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**Rabbi Mordechai Willig –  
Financial Gloom - A Precursor to Light?**

<torahweb@torahweb.org> Thu, Dec 25, 2008 at 3:56 PM

Rabbi Mordechai Willig

Financial Gloom - A Precursor to Light?

The miracle of Chanukah occurred on the 25th of Kislev. The Maharal associates this date with the winter solstice. The world was created on the 25th of Elul, which presumably was the day of the autumnal equinox. As such, three months later, the first day of Chanukah, represents the shortest day and longest night of they year. Generally this is a mere approximation since the solstice depends on the solar calendar and Kislev is a lunar month. This year, however, Chanukah occurs on December 22nd, the precise date of the winter solstice.

The Maharal explains that Chanukah's timing symbolizes that no matter how long and dark the night, there is light at the end of the tunnel. The Chashmonaim were hopelessly outnumbered, yet they prevailed. The Bais Hamikdash was thoroughly contaminated, yet the jug of oil was found and miraculously lasted until new, pure oil could be attained.

Indeed, true light emerges only from darkness (see "Imrei Baruch", by Harav Baruch Simon, shlit"a, Shemos p. 51-54). The Chashmonai kings followed the Greek rulers, just as white sheep, symbolizing the Jews, follow the dark goats, representing the Greeks. This is the way of the world since its inception. The light of Torah follows the darkness of the Greeks, just as the day follows the night (Shabbos 77b, Maharsha).

On Chanukah we recite: "Hofachto mispedi l' mochol li - You have transformed my lament into dancing for me" (Tehilim 30:12). Out of the greatest darkness emerged the light of Chanukah, the precursor of the ultimate light of Mashiach (Meor Enayim. See "Chanukah: The Connection Between the Second and Third Temples", by Rav Hershel Schachter).

The bravery of the Chashmonaim, who battled against overwhelming odds when overcoming the physical enemy, was evident on the spiritual battlefield as well. They were not deterred by the sight of a ravaged and desecrated Beis Hamikdash. Rather, they demonstrated faith and optimism by lighting the menorah, thus meriting the miracle of Chanukah.

Each generation, and each year, produces different challenges, both physical and spiritual. Indeed, the correct response to physical and monetary setbacks is to improve our spiritual profile (see The Financial Curse: A Warning Shot?). Unfortunately, recent events have exacerbated the

financial crisis, and have created a particularly Jewish problem in the midst of an international debacle (See New York Times Dec. 23, 2008 p.1)

As Chanukah teaches, a Torah Jew must not despair. As a whole, Am Yisroel has been in much worse financial straits, and has recovered. It is incumbent on all of us to help those who have suffered direct personal losses. We must help them financially by providing jobs or interim monetary aid when appropriate, and we must help them emotionally by expressing empathy and personal support.

Parshas Mikeitz begins with Yosef's meteoric rise to power. But the seeds for this ascent, which saved the world from starvation and transformed Am Yisroel, are found in four words in Parshas Vayeshev. When Yosef saw the baker and butler upset, he asked them, "Madu'a p'neichem ra'im hayom?" (Breishis 40:7). Instead of ignoring his fellow prisoners, he empathized with them by asking, "Why are your faces downcast today?"

Individuals whose fortunes were diminished or nearly eliminated require encouragement even if all of their needs are met by what remains. A kind word or a sympathetic inquiry can achieve wonders.

We must all – rich, formerly rich, and never been rich – realize that wealth does not define a person. It is an external blessing which can come and go. The purpose of excess wealth is to help others. As Yaakov told his sons, "Lama tisrau - Why do you make yourselves conspicuous?" (Bereishis 42:1). One who has what others don't should not flaunt it (Rashi. See Kli Yakar Devarim 2:3).

Yaakov instructs his sons, "Shivru lanu me'at ochel - Buy us a bit of food" (43:2), enough to eat without luxuries. One who craves luxuries, as defined by the wealthy, will never be happy. The Torah way is to be satisfied with necessities. This yields happiness in this world and goodness in the world to come (Avos 4:1, 6:4; Sichas Mussar, by Rav Chaim Schmuelevitz, pp. 66, 67).

The recent financial crises have caused much pain and anguish. But if we improve in our sympathy to others and in our attitude towards wealth, we will have learned the lesson of Parshas Miketz. Perhaps we will then deserve to see the current darkness followed by light, in the spirit of Chanukah. May Hashem recreate the miracle of Chanukah by hastening the redemption of the Beis Hamikdash, and may He turn our lament into the ultimate dance of the righteous (Ta'anis 31a).

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<http://613.org/rav/ravnotes2.html>

**Rav Soloveitchik ZT'L**

Notice These are unapproved unedited notes [of R.Y.?] of classes given by Rav Soloveitchik.

Lecture delivered by Rabbi Soloveitchik at Talner Synagogue on Saturday evening, December 22, 1979, Eighth day of Chanukah. Talner Rebbetzen Memorial

Last year, I read a few lines and interpreted them from Hilchos Chanukah from Rambam. Tonight, I shall continue. That which I last discussed was the topic of "Lachatz" - they were oppressed. Now we find. "Hoshya Osom" - And G-d save dthe Jews from the hands of the Y'veonim. As consequence, the Kohanim killed those taht defiled the "Hachal" - the holy of the Temple. The plan of the Graeco Syrians was to destroy the entire nation and we must always bear in mind that anti-Semites always have a definite program. Their regimen is - what to do first - what to do next. However, their objectives are very important. Often, we learn a lot from our enemies. There is a time when there purpose is not to destroy necessarily but sometimes to great danger, when the "Goy" says "change your shoe laces," it is significant to the extent of the nation's survival. Even today their object is the destruction of M'dinas Yisroel. Apparently, there is something which irritates them.

In Bais Sheni - the second Temple, the objective was "Orlah" - circumcision and the Bais Hamikdash. Especially did they want to destroy the "Kodshe Kodeshim," the Holy of Holies where the Ark of Ten

Commandments had rested. There were even spread false rumors about the obscurity of the "Kodshe Kodeshim". Then, if they had been successful the whole community would have disappeared because we were not ready for "Golus" - diaspora. In order to be able to survive in "Golus" we had to have the right conditions and these conditions were not ready at that time. This is what Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai understood at the destruction of the second Temple by Rome when he appealed to Vespasian to allow the Yeshiva to be built at Yavneh. These were the conditions needed for survival. If the "Churban" - destruction had taken place now, 200 years earlier we would have vanished and perished.

They took all the material goods of the Temple and wanted to undermine sexual modesty. This is why three times the Torah tells us the episodes of Sarah and Rivka with Pharaoh and the Avimelechs. If they had been violated despite the fact that it was not their fault, they would not have been the mothers of Israel. They would have been disqualified and wouldn't have entered the halls of history. (The same would have applied to Joseph in his encounter with Potipher's wife.) Thus, when the enemy entered the Temple, apparently they realized the difference between "Tohor" (clean) and "Toma" (unclean). "Is this Tohor or Toma?" If it was Tohor they touched it and automatically defiled it. They understood. Also, they physically damaged the Bais Hamikdosh. We are not so much afraid of physical damage as spiritual because we are told that even if the Temple is completely destroyed, the Kedusha - holiness - will not disappear.

And the Jews killed the Yevonim! G-d saved the persecuted from the hands of the persecutors. Rambam tells us that G-d had mercy on them and told the "Chashmonoyim" to defend themselves. This was the first act of victory on the part of the Jews - namely the inclination for defense (that which was impractical due to the disparity of numbers.) The first victory was not terrestrial. It is that there was a group called "Chashmonoyim" who had the courage and was determined that no matter how small was their number -- too small actually to declare war, they would take up weapons and attack. G-d inspired this courage and the battle was won before they started to fight. He saved them from the hands of the Yevonim before they even started to fight. How did G-d start it? - by inspiring them to go out and fight. The group was very small - around 800 - yet they had the courage. Nothing else is recorded except the mopping up.

