure in Egypt.

The Torah tells us that Joseph recalled the dreams that he dreamt for them, Lahem. Joseph realized that his dreams were not about him personally, but rather they were about the entire Knesses Yisrael. According to Chazal, Joseph's bundle of wheat that stood up represents Moshiah Shel Yoseph. Joseph saw in his dreams the destiny of the Jewish Nation. Joseph called them spies because had their true mission been to purchase food, there would have been no need for all of them to come down to Egypt. A few of them would have sufficed, or perhaps they could have sent their servants to purchase for them. Rather, Joseph told them that they were scouts. Had they only intended to spend a short period in Egypt, there would have been no need to send spies and scouts. Similarly when Moshe sent spies he instructed them to observe the conditions of the inhabitants as well as the land, was it fertile, were there fruit bearing trees? After all, if one intends to battle an

enemy, what difference does it make if there are fruit trees? They were fulfilling a similar concept to that of the prohibition of betrothing a woman until seeing her. That is why Moshe sent scouts to report on the land. They were beginning a long term relationship with the land so they needed to know what they were getting and needed to be familiar with it. Similarly, Joseph was telling his brothers that you are the forerunners of Bais Yisrael who will be spending a long time here, therefore you must be here to scout out the land and to become familiar with it.

The Rav noted that the Torah, in the description of many Mitzvos (especially forbidden relationships), prohibits us from emulating the abominable practices of the Egyptians. Yet, the Hashgacha decreed that only in Egypt would Bnay Yisrael become a great nation. Perhaps the Jews were brought down to Egypt so they might observe the most technologically advanced culture and people of the era. They were the technological equivalent of the USA today. Still with all their advancement, they were a morally bankrupt, corrupt nation capable of enslaving an entire nation. The Jew is commanded to love the convert, for the Jew is especially familiar with the difficulties of life as a Ger, having suffered in Egypt.

One might have thought that Joseph would have been sold as a slave to an Egyptian "professor". However, Joseph was sold as a slave to the chief executioner of Egypt (Rashi says that it was the chief butcher, however Unkelos translates it as chief executioner), whose morals, we might assume, were not of the highest level. Yet the Hashgacha wanted Joseph in such an environment in order that he might understand the need for kindness and concern towards others. Joseph tells his brothers that they are spies who have come to see the weaknesses of the land, Ervas Haaretz. In order that they may become a great nation they must observe the low morality of the Egyptians so that they may learn what activities and attitudes to avoid. The brothers answered that they were in Egypt only to purchase food. They did not understand what he was telling them. Joseph told them that they will be here for a lot longer period than simply to purchase food. Their purpose for coming was to prepare themselves, to avoid emulating the corrupt ways of the Egyptians, among whom they will be spending a long time. He is there to ensure that they fulfill their destiny of exile in Egypt, just like the Ish who led him to begin the destiny of the Jewish Nation that fateful day many years before. He was telling them that they were there as scouts to prepare for their long sojourn in Egypt. The brothers responded that they were 12 brothers at one time, and one is missing and the other is at home with his father. Joseph answers them that this confirms what he has been telling them all along, that they are all spies and scouts. And he, Joseph, was the first of the scouts that was sent years before to ensure the fulfillment of the destiny of the Jewish Nation.

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