

Ohr SHABBOS

PARSHAS MIKEITZ

This week's Parsha begins by telling us that finally, after two years of Yosef being in prison, it was time for him to be freed. Paraoth has a dream and is troubled by the meaning of it, which leads to Yosef's eventual release. Why was Yosef in prison for these two years? Rashi at the end of last week's Parsha quotes a Medrash which explains that, because Yosef put his trust in the cup-bearer and asked him to help orchestrate his release by mentioning him to Paraoth, Yosef was penalized. For every expression that he used in his request to the cup-bearer, Yosef was forced to linger an extra year in prison.

The Meforshim explain that Yosef's remaining in prison for another two years was not a punishment, since Yosef did not commit any wrongdoing by requesting the cup-bearer to remember him when he saw Paraoth. Rather, this was the natural consequence of Yosef's relying on another person to save him.

If Yosef had relied solely on Hashem and not on any natural means, then Hashem would have responded by liberating Yosef in a supernatural way. However, once Yosef asked the cup-bearer and chose an ordinary way to secure his freedom, Hashem responded by freeing him in a natural way. And this took two years longer than if Hashem had taken him out of prison in a miraculous way.

In Tehillim (121: 5) it's written that "Hashem is our shadow, our right side". The Ba'al Shem Tov explains the concept of Hashem being our shadow. Just as a shadow mimics the actions of the person, so too Hashem responds to us the way we relate to Him. A person determines the relationship he has with Hashem. If a person's sole desire in life is to serve Hashem with his entire being, then Hashem will reciprocate. If a person places his trust entirely in Hashem and doesn't worry about what is happening in the world, then Hashem will respond by leading him in a way that is supernatural. However, if a person is concerned about all the happenings in the world, then Hashem will allow him to be affected by them. Hashem will relate to a person the same way that person acts with Hashem.

That is why Yosef had to remain two years longer in prison. It was not a punishment. Rather, by choosing to ask the cup-bearer to mention him to Paraoth, Yosef established that his relationship with Hashem should be a natural relationship. And in the natural world, when one asks another for a favour, it is common that they forget.

Many times we feel distant from Hashem and we wonder why we don't feel Hashem in our daily lives. At those times we must determine: is this because we act distant from Him?

THE REST OF THE STORY:

By R' Yosef Dovid Rothbart

Yehudis had entered the Greek encampment and was brought to Holofernes. Seeing the king on his throne, she at once prostrated herself before him, but was immediately raised up.

"Do not fear," Holofernes encouraged her. "I do not wish your death or the death of any person who would serve me. Even the nation from which you came would not have been attacked had they not revolted against me. But please tell me, why have you left your city to come over to us?"

Yehudis portrayed in detail the suffering of the Jewish nation as a result of the siege. She described the terrible hunger and the lack of water. She explained that the people were so desperate for sustenance that there was talk about allowing the eating of the Korbanos.

"When I heard about that, I realized the city was lost and fled from there. God has sent me to speak to you, for your servant serves Him faithfully. And I will continue to do so while I am here as well. When He informs me that it is the time to exact His revenge on His people for their sins, I will inform you. You will enter the city without any opposition."

The king was very pleased by what Yehudis had said. He promised her that when he conquered the city she would be renowned upon the earth.

Holofernes commanded that she be taken to his private tent to dine with him. But Yehudis refused saying that before coming to his tent she must be permitted to go beyond the camp for three consecutive nights.

Each night she would leave the camp and immerse herself in a pool. She would tearfully beg Hashem to help her succeed in her attempt to save the Jewish people. Afterwards, she would return to the camp until the next night.

On the third day she accepted the offer to join Holofernes in his tent for a feast. The king's face shone when she arrived and he quickly bade her to sit next to him. She opened a pitcher of milk and drank with him. He was so overcome by being in her company that, along with the milk, he drank great quantities of wine.

After everyone had left, Yehudis found herself alone in the tent with Holofernes, who had fallen asleep, oblivious to the happenings.

Instructing her handmaiden to stand guard by the entrance of the tent, she neared the bed, paused, and with tears flowing offered a silent prayer. She ended her prayer, approached the head of the bed where the king's sword lay. Then, grasping his hair in one hand, she took hold of the sword and with a cry, "Strengthen me, Hashem," she struck him twice, severing his head.

(Based on Meam Loez)

The 25th word in the Torah is Ohr- light. (B'reishis 1: 3) The 25th place of encampment of the Jewish nation when they travelled in the desert was Chashmonah. (Bamidbar 33: 29)

HALACHA

Hilchos Shabbos Chanuka

One of the Mitzvos that the Greeks forbade the Jewish nation to keep was Shabbos. Every year on Chanuka we have an opportunity to show that, despite the efforts of the great Greek empire, the Jewish people are still around and keeping Shabbos. Let us review some of the Halachos that apply to this special Shabbos.

After the sun has set, the Menorah becomes Muktzeh and may not be moved with one's hands for any purpose. The Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 279: 1) explains that this is true even after the flames have been extinguished. If it is necessary to move the Menorah, it may be moved with one's foot, body or elbow after the lights have burned out according to the Mishna Berura (O.C. 308: 13 and 311:30 c.f. Chazon Ish O.C. 47: 13). If the place where the

menorah is standing is needed for another purpose, the Mishna Berura (279:14) writes that a non-Jew may be asked to move the Menorah after the lights have burned out. This is true regarding the table as well.