There is something here in Rambam's text which bothers us! It is hard to comprehend. Rambam uses the same expression concerning the people as which is used concerning G-d. "He saved them from their hands." This is an attribute which belongs exclusively to G-d and here we find it with people. It is troublesome!

At "Kriya Yam Suf" the crossing of the Red Sea, Moshe didn't take credit for himself. There it is credited solely to Hashem. Of course, they were inspired and encouraged by G-d but it is unjustified to ascribe it to people. At the "milchemes Amalek" the fight with Amalek in the desert we find, "the initiative is ours. G-d will finish it but you must start it." There we find no unusual help. "Bochur Anoshim" - chase men - I'll just help. Yet in Egypt we find (sedra Bo) "Ani V'lo Maloch" - (I and not an angel will declare war.) "You just recite the Hallel - I'll fight!" Here at Chanukah apparently G-d desired that the salvation should be named after "Bosor V'dom" - mortal beings.

In my criterion, the difference is: "What is the enemy out to accomplish? If it is physical destruction then G-d will do the entire job. If it is spiritual then the Jew must undertake action. With Amalek, "You have to be active Moshe! I'll just accept your prayer! Also, here with the Chashmonoyim it was spiritual. Many Jews were actually with the Greeks -- accepting the Greek culture and morality. This is why the "Yeshua" the salvation, is named after the Jews. They must fight and G-d will complete. Therefore the attribute of G-d is ascribed to the people. "You will win and it will be your victory." In the "Al Hanisim" prayer which we recite on Chanukah, the action is well defined. "Ravto Es Rivom, etc." - weak against strong. Apparently, the weak had to fight against the strong. "Al Hanisim" describes war between two factions. It is well described: "You gave over the

strong into the hands of weak, many in the hands of few, impure in the hands of pure, wicked into the hands of righteous!" The minority which was not expected to win, did win. It is well portrayed, almost in detail.

In Purim, it is different. Esther and Mordecai are not even mentioned save for the fact that it occurred in their time. Chanukah was a war for unique spirituality. In such a war, the Jew must participate and this is exactly what G-d wanted them to do. In Purim, the enemy wanted to destroy every Jew. Therefore, at Purim, G-d did it all. Although, Esther did endanger her life, G-d would have done it without them. There it is all G-d's victory and consequently Al Hanisim is very short.

Maimonides cannot get over that the Kohanim were involved. Israel became again an independent sovereignty. Why does Rambam tell us this? Why does he tell us that it was 200 years removed from the churban? Of course, we have already mentioned that Israel was not ready for the Churban and subsequent Golus. Actually, during the years of the second Temple there were many fasts and many feasts which are not even recorded. There were attacks by nations precipitating fasts and victories resulting in feasts. But with the advent of the Churban, these were suspended. These victories made little difference to our history. The two great exceptions are Chanukah and Purim. These are just as important now as then! Why? Because if not for Chanukah and Purim, we couldn't have survived the destruction. We have survived persecution, torture, suffering and are still a religious identity. The fact that we have survived 1900 years is due to these two holidays. I'm certain many people ask, "How did we do it?" To be in "golus" and not lose identity is a tremendous art. "Your desert of the golus is beautiful having been able to survive even Hitler." At that time, when I rode on trains and planes people asked me, "Do you still resist Christianity?" The answer is that we survived because of Chanukah and Purim. The Jew is not only a good warrior but can survive "Golus". It is due to the Chashmonoyim. We have developed a personality which is resistant to pain and torture thanks to Torah Sh'Bal Peh - the Oral Law. If not, the Churban would have destroyed all. Thus, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai was able to tell Vespasian, "You will not succeed in destroying the Jews!"

The Kohanim were the fighters, the revolutionaries and after they won the war they were awarded the kingship. Rambam mentions it twice that it was a miracle that Kohanim became kings. In my opinion, it is that in every age the enemy tries to destroy a specific object. The great hate was the "Mizbayach", the altar, because it was expensive to maintain and the Kohan was the one to protect it because only he had access. Especially as a king was he able to do so effectively. That the Kohan should observe the laws is prescribed by Torah. Thus, all considered the Kohan was hated and tried to be obliterated. It is indeed a miracle that the Kehunah should be preserved for 2200 years hence. I am often asked if a minor should Duchan and I am for it. I am also against asking a Kohan to leave the room when there are only 3 aliyahs available and it is wished to be distributed to others. We are a people composed of 3 groups and the Melech HaKohanim - the king who was Kohan preserved the Kehunah. The Besdin - the high court of that time, not only sanctioned the priestly king but it is greatly praised by Talmud and they formulated many great laws.

Basically, of course, the kingdom is only from the Davidic house but occasionally they deviated and chose from the priests. It is not against the law. It can be from a descendant of any tribe if necessary. Rambam (Nachmanides) says no -- that a king cannot be from Kohanim (as detailed in a lecture by Rabbi Soloveitchik on a previous year) but Rambam (Maimonides) allows it. Thus, G-d allowed that His crown be bestowed on humans and that the victory be ascribed to them. The very day that the "Chashmonoyim" drove out the Yevonim, they walked into the Bais Hamikdosh to appraise the damage and to begin the rededication.

Therefore, the scholars of that generation declared that the candles be lit on the 25th of the month Kislev - every evening near the door and called the holiday Chanukah.

Maimonides started with the night - lighting the candles near the doors of the houses. There are two mitzvas! In the morning, we say Hallel, in the

evening, we have "Madlikas Haner" - the lighting of candles. The object of lighting of candles is "Pirsuma Hanes" - publicizing the miracle and is, therefore, useless to light a candle at noon. But basically it is one mitzvah and the publicizing can be implemented in two ways - Hallel and Candle. It is implemented by speech (the Hallel) and sight - the candle. If someone says that he does one and not the other, then the mitzvah is incomplete. It is not two separate entities.

Rambam speaks exclusively of Hallel on Chanukah. Why not on the other holiday (Purim)? Because other holidays have other Mitzvos while Chanukah is exclusively Hallel during day and lights at night. It is one. Both aspects represent the same thing - Pirsuma Hanes.

It should like to ask the following! I would like to say that public means in a public square rather than at "one's door". It is a different motif. Why did the sages ordain to light the candles at the door? Gemora Shabbos declares that as one enters the door the mezuzah should be on the right and the candles on the left. Apparently, the door has importance. The lamp should be outside. Now it is different. It is directed to people inside. What is the difference - left or right - mezuzah and lamp? What is the logic? It is almost as leaning to the right or the left hand side when eating matzoh at the seder.

There is a common demoniator between mezuzah and Chanukah! What is the common motif? It is the nature of the mitzvah! There is a group of mitzvot called, "Mitzvah Sh'Begufa", meaning - those mitzvot which man himself must do personally. Wearing Tzitzis, pulling on Tefilin, sitting in a succah -- I cannot send someone to do it for me. I must do it myself. But the mitzvot "Lo Begufa" is not necessarily obligatory on me personally. For instance, "Biur Chometz" - the burning of the Chometz prior to Pesach. I must see that Chometz is destroyed but who does it is not important. The same is "milah" - circumcision. Torah says a father shall circumcize his son but most fathers don't do it themselves. Each Bais (home) is "mechuyav" - obligated to have mezuzos. Is my hand required to affix it? No, but I must see that it should be done!

If I live in a house it must have a mezuzah but am I obligated. No, someone else can do it. Yet Torah says, "You shall affix a mezuzah." It means I shall see that it is there! If the candle is lit by anyone who is qualified than I am "Yetzeh" - have fulfilled my duty. It is my duty to see that every night it is done during chanukah and a mezuzah all year on a dwelling. The "Kiyum" - fulfillment is anyone as long as it is done eight days. The same is mezuzah. I am "mechuyav" - obligated; I must see that while I am there it is equipped with both. This is the common denominator between mitzvot mezuzah and mitzvot chanukah. Those that established chanukah extended the mitzvah of mezuzah. Thus, the house must be decorated with mezuzah all year around and lights for 8 days. Therefore, they are placed opposite each other. They are surrounded and encircled! I don't know if the mezuzah is missing if the candle should be there.

The expression for mezuzah is the same as for Naros - the lights. It should be very precious! The same applies to Tefilin. It is a common denominator. It reminds man of G-d and elevates man to greater heights. He will think only of truth and justice. Whenever he enters the mezuzah becomes visible and the same is true with Chanukah. Man should rise higher and higher spiritually! It is one mitzvah. What should my thought be when I open the door and see the mezuzah? "Yichud Hashem" - the Oneness of G-d. How do I react to the lights of Chanukah? Likewise - "Yichud Hashem". Therefore, when I see it I am reminded of G-d's unity and G-d's providence. Therefore, Ner Chanukah must be in proximity to the mezuzah!

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Rabbi Frand on Parshas Miketz Rabbi Yissocher Frand  
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Rabbi Frand on Parshas Miketz These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape #617, The Bad Dream. Good Shabbos! A Time For Humility And A Time For Assertiveness

In this week's parsha, Yosef's brothers vigorously deny his accusation that they are spies and insist: "We are all sons of one man; we are truthful people; your servants have never been spies." [Bereshis 42:11]

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch has two interesting observations on this pasuk [verse].

First Rav Hirsch notes that we have seen throughout history that as strong as family bonds may be, when times of panic arrive, these ties often give way to an "every man for himself" attitude. When it comes to a question of "my survival or your survival," family connections have a way of breaking down very rapidly.

There was a famine. People were lining up for food. They did not know if the food supply would run out or not. Most people under such circumstances would be tempted to try to push ahead in front of the line. However, the sons of Yaakov stood together as a group. "We are all the sons of one man" in good times or in bad times. We are either all going to get food or none of us will get food.

The second insight that Rav Hirsch makes is classic Hirschian exegesis. The way the brothers stated that they were all the sons of one man by saying, "Kulanu bnei ish echad NACHNU." NACHNU [we / us] is an abbreviated version of the word ANACHNU. In fact, this very word ANACHNU is used in the next phrase of the pasuk: "keinim ANACHNU" (WE are truthful people). Rav Hirsch asks why the pasuk is inconsistent in the use of this first person plural pronoun. Why is it stated as NACHNU one time and then as ANACHNU just two words later?

Rav Hirsch explains that the two words have different connotations. NACHNU is a much more modest form of the word for "we" than is ANACHNU. When one does not wish to assert himself and wishes to show modesty, he does not use the full word ANACHNU, but rather the more subtle and diminished form, NACHNU.

Rav Hirsch elaborates: When demonstrating their distinguished genealogy (yichus), they were modest – kulanu bnei ish echad NACHNU. But when their integrity was being impugned, then the occasion called for putting aside all modesty and forcefully denying the charge. Therefore, they aggressively used the word ANACHNU and stood up proudly for who they were: WE are truthful people.

The same people, who in the previous breath were modest and humble in presenting their lineage, were forceful and unapologetic in stating whom they were: keinim ANACHNU.

Let The Almighty Say 'Enough' To My Troubles

Towards the end of the parsha, the brothers return to Yaakov and tell him that the ruler in Egypt wants to see their brother Binyamin. Yehudah takes full responsibility for Binyamin and Yaakov agrees, reluctantly, to send him. Then he adds, "And may Almighty G-d (Kel Shakai) give you mercy before the man..." [Bereshis 43:14]. The name Shakai (Shin Daled Yud) is a peculiar form of the Divine Name and is not often used in the Book of Bereshis. Why does the patriarch Yaakov invoke this Name here?

Rashi provides a Medrashic interpretation which plays on the letters Shin Daled Yud such that it be read SHE DAI [that it is enough]: "The one who said 'enough' (DAI) to the world should say 'enough' to my troubles." Rashi elaborates on the list of troubles: "For I have not had calm since my youth. I suffered the trouble of Lavan, the trouble of Eisav, the trouble of Rachel, the trouble of Dinah, the trouble of Yosef, the trouble of Shimon, and now the trouble of Binyamin."

Our patriarch Yaakov had a very tumultuous life. The list of personal family tragedies that befell Yaakov throughout his life is extensive. But what exactly is the meaning of the expression "The one who said 'enough' (DAI) to the world should say 'enough' to my troubles?"

The Medrash states that before the Almighty created this world He created and destroyed other worlds until finally He created this world and said "DAI

[enough] -- This is the world I am going to go with!" What was different about this world that was not present in the other worlds?

The Shemen HaTov sites a comment from the Rebbe Reb Bunim (P'schis'cha [1765-1827]). One of the fundamentals of our faith is that we have the ability to choose good or to choose bad. That is the reason we can be held accountable for what we do. But in order for us to be able to freely choose, the Almighty had to create a world with a perfect balance between the physical/material (gashmiyus) and the spiritual (ruchniyus). The world had to be one in which a person was not necessarily forced to choose good or condemned to choose evil. It had to be a world where things would not be obvious.

If every time we choose that which is good, everything always went perfectly for us then everyone would always choose good. Likewise if every time a person chose that which is bad, he would be struck by lightning, then no one would choose to do that which is bad.

This is how the Rebbe Reb Bunim explains the medrashic expression "the Almighty created worlds and destroyed them". He created many worlds that did not have just the right balance, until He got to this world and He said "enough". I have now created the perfect world in which the desired harmony between ruchniyus and gashmiyus exists. Now, in this world, a person can freely choose between good and bad.

The Vilna Gaon similarly explains the Rabbinic teaching: "originally the Almighty wished to create the world with the Attribute of Justice (midas haDin), but He saw that the world could not thereby survive so he joined with it the Attribute of Mercy (midas haRachamim)." Had the world been created solely with the Attribute of Justice, if one sinned he would immediately have been punished. But G-d saw that the world could not continue like that. The Gaon explains that it could not continue like that because then there would be no free choice – everyone would be forced to choose that which is good!

What does stop a person who does something bad in this world? To handle this, the Almighty created suffering (yeesurin). Troubles, pain, and anguish are all reminders. They throw up a red flag, so to speak, and keep a person honest. They give pause and make a person think. They serve as a counter balance to a tendency to choose evil.

It doesn't always happen. A person can sin and get away with it for years without it affecting him. But eventually these 'yeesurin' will come to haunt him. They will get him to think and re-evaluate his actions and deeds of the past. He will need to reassess and decide whether he needs to change his ways.

The Sages say that salt is called a covenant (bris) and yeesurin are called a covenant. Salt is a wonderful spice. What would our food taste like without salt? But when things get too salty, they become inedible. Yeesurin are the same way. There must be a little yeesurin in this world to keep us honest. But if things become too 'salty' (too much yeesurin), they become unbearable.

This is what the patriarch Yaakov said. "The One who said to this world 'Enough' -- Namely the Almighty who created this planet with an institution called 'choice' whereby a person can do good or do evil, and the One who provided man with the phenomenon of yeesurim to keep him honest -- He knows that if those yeesurim become too overwhelming, man can not go on. Then there is no choice left.

In effect, this is what Yaakov said to the brothers. "You should know that I have had enough trouble in my life already. I have reached the end of my rope. The Almighty who said 'Enough' to His world, realizing there needs to be this perfect balance, He now should say 'Enough' to my troubles already.

This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. Tapes or a complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information. To

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From: Kol Torah [koltorah@koltorah.org] Sent: Friday, December 23, 2005 2:22 PM To: koltorah@koltorah.org Subject: Kol Torah Parshat Vayeishev The Rambam's Rescue of the Holiday of Chanukah

### **The Rambam's Rescue of the Holiday of Chanukah by Rabbi Chaim Jachter**

In honor of Chanukah, we will devote the next two issues to Chanukah-related topics and shall return afterwards. IY"Y and B"Y, to our presentation about why smoking is forbidden. Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik writes in his essay entitled Raayanot Al HaTefillah that the Rambam "rescued" or restored the Mitzvah of Tefillah to insure its proper distinction as a Biblical obligation. In this essay, we seek to demonstrate that in a somewhat similar vein, the Rambam may be described as having rescued or restored the observance of Chanukah to its rightful place. I am indebted to the TABC's 5765 "Y9" Gemara Shiur for their many contributions to this analysis of this topic. In addition, I wish to thank the people to which that I delivered a Shiur on this topic in West Orange, New Jersey on the Shabbat before the wedding of my brother-in-law Rabbi Etan Tokayer to my sister-in-law Esther (formerly Najar). The group included some prominent educators such as Rabbi Etan as well as Rabbi Jeffrey Saks and Rabbi Marc Smilowitz, and I wish to acknowledge the ideas that this group contributed to this essay.

Chanukah in the Mishnah and Gemara The Mishnah pays scant attention to the holiday of Chanukah. The author of the Mishnah, Rabi Yehuda HaNassi devotes a full Masechet (tractate) to every holiday except Chanukah. He does acknowledge its existence in passing in two places. It is mentioned in Masechet Bikkurim (1:6) as the latest opportunity to bring Bikkurim (for an interesting explanation of the connection between Chanukah and Bikkurim, see Rav Yoel Bin Nun's essay in Megadim 12:49-97). It is mentioned a second time in passing in Masechet Bava Kamma (6:6), where a Mishnah discusses a case in which flax carried by a camel catches fire from Chanukah candles placed in front of a store. We see that Rabi Yehuda Hannassi recognizes Chanukah's existence but seems to have deliberately sought to downplay its significance. This point is highlighted by contrasting it with how Rabi Yehuda Hannassi dealt with Purim. I once heard from Rav Hershel Schachter that there is not really sufficient material regarding Purim to fill an entire Masechet. Therefore, Rabi Yehuda Hanassi "padded" Masechet Megillah with important but tangential material in order to dignify Purim by devoting a complete Masechet to the holiday. It is for this reason, explains Rav Schachter, that Masechet Megillah includes discussions of the Halachot regarding Torah reading and Beit Keneset as well as the series of "Ein Bein" Mishnayot in the first chapter (Mishnayot five-eleven) that have little or no relevance to Purim. The fact that Rabi Yehuda Hanassi chose not to devote an entire Masechet to Chanukah or even a chapter regarding Chanukah is striking evidence of Rabi Yehuda's intention to minimize this holiday. Indeed, there is no systematic discussion of the Halachot of Chanukah in the Mishnah. In addition, Rabbi Saks noted that there is precious little extra-Mishnaic Tannaitic material (such as Braitot or Tosefot) devoted to a discussion of Chanukah. It seems that the other Tannaim shared Rabi Yehuda Hanassi's agenda of minimizing the holiday of Chanukah.

The Gemara does not elaborate on Chanukah, but at least includes a somewhat systematic discussion of its Halachot in Masechet Shabbat (21b-24a) in the chapter that discusses the Halachot regarding Shabbat candles. However, the fact that the Gemara raises such basic questions regarding Chanukah, such as why we celebrate Chanukah at all

(Shabbat 21b, as explained by Rashi s.v. Mai) and whether we recite Mussaf on Chanukah, seems to point to the fact that the Tannaim paid scant attention to this holiday.

Chanukah in the Mishneh Torah In stark contrast, the Rambam devotes an entire section of his Mishneh Torah to the Halachot regarding Chanukah. By doing so, the Rambam places the holiday of Chanukah on par with other holidays such as Purim. In fact, the Rambam seems to greatly emphasize that Chanukah is a holiday just as Purim is a holiday. He couples Hilchot Chanukah with Hilchot Megillah and he compares various aspects of Chanukah to Purim (Hilchot Chanukah 3:3-5). He writes that we may not eulogize or fast on Chanukah just as we may not do so on Purim, and that lighting Neiros Chanukah is a rabbinically ordained Mitzvah just like reading the Megillah. Parenthetically, I should note that I heard a differing explanation in the name of Rav Soloveitchik for the Rambam's repeated references in Hilchot Chanukah to Purim. He explains that Purim established a precedent for Chazal to create a new holiday celebrating the salvation of our nation from its enemies. For an explanation for why Chazal hesitated to establish a new holiday, see Megillah 14a.

The Rambam also seems to "pad" Hilchot Chanukah in order to insure that it can occupy an entire section in his Mishneh Torah. The Rambam includes a full description of the miracle of Chanukah even though he does not include even a minimal description of the miracle of Purim in Hilchot Megillah (for an alternative explanation for this phenomenon, see Rav Soloveitchik's thoughts cited in Harerei Kedem 1:271). He also includes a full discussion of the Halachot of Hallel in Hilchot Chanukah, despite the fact that it would seem to have been more appropriate to include in Hilchot Tefillah (again we should note that there are other explanations; Rav Soloveitchik explains that the Rambam included the laws of Hallel in Hilchot Chanukah to teach that Hallel is the essence of the holiday of Chanukah). Rav Soloveitchik (cited in Harerei Kedem 1:272) explains that the Rambam even includes a basis for making a Seudah on Chanukah, as the Rambam describes this holiday as a time for Simcha (Hilchot Chanukah 3:3). Indeed, the Taz (Orach Chaim 670:4) cites the Maharshal who writes, "It is a Mitzvah to rejoice on Chanukah, as the Rambam indicates that these are days of celebration." It is in fact our custom to make a Seudat Chanukah despite the fact that there is no explicit Talmudic source for such a practice and despite the fact that some Acharonim (see the Levush's introduction to Hilchot Chanukah) believe it is entirely unnecessary. The Seudat Chanukah is another manner in which we dignify the holiday of Chanukah. The Rambam, in uncharacteristic style for his Mishneh Torah, waxes eloquently about the importance of Ner Chanukah (Hilchot Chanukah 4:12). He writes, "The Mitzvah of Ner Chanukah is exceedingly beloved and one must scrupulously observe this Mitzvah in order to publicize the miracle and increase praise and expression of gratitude to Hashem for the miracles that He has performed for us."

Moreover, this eloquent advocacy for the observation of Chanukah is followed by an extraordinary Halacha presented by the Rambam that has no explicit Talmudic source. The Rambam states that if one does not have sufficient funds to purchase Ner Chanukah, he should borrow money or even sell some of his clothes in order to procure the money to buy Neiros Chanukah. The Maggid Mishneh comments that there is no explicit Talmudic source for this assertion, but the Rambam drew an analogy between Neiros Chanukah and the Arba Kosot for Pesach. The Rambam reasoned, writes the Maggid Mishneh, that just as the Halacha requires a poor person to sell his clothes in order to purchase wine for the Arba Kosot (Pesachim 99b and see Rashbam s.v. VeAfilu), so too one must sell his clothes to purchase Neiros Chanukah, as the purpose of both Mitzvot is to publicize miracles that Hashem has performed for us.

Thus, in a dramatic fashion, the Rambam demonstrates for us the importance of observing the holiday of Chanukah. The Rambam (Hilchot Chanukah 4:14) even seems to apologize for ruling that if one can fulfill either Neiros Shabbat or Neiros Chanukah, he should choose Neiros Shabbat. It is possible that the Rambam feels compelled to offer a lengthy

explanation for his ruling in order to avoid degrading the holiday of Chanukah.

We should note that the Rambam seems to be following the precedent of the Amoraim who discuss Chanukah in more detail than do the Tannaim, and he merely advances the process one step further. We shall, Y"Y and B"N, discuss this matter further next week.

Why Do the Tannaim Minimize Chanukah? An explanation that is often advanced why Chanukah is minimized in the Mishnah is that Rabi Yehuda Hanassi was a descendant of David HaMelech (see Shabbat 33b) and he was upset that the Hasmoneans usurped the Meluchah (kingship) from the descendants of David HaMelech. Indeed, the Rambam (Bereishit 49:10) strongly criticizes the Hasmoneans (who were Kohanim) for assuming political power instead of someone from the tribe of Yehuda. Even during the tumultuous times described in Sefer Melachim Bet (Kings II), when political assassinations were unfortunately quite common and the spiritual level of the masses was relatively low, they always insured (and sometimes even made extraordinary efforts) that the son of the deposed king was named as the successor in order to preserve the Davidic line.

Moreover, it seems that we accepted Zerubavel as our leader during the early days of Bayit Sheini (the Second Temple) because he was a great grandson of Yechania (Yehoyachin, a king of Davidic descent), as stated in Divrei HaYamim I (3:16-19). Rav Yoel Bin Nun speculates that the descendants of Zerubavel did not continue to serve as the governors of Judea because the Persian government feared that this would spark a Jewish desire for independence and sovereignty. Accordingly, when the Hasmoneans finally restored Jewish sovereignty over parts of Eretz Yisrael, a descendant of Zerubavel or some other descendant of David HaMelech should have been appointed as king. The appointment of Kohanim as the political leader was the first time that Jews voluntarily chose to break the Davidic line.

Therefore, Rabi Yehuda Hanassi decided to leave the Halachot of Chanukah in the domain of Torah SheBe'al Peh (oral law) as an implicit criticism of the Hasmoneans and as a lesson for generations that when Jewish sovereignty is fully restored, a descendant of Beit David should be appointed as king (see Yeshayahu 11:1 and the Rambam Hilchot Melachim chapter eleven). The Rambam, in turn, may have feared that leaving Chanukah's Halachot in the realm of Torah SheBeAl Peh would cause them to be forgotten entirely, due to the instability of Jewish life of the time (see the Rambam's introduction to the Mishneh Torah).

Another possibility for the almost complete omission of Chanukah from the Mishnah is the proximity of the writing of the Mishnah (c. 200 C.E.) to the Bar Kochba revolt (135-138 C.E.). The against-all-odds victory of the Hasmoneans against the Syrian-Greeks served as an inspiration for those who wished to revolt against the Roman Empire's control of Eretz Yisrael. Moreover, Chanukah was established in part to celebrate the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over Eretz Yisrael (see the Rambam Hilchot Chanukah 3:1). Perhaps the Tannaim, who in general were not supportive of the Bar Kochba revolt as stated in the Jerusalem Talmud (Ta'anit 4:5), wished to cool some of the passion for revolt by relegating the Halachot of Chanukah for the Torah SheBeAl Peh. Indeed, Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch (Devarim 8:10) explains that a message of the fourth Berachah of Birkat HaMazon, which was established after the failure of the Bar Kochba revolt (Berachot 48b), was to avoid repeating the Bar Kochba revolt. The Rambam, however, either feared that Chanukah would be forgotten or realized that by his time (he wrote the Mishneh Torah in the 1180's) the passion for revolt had cooled. The Rambam had to express great enthusiasm for Chanukah to avoid our concluding from the Mishnah that Chanukah is not an important holiday.

Conclusion Rabi Yehuda Hanassi and the other Tannaim felt it important to reserve discussion of Chanukah to the Torah SheBeAl Peh. We may speculate as to the reasons for this phenomenon and the lessons that we derive from it, particularly today in a time when Jewish sovereignty has been restored to parts of Eretz Yisrael with some international approval.

The Rambam, in turn, rescued the holiday of Chanukah, which would likely have been forgotten had he not so enthusiastically celebrated it in

writing. Next week we shall, IY" H and B" N, we shall discuss the Rambam's source in the Gemara for stressing the importance of Chanukah.

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#### **Make it Public by Rabbi Yosef Adler**

Throughout the days of Chanukah, we recite two Berachot prior to the lighting of the candles: "LeHadlik Neir Shel Chanukah" and "SheAsah Nisim." This second Berachah also is recited on Purim prior to the reading of the Megillah. However, on Pesach night there is no such formal declaration. What might be the difference between the two? Furthermore, the Rambam, in his description of the obligation to light the Menorah each night, states that the purpose of the Mitzvah is "LeHarot ULeGalot HaNeis," "to show and to reveal the miracle." What exactly does the Rambam mean by "to reveal" the miracle? Is it hidden from view or disguised? At the end of Parashat BeShalach, the Torah describes the battle waged against Amaleik. After the victory, Moshe builds a Mizbeiach, "VaYikra Shemo Hashem Nisi," "And he proclaimed its name 'God who performed this miracle for me'" (Shemot 17:15). Moshe had seen Hashem perform dozens of miracles in Mitzrayim. He never felt compelled to erect a Mizbeiach to thank Hashem for having performed any of those miracles on behalf of Am Yisrael. Why did he feel compelled to erect a Mizbeiach after the battle with Amaleik? Perhaps the answer lies in the miracle itself. In regard to the miracles in Mitzrayim and at the splitting of the sea, everyone recognized the hand of Hashem as being responsible for the events. Chazal state that a simple maidservant at the splitting of the sea saw the hand of Hashem more clearly than the prophet Yechezkeil. After the third plague, even the Egyptian lords admitted, "Etzba Elokim Hi," "It is the finger of Hashem" (Shemot 8:15). Under those conditions, it was not necessary to build a Mizbeiach in tribute to Hashem, because it was obvious to one and all that He was responsible. That is why Am Yisrael burst into song after the Egyptians drowned in the sea. However, when battling Amaleik, members of Am Yisrael participated in the actual battle under the leadership of Yehoshua. They bore arms and waged war physically against Amaleik. It is possible that one could have concluded that the victory came as a result of his own initiatives and efforts. It was more difficult to recognize and identify the hand of Hashem in that situation. Therefore, Moshe erected the Mizbeiach, which would direct the attention of Am Yisrael to the fact that this victory also was a result of divine intervention. The same is true of the events of Chanukah and Purim. The battle against the Yevanim was waged by the members of the Chashmonai family. The name of Hashem does not appear in the Megillah. Therefore, someone might be led to believe that Hashem did not orchestrate those miracles. To dispel this misapprehension, we recite the Berachah "SheAsah Nisim," emphasizing that Hashem in fact was responsible for all of the miracles associated with those days. It also is for this reason that the Rambam states that it is our obligation to reveal the miracle, because it may not be that obvious that Hashem played the primary role, albeit in a disguised fashion, in the unfolding of these miracles. The Rambam therefore concludes his description of Hilchot Chanukah, "Mitzvat Chanukah Chavivah Hi Ad Meod VeTzarich Adam LeHizaheir Bah Kedei LeHodia HaNeis UIHosif BeShevach HaKeil," "The Mitzvah of Chanukah is very precious, and one should be very careful to publicize the miracles and to add praise unto the Almighty." In our own generation, one senses the identical problem. Hashem has been kind enough to our generation to make possible the creation of the state of Israel, to allow a Jewish government to control its affairs, and to see to the reunification of Yerushalayim. However, a good segment of the Orthodox community does not perceive these events as

emanating from Hashem. Those in our community that have come to that recognition should make every effort to publicize those miracles, and, perhaps, even recite the Berachah of "SheAsah Nisim" to accomplish that objective.

Pirsumei Nissa - Light Up the World; Enlighten Ourselves by Shlomo Klapper

In his Hilchot Chanukah (3:3), Rambam records that the Chachamim (Sages) established the holiday of Chanukah as eight days, starting from the 25th of Kisleiv, of happiness and thanksgiving, during which we light the Menorah "LeHarot ULeGalot HaNeis," "to show and reveal the miracle." Later (4:12), Rambam writes of the Mitzvah of lighting Neiroi Chanukah (the Chanukah candles), "Chavivah Hi Ad Me'od," "it is exceptionally beloved." He continues to say that one must do Pirsumei Nissa, publicize Hashem's miracle, and thank Him for the miracles He performed on Am Yisrael's behalf. Rambam's explanation behooves several questions. Why does Rambam highlight "LeHarot ULeGalot HaNeis" as the crux of Neiroi Chanukah? What is the difference between LeHarot and LeGalot?

Rambam does not say a Mitzvah is "Chavivah" when writing about other cases of Pirsumei Nissa, such as reading Megillat Ester on Purim and drinking four cups of wine on Pesach. How is Neir Chanukah different from other Mitzvot of Pirsumei Nissa and deserving of the term "Chavivah"? Obviously there is something special about Neir Chanukah, since if Pirsumei Nissa's purpose were just to thank Hashem, it would not be different than what we do everyday during davening! What is unique about Neiroi Chanukah and how do we characterize this special dimension?

The Mitzvah of Neiroi Chanukah is not defined as "Zeicher LeMikdash," established to commemorate Temple practices. Nevertheless, Neiroi Chanukah carry their own special Kedushah, evident from the words we say every night of Chanukah, "HaNeiroi HaLalu Kodesh Heim," "these candles are sacred." From where is this Kedushah derived if not from the Beit HaMikdash? Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik explains all these questions based on a statement of the Gemara (Shabbat 22b). It writes that the Beit HaMikdash's Menorah, expressly its Neir Tamid (perpetually lit center candle) was an undyingly glowing reminder that Hashem's Shechinah (divine presence) resides among Bnei Yisrael. Rambam, in his commentary to Parashat BeHaalotecha, writes that the Chanukiyah replaces the Menorah BeZman HaZeh (nowadays). We can thus see that their goals are the same: to physically show that Hashem's Shechinah is among the Jews, even in our generation. The fulcrum of the disagreement between the Greeks and Jews was if Bnei Yisrael is a nation chosen from among other nations. This issue has been the source of anti-Semitism from Greeks, Romans, Christians, and Muslims. The Greeks posited that G-d did not cull the Jews from among other peoples; however, the Menorah averred this claim's speciousness, as it exhibited that Hashem still remained with the Jews. Thus, we can understand the Chanukah candles in a different light. The candles do not only remind us of the miracle, but reveal Hashem's Shechinah. When one lights Neiroi Chanukah nowadays, he shows that Hashem still resides among Bnei Yisrael. Rambam thus emphasizes that Neiroi Chanukah are meant LeHarot ULeGalot HaNeis. LeHarot is to show something perceptible; LeGalot is to reveal something hitherto unknown. To illustrate the two different definitions, one can draw a parable to touring a house. LeHarot is showing extant aspects of an existing house; LeGalot is showing an empty field, how a house formerly stood upon it, who lived in the house, how it was burnt down, and other details that are not readily apparent. Neiroi Chanukah have two functions. One is LeHarot HaNeis, to show others the well-known miracle by lighting in a public place. The other is LeGalot HaNeis – to reveal Chanukah's not readily apparent essence, to reveal why we fought the Greeks, to reveal why we are still lighting commemorative candles today, to reveal to the entire world that Jews are unique and chosen by God, and to reveal that He resides with us – by kindling Chanukah candles. Hashem shows Himself

through Neir Chanukah as he did through the Neir Tamid in the Beit HaMikdash. Through Neir Chanukah, we demonstrate that Hashem resides in every Jew. That fact is the pivot upon which the Torah is based. Thus, Rambam uses the special language of "Chavivah" to show us that Neir Chanukah is beloved because it epitomizes the Torah's essence. As they show the bond between Hashem and Bnei Yisrael, Neir Chanukah are independently holy. We, says the Rav, should approach them with reverence, as Moshe approached the Senneh (the Burning Bush). Unlike during other persecutions, where Jews were clearly persecuted, during Galut Yavan, the Greek exile, Jews were not overtly victimized. Yet before the Maccabee victory, Judaism was in dire straits. Millions of Jews were fully assimilated, usually willingly, into Greek culture, whose openness to proselytes was an anomaly among the era's world cultures. Shocked and lured by prosperity and inclusiveness, Jews rampantly assimilated into Greek culture at record, uncontrolled, astonishing rates. The Gemara laments that Jews disregarded even basic Mitzvot, like observing Shabbat and refraining from Melachah. The biggest problem the Jews faced was intermarriage, caused by the unchecked assimilation. The Beit HaMikdash was defiled and violated, but the Jews did not retaliate due to the unbearable, seductive burden of Galut Yavan. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were dying; but, unlike in other persecutions, these Jews were dying spiritually. No fundamental Mitzvot, no usable Beit HaMikdash, pernicious intermarriage rates, and unbridled assimilation always compose a fatal recipe for the Jewish nation. But the Chanukah victory changed our nation's spirit. We stopped assimilating and intermarrying, cleaved to Torah and Mitzvot, and rededicated the Beit HaMikdash. Many claim that we are now in Galut Yavan, as Judaism is suffering spiritually, not physically. Before the "Modern Era," Jews clung to their religion and to each other because they were all we had. Society was less than amiable to Jews. Nowadays, however, we are free from violent persecution and the deleterious intermarriage and assimilation rates plaguing Jews are at historic highs, reminiscent of the Greeks' spiritual attacks. There is no Beit HaMikdash, and, unfortunately, the vast majority of Jews do not observe Mitzvot because of indifference or lack of exposure. The parallels between our current exile and the Greek exile are mortifying. Querulous many say there is no foreseeable end to this Greek exile, for our Jewish nation is incorrigibly divided. Chanukah, however, shows otherwise. In the first Galut Yavan, the Jews were saved by retaking control of Israel, reestablishing their Jewish identity, and showing that God's presence resides among Bnei Yisrael. We should learn from the first Galut Yavan, show our identity to the world, and reveal that God, albeit concealed, resides with Am Yisrael. For centuries, publicly lighting Neir Chanukah would endanger one's life; fortunately, we live in a time which allows us to proudly and conspicuously light Neir Chanukah without fear. When we light the Chanukah candles, therefore, we should assert our unique identity to the world. It is thus paradoxical that Chanukah, the holiday when Jews are most conspicuously Jewish, is the holiday unfortunately adulterated with non-Jewish themes. Sadly, Chanukah has somewhat morphed into a modulated version of another major holiday in December. When we kindle the sacrosanct Neir Chanukah this year, perhaps we ought to turn the light inward: LeHarot, to show ourselves the previous rescue from Galut Yavan, which will be repeated only after we realize the imperative LeGalot, to reveal to ourselves and appreciate our unique identity as Jews, a people G-d chose from among all other nations.

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From: **Rabbi Goldwicht** [rgoldwicht@yutorah.org] Sent: Thursday, December 29, 2005 10:08 PM To: Shulman, Charles Subject: Parashat Mikeitz 5766 WEEKLY INSIGHTS BY RAV MEIR GOLDWICHT  
Parashat Mikeitz

Our parasha, Parashat Mikeitz, opens with Pharaoh's dreams and ends with Yosef's rise to power. The previous parasha, Parashat VaYeishev also

opens with dreams—those of Yosef—and ends with Yosef's "descent" into the pit—prison. Both parshiot open with dreams; however, one ends tragically, while the other ends positively.

The lesson is clear: When a person dreams about himself, placing himself in the center of the Universe, he will end up lonely and empty-handed. However, if a person tries to realize the dreams of others, as Yosef does with Pharaoh's dreams, he will rise to great heights.

Life is full of dreams. The key is to always help others fulfill their dreams to the greatest extent possible. Not only does one lose nothing by helping others, but, quite the contrary, one merits the fulfillment of his or her own dreams.

Once Yosef realized the mistake of his original dreams, in which he placed himself at the center while the members of his family prostrated themselves before him, he knew that the remedy was not only to interpret Pharaoh's dreams for him, but to advise him towards the fulfillment of those dreams. It was this advice that sparked his rise to power as second-in-command to Pharaoh.

The Ramban and other Rishonim ask how Yosef was so brazen as to advise Pharaoh without being asked for it. Yosef's "chutzpah" is especially striking considering that he was standing in the presence of all of the chartumim and wise men of Mitzrayim.

The answer is as follows: When Pharaoh reported his dream to the chartumim and wise men, he did not report it accurately. Rashi points out one of the more obvious examples: In his dream, the Torah tells us that Pharaoh stood upon the Nile, considered a G-d in Mitzrayim; in recalling the dream for his wise men, however, Pharaoh claims to have stood on the banks of the Nile, knowing full well he could not get away with standing on a G-d of Egypt.

In his dream, Pharaoh dreams of seven beautiful, fat-fleshed cows ("y'fat mar'eh uv'riot basar") and seven ugly, lean-fleshed cows ("ra'ot mar'eh v'dakot basar"); in reporting the dream to Yosef, however, he chooses different words to describe the cows. "In my dream...seven cows, fat-fleshed and beautiful ('y'fat to'ar')...and seven cows...poor, very ugly, and lean-fleshed ('rakot basar')." When Yosef hears "y'fat to'ar," he recalls his mother, Rachel, whom the Torah describes as y'fat to'ar; when he hears "rakot basar," he recalls his aunt, Leah, whom the Torah describes as "v'einei Leah rakot." (Although the spelling is different, the pronunciation is the same.) The Leah-cows, Yosef's brothers, tried to kill the Rachel-cows, Yosef.

From this, Yosef understood that Pharaoh's dreams were personally relevant to him. In solving Pharaoh's dreams, he was also solving his own. He interpreted Pharaoh's dreams as a sign that Yosef's own family would soon arrive in Mitzrayim, and saw his opportunity to advise Pharaoh in the hopes of being placed in a position that would enable him to ease his family's transition into Mitzrayim.

In short, in the process of helping Pharaoh realize his dreams, Yosef brings his own dreams to fruition—not to rule over his brothers, but rather to ease their transition into Mitzrayim where they could live as equals, as brothers are meant to be.

Dreams are a significant part of our existence as Am Yisrael. "When Hashem brought back those who returned to Zion, we were as those who dream" (Tehillim 126). It is important to dream, for one who dreams, achieves. But it is even more important to help others realize their dreams. Through this, we will merit the fulfillment of all of our dreams in a way that increases the glory of Heaven.

Shabbat Shalom and Chanukah Sameach!  
Meir Goldwicht

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**Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum** - Parshas Mikeitz

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And it happened at the end of two years to the day: Pharaoh was dreaming that behold - he was standing over the River. (41:1)

There are dreams, and there are dreams. Someone once commented to Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, father of the mussar, ethical development, movement that "life is but a dream." Rav Yisrael countered, "It is a dream only to those who are sleeping." Some other individuals view life as a nightmare and attempt to escape it. It all depends upon: who you are; your perspective; and how you live. Ultimately, one's dreams will be an expression of himself. Yaakov Avinu dreamed; Yosef dreamed. Their dreams were dreams of substance, which carried profound messages. The Chief Chamberlain and Chief Baker also dreamed, as did Pharaoh. They, too, had dreams which carried messages, but they did not know the deep meaning of their dreams; they were unable to discern the messages.

Let us delve into Pharaoh's dream and attempt to extract some of its lessons. He dreamed that the seven scrawny cows had swallowed the seven healthy cows, such that the healthy cows literally disappeared within the scrawny cows. It was as if it never had happened. No physical alteration whatsoever occurred in the appearance of the scrawny cows. Two anomalies about this dream surely bothered Pharaoh. Of course, he had no idea how to discern the meaning of the dreams. First, cows are not carnivorous. Thus, it is not likely for the scrawny cows to swallow the healthy cows. Second, the fact that no physical change transpired in the scrawny cows leaves us wondering.

We can understand why Pharaoh was so disconcerted. Yosef interpreted the dream to Pharaoh's satisfaction. A hunger would occur that would be so unnatural that it would "swallow" up the years of plenty, to the point that they would be completely forgotten. We can derive another worthwhile lesson from the scrawny cows' post-swallowing appearance. The Sfas Emes gleans from here that within the forces of evil exist forces of good. Without the good embedded within, the evil would be unable to exist even for a moment. True, we do not always see the good within the evil. Indeed, the evil is so intense that it is impossible to believe that amidst this evil good is concealed. That is, however, the lesson of the scrawny cows. Their physical appearance defied the human eye to notice the healthy cows within, but they were present.

This lesson has a practical application for us. At times we stand in wonderment, stupefied by the success and triumph of evil. The feeble-minded even begin to believe that it is all over; evil has triumphed. In with the bad; out with the good. Those who are astute, who are guided by their deep-rooted belief, understand that the truth can never be abrogated. Often, it is concealed under many layers of falsehood, but it is buried underneath. On the contrary, the truth is what sustains the evil and falsehood without!

Pure falsehood has no leg to stand on. In order for sheker, mendacity, to thrive, a little truth must be mixed in. All of the bogus ideologies-- the philosophies of deception and misrepresentation of the facts-- are able to exist only with the support of the little good embedded within. If we take the time and make the effort to analyze these perverse credos, expounded by individuals who take hypocrisy to a new nadir, we will see that they exist only because there is some inherent good or truth within the foundations of their belief.

So Yehudah said, "What can we say to my lord? How can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? G-d has uncovered the sin of your servants.

Here we are: We are ready to be slaves to my lord both we and the one in whose hand the goblet was found." (44:16)

We see what seems to be a contradictory pattern of behavior in the way the Shivtei Kah, twelve tribes, were acting. Initially, with Yehudah at the helm, they seemed to be acting almost obsequiously. They were taking the blame for everything, protesting that they were at fault and that they had been sinners. Suddenly, Yosef stated, "I cannot do that. The man who stole the goblet is the one that will be held responsible, and he will be punished - no one else." As soon as Yosef made this declaration, Yehudah, the king of the brothers, stepped forward, faced off against Yosef, and began to speak harshly with him. He threatened to destroy all of Egypt, including Yosef. What happened? What aspect of Yosef's statement caused such a transformation?

Horav Eliyahu Lopian, zl, refers to the execution of the Asarah Harugei Malchus, ten sages who died martyrs' deaths at the hands of the Romans. Chazal tell us that before they accepted death, they requested that Rabbi Yishmael ascend to Heaven and discern if this gezeirah, decree, was Heaven-sent or the natural reaction of an anti-Semitic king. The question that glares at us is simple: What difference did it make?

Rav Elya explains that had the sages discovered that this decree had not originated in Heaven and that it had been purely the work of an evil Emperor, they would not have accepted death. They would have fought the Romans. With the same esoteric power that permitted them to ascend to Heaven, they would have overpowered the Romans. This is possible when the decree is not from Heaven. When it is clear that the Heavenly Tribunal has declared that they be executed, there is nothing to discuss. Hashem has spoken. We listen, and we accept.

The Shivtei Kah had a similar reaction. They were not aware of any sin on their part which would have caused them to be deserving of such ghastly treatment by the Egyptian viceroy. The only slight infraction that gnawed at them was the incident concerning Yosef. They immediately accepted the consequences, even though they had not stolen the silver goblet. They accepted it as their retribution for selling Yosef: "Hashem has discovered the sin of your servant." They believed that Hashem wanted them to become slaves as punishment for an earlier sin on their part. They asserted: We will, therefore, all become slaves, because we are all responsible.

This was all satisfactory until Yehudah heard that only Binyamin would remain as a slave. They immediately recognized that this was not a Heavenly response to their sale of Yosef, because Binyamin had not been involved in that episode. They were the ones who had sold Yosef, and, therefore, they should be the ones to be sold - not Binyamin, who had not even been there. It was at that moment that it dawned on them that Yosef was simply a wicked man out to satisfy his evil tendency. They would not tolerate this. If they were innocent, they would not accept punishment. This is when Yehudah stepped in and threatened Yosef.

How fortunate is he who lives in such a manner, who accepts Hashem's decree, because he is willing to acknowledge that he is not perfect. How much greater is he who can say unequivocally, "I have done no wrong."

Chazal further elaborate this idea when they relate the conversation that took place between the executioner and Rabbi Chanina ben Teradyon. Apparently, money that had been set aside for Purim and money that had been designated for tzedakah were mixed together. Rabbi Chanina became aware of this, and he remarked, "Woe is me, perhaps I became liable for Heavenly excision." It was precisely at that moment that the Roman executioner knocked on his door to notify him that he was being summoned to the executioner's block: "Rabbi, it has been decreed on you to be wrapped in your Torah and burned together with it."

The time arrived, and the executioner wrapped Rabbi Chanina in the Torah, setting fire to the pyre that had been placed at his legs. The fire consumed the wood, but miraculously it did not touch Rabbi Chanina. This brought the executioner to wonder if he had the right man. "Perhaps you are not Rabbi Chanina," he queried.

"It is I," answered Rabbi Chanina. "You have the correct person." "Why does the fire not consume you?" the executioner asked. "I made a vow that the fire would not harm me until I confirmed that this was a Heavenly decree. Wait a moment, and I will inform you whether my death has been decreed by Heaven" was Rabbi Chanina's matter of fact reply. The executioner was in a quandary. Individuals who had the ability to decree death on themselves were clearly beyond the jurisdiction of the Roman Emperor. How is it that the Emperor's decree would have an effect on them? At what point are they under the rule of the king, and when are they in charge of themselves?

He turned to Rabbi Chanina and said, "Rebbe, run quickly, and I will take your place. Whatever the king had in mind to do to you, he can do to me in your place. I will be your surrogate."

Rabbi Chanina looked at him incredulously, exclaiming, "Simple man! If Heaven has issued a decree against me, where can I run? Do you think that Hashem has no other agents to do His bidding? Is there a shortage of lions, bears and vicious wolves? You should know that I will die regardless, because that is the Almighty's decree, but do not think for one moment that Hashem will not exact punishment from you for your complicity in this act of murder."

The executioner was shaken by these words, and he immediately acted upon inspiration by jumping into the flames, crying out to Rabbi Chanina, "How you will die, I will die, and there I will be buried; and as you will live (in Olam Habah), so I, too, will live." Immediately thereafter a Heavenly Voice was heard, "Rabbi Chanina ben Teradyon and his executioner are both prepared to enter into eternal life in Olam Habah."

We now understand the depth of the brothers' acceptance of the Heavenly decree - as long as they felt it had been issued from Heaven. Once they discovered, however, that it was all the work of the "evil" viceroy, they took issue and were prepared to battle the entire country. They had not sinned. Thus, they refused to be fodder to satisfy the arbitrary evil whims of the Egyptian ruler.

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Joyous Torah Treasures  
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by Sam Friedman, M.D.

### Yosef and Chanukah

The *Shulchan Aruch* is the classic Code of Jewish Law written by Rabbi Yosef Karo, who lived from 1488-1575. The *Shulchan Aruch* teaches that certain specific Torah portions are always read in close proximity to certain holidays (*Orach Chayim* 428:4). The Torah portion (*parsha*) entitled *Vayeshev* is usually read near the holiday of Chanukah. Most of *Parshas Vayeshev* discusses Yosef and the beginning of his life in Egypt. This suggests that there may be a relationship between Yosef and Chanukah. This essay will explore this relationship and some interesting ideas that are related to the word חנוכה (Chanukah).

Chanukah commemorates the victory of the Jews over the Syrian-Greeks in 165 B.C.E. According to the Rambam (1135-1204, great Talmudist, codifier of Jewish law, philosopher, and royal physician), the "...Greek kingdom issued decrees against the Jewish people, [attempting to] nullify their faith and refusing to allow them to observe the Torah and its commandments..." (*Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Chanukah 3:1). Similarly, the "*Al Hanisim*" prayer that is recited on Chanukah relates that "...the wicked Greek kingdom rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and compel them to stray from the statutes...." The aim of the Greeks was not the physical destruction of the Jews, like Haman's intention in the days of Mordechai and Esther, but rather their spiritual demise. *The Greeks sought to annihilate the Jews spiritually.*

For example, the *Midrash Bereishis Rabbah* (2:4) relates that the Greeks ordered the Jews to write that they have "no portion in the God of Israel." The Greeks sought to annul *Shabbos*, circumcision, and the sanctification of the months (*Megillas Antiochus* 1:9). Interestingly, the desire of the Greeks to abolish the sanctification of the months, may relate to the fact that Chanukah is the only Jewish holiday, besides Rosh HaShanah, that includes a פְּדוּת פְּדוּת, the beginning of a new month. Rashi tells us that the Greeks decreed that every Jewish bride must first have sexual relations with the local Greek commander (commentary of Rashi on *Shabbos* 23a). The Rambam teaches that the Greeks "...entered the Sanctuary, wrought havoc within, and made the pure become impure..." (*Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Chanukah 3:1).

Yosef is the role model for all generations, showing how to succeed as a Jew while living among gentiles outside of the Land of Israel. Even though Yosef was sold into exile by his own "God fearing" brothers, he never rejected his family's religion. If he had sinned while living in Egypt, none of his family would have known. After Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Yosef, he was imprisoned (*Bereishis* 39:20). *Despite being sold by his own "God fearing" family, being thrown into prison, and being the only Jew in Egypt, Yosef remained righteous.* Perhaps it is for this reason that our Sages refer to Yosef as יוֹסֵף הַצַּדִּיק "Yosef, the Righteous" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 93:7; *Zohar*, *Parshas Vayeshev* 189b).

*Yosef is the role model for the Jew in exile.* If life in exile is very difficult and, as a result, a person begins to question his or her belief in God, Yosef's example will hopefully remind that person to remain "righteous." Our Sages have taught, based on the *Midrash Tanchuma*, *Lech Lecha* 9, "מַעֲשֵׂי אֲבוֹת סִינַי לְבָנִים" "The happenings of the forefathers are a *sign to the children.*" Yosef's life is a *sign to the children* for all generations as to how to succeed as a Jew while living among gentiles in exile. Similar to Yosef, who suffered the hardships of a Jew in exile and still earned the title "יוֹסֵף הַצַּדִּיק" "Yosef, the Righteous," the Jews triumphed over the Greeks and remained righteous. The life of "יוֹסֵף הַצַּדִּיק" "Yosef, the Righteous" is a *sign to the children*, for all generations, that the Jews have the strength not to assimilate. *Just as Yosef remained righteous and didn't assimilate despite having been sold by his own family, and being the Viceroy of Egypt, so too the Jews withstood the Greek attempt to destroy Jewish culture and religion.* Since Yosef is the role model, for all generations, of a Jew who doesn't assimilate despite external pressure to do so, *the story of Yosef coincides with the holiday of Chanukah.*

Perhaps this is one of the reasons that *Parshas Vayeshev*, which discusses Yosef's descent to Egypt, is usually read near the holiday of Chanukah. Rabbi Sholomo Ganzfried (1804-1886) discusses the meaning of the name חנוכה (Chanukah) in the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* (139:1). Rabbi Ganzfried explains that "the name חנוכה (Chanukah) can be divided into 'חנה' They rested from their enemies on the twenty-fifth [day of the month of Kislev, which is the day that Chanukah begins]. Also, [the word חנוכה (Chanukah) is derived from 'חנך' 'dedicate,'] for it was at that time that the Jews rededicated the Temple after their foes had defiled it."

*Some of the other major laws of Chanukah are hinted at in the word חנוכה.* There is a well-known argument, quoted in *Gemora Shabbos