Although a Dreidel is not Muktzeh (c.f. Igros Moshe O.C. VI 22: 10), children should be discouraged from playing Dreidel games on Shabbos, even when playing with things other than money (c.f. Mishna Berura 322: 22).

Squeezing fruit or clothing on Shabbos may involve the Melacha of Dosh and is generally Assur. However, if a food has been cooked or pickled in a liquid, then one may extract the *unwanted* juice from the food according to most opinions (c. f. Aruch Hashulchan 320: 19). Based on this, most allow one to squeeze the *unwanted* oil out of latkes on Shabbos, either by hand or with a utensil. This should be done right before eating them (c.f. 39 Melachos of Shabbos II pg. 341).

Chanukah gifts may not be given or received, unless they are needed for Shabbos use (Mishna Berura 306: 33).

If Al hanisim is mistakenly omitted, the Shemoneh Esrei or Birkas ha-Mazon is not repeated.

After Shabbos ends, one must be careful to light the Menorah as close as possible to the end of Shabbos. Indeed, the Shevus Yitzchak, quoting Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv, writes that although a person who always waits for 72 minutes before ending Shabbos should do so on Chanuka as well (c.f. Igros Moshe O.C. IV 62), those who wait 72 minutes only on occasion, should not wait 72 minutes on this night, rather they should light right away. Some have the custom of lighting Chanukah candles even before Havdalah, while others light them immediately after Havdalah. All agree, though, 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.

REFLECTIONS

BY RAV MORDECHAI SCHEINER
ROSH KOLLEL

אין חכמה כתורה

We live at a time in which a plethora of advanced scientific knowledge is readily accessible. There are books written at every level that explore the marvels of the universe. How does this affect us? Does this enhance our understanding of הו"ל, or does this knowledge arouse within us questions concerning the truths contained within the statements of our great sages?

העם ההולכים בחשך ראו אור גדול - The nation that walks in darkness saw great light. This Pasuk is enigmatic. How can there be light when one is enclosed by a great darkness? The Medrash (Tanchuma Noach 3) explains that the darkness referred to is תורה שבעל פה - the Talmud. For just as one must struggle to see when he is surrounded by darkness, so too for one to understand the oral law he must study with much effort and diligence.

With this we can understand the rest of the Pasuk- "They saw great light". Although light generally enables one to see, at times it may also blind him. When one is driving at night and a car, with its headlights glaring,

approaches from the opposite direction, he cannot see even 50 metres ahead. However, in the absence of light, one has the ability to see stars millions of light-years away.

The Maharal (Be'er HaGolah, Be'er 6) elaborates on this concept. He writes that even when הו"ל made statements regarding nature and science, they didn't discuss the apparent and obvious. They felt it was trivial and insignificant.

Rather, הו"ל are teaching us the underlying metaphysical cause of everything. Science,

however, examines phenomena that can be understood and proven. What the scientists teach is the physical reality of our world.

הו"ל, on the other hand, demonstrate the spiritual cause of this reality. Each group is clarifying something else. Therefore, when Hashem gave the Torah He "ripped open the heavens"- He tore away nature and the Jewish nation saw that G-d was alone.

It is possible that the oral law is compared to night for another reason as well. Knowledge can bring a person to haughtiness. The more one knows, the more powerful he feels. However, the חכמה of the Talmud has the opposite effect, as the Rambam writes: he will be humbled by the greatness of G-d and feel small with the realization that he hasn't even begun to plumb the surface of the knowledge that lies within.

It's not appropriate to think that the Aggadata of the Talmud have little worth. Rather, they contain deep secrets and great treasures. For when a person approaches them in an intellectual manner, he will understand from them the most elevated truths and glean celestial knowledge which learned scholars attempted to conceal... However, if one were to study them superficially, he would discover ideas which are nonsensical... This was done for a number of reasons... To conceal [these ideas] from those fools whose hearts won't shine... Also the sages didn't desire to reveal some [of these secrets] to some people... A wise person who desires knowledge... must pray that He enlighten him with understanding and that He teach him the secrets... גל עיני ואביטה נפלאות מתורתך (Rambam, Introduction to the Mishna)

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Shabbos table discussions

- We light the Menorah as a commemoration of the miracle which allowed us to light the Menorah in the Mikdash. When the Beis HaMikdash was around and we had a daily reminder of this miracle, did we light the Menorah on Chanukah?
- There is a Hiddur of using a silver Menorah for Chanukah. If one uses a silver Menorah with glass cups does he fulfill this Hiddur, or is it considered that he lit using a glass Menorah?

Shabbos STORY

By R' Yossi Bergman

Never Give Up

When Chatzkel Frankel returned to the states from a visit to Warsaw after the war, he brought with him regards to the Bluzhever Rebbe from an unobservant Jew, a former Polish Bund leader named Zomatchkovski, who said simply, "Tell Rabbi Spira that he saved me. He will understand." Frankel delivered the message dutifully and waited for an explanation.

The Bluzhever Rebbe related the following story:

On the morning before Chanukah, a random *aktion* was made in Bergen-Belsen. The Germans went from barrack to barrack, taking out prisoners and shooting them dead in cold blood. There was no opportunity that day to remove all the bodies, so the prisoners had to step over and around the horrific reminders of the morning's terror.

A few days before then, some prisoners were concerned about the fact that Chanukah was approaching. They wanted to kindle Chanukah lights; but with what?

After much deliberation, they came up with a plan. The prisoners wore wooden shoes that have been dyed black by female prisoners. The shoe dye used for this was flammable and it could serve as fuel. It would be arranged to have some smuggled into the camp factory. Threads would be pulled from garments and twisted into wicks.

Now, on the night of Chanukah, the word spread that on that night there would be a secret Maariv service followed by the kindling of Chanukah lights. The Bluzhever Rebbe led the service, then recited the three Brachos of the first night of Chanukah and lit the improvised Menorah. Undeterred by the risk of being discovered, many Jews made sure to be present.

After the Rebbe finished reciting the Brachos, Zomatchovski approached him and sputtered in anger, "Rabbi Spira, there is one thing I cannot understand. You uphold the tradition you believe in, good! But how can you bring yourself to say Shecheyanu?! How dare you thank Hashem for allowing us to live in this time of torture, death and hunger? Haven't you made a mockery of our suffering?"

The Bluzhever Rebbe answered softly, "You are asking a very good question. I too, was wondering how I can joyfully recite the blessing. But then I looked around, and what did I see? Courageous

Jews gathered together to watch the candle lighting. Although they can give up hope, they insist on remaining Jews. Never have I seen such demonstration of Jewish courage and strength. For that alone it is sufficient to thank the Creator. He has given us the privilege of being alive and seeing the greatness of our people!"

The Rebbe went on, "You know our history. When you speak of Jewish suffering during the inquisition and during the Chmielnicki massacres, you admire those Jews for having the courage to rebuild. Yet you think that you have suffered more than them; that you have the right to surrender and give up hope. What makes you think you have suffered more than any other Jew in history? No! We are not giving up. We are proud that have lived to see thousands of Jews who will never give up and who are evidence that we will rebuild again!"

Years later, the unobservant Bundist was still grateful to the Rebbe for giving him the strength to survive the war and not give up.

RIDDLE

By R' Naftali Spiegel

In the year 1948 there was no Shabbos Chanuka. Why not?

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editor@ohrshabbos.com.

Please include your name and age.

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SHIURIM AND EVENTS IN KOLLEL OHR YOSEF THORNHILL COMMUNITY KOLLEL



YARCHEI KALLAH

Kollel Ohr Yosef & BAYT Adult Education invite the men and women of the community to the fifth annual Yarchei Kallah from Dec.24-Jan.1. Stay tuned for the full Yarchei Kallah schedule, including a video on the life of Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, shiurim from Rabbi Nate Segal, Rabbi Asher Vale, Rabbi Yosef Dovid Rothbart, Rabbi Moshe Taub, and Shabbos with Rabbi Eliezer Breitowitz.



AMUD YOMI

Come join the Amud Yomi shiur, led by R' Dovid Rosen on Monday through Thursday nights from 8:00-8:45 pm. The Amud Yomi shiur is a structured Gemara shiur delving into Maseches Sanhedrin at a steady pace. They are currently learning the 9th perek.

Did you know...

- That the name Chanukah stands for the combination Chanu-ko (חנו כ"ה)-camped here. It was on the 25th of Kislev that the Greeks stationed in Yerushalayim were defeated by the Chashmonaim.
- Others explain that the name "days of Chanuka" is related to a dispute between Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai? Beis Shamai maintain that the eight (the letter ח) lights are kindled on the first night, and on each successive night the number of lights is reduced by one. Beis Hillel argue. They hold that one candle is lit on the first night, two on the second, and so forth. The word Chanuka is an acronym for eight (ח) Neiros V'Halacha K'Beis Hillel (ח נרות והלכה כבית הלל)- eight candles and the practice is according to the opinion of the house of Hillel.
- In the final battle with the Greeks before the Jewish army recaptured the Mikdash, the greek army consisted of 10 million soldiers-1000 divisions of 10 thousand each?
- Hashem assembled the 70 ministering angels of the nations and enslaved them to his will? During the battle, these Sarim would catch the arrows which the Greeks shot at the Jewish army and redirect them towards the Greek soldiers.

- Whenever one of the princes that came to fight against the Jews was killed, The Sarim would take his possessions and cast them into the Jewish houses?
- After the Greeks lost this battle, Antiochus abandoned his kingdom and fled to a distant land? He was pursued by taunts of "Runaway! Coward!" wherever he went. (Based on Meam Loez)

To contribute to this section and be featured in this newsletter, email your D'var Torah to editor@ohrshabbos.com or drop off it at kollel Ohr Yosef 613 Clark Avenue West.

riddle

By R' Naftali Spiegel

How long after Yehuda's wife died did Yehuda meet Tamar in Timnah?

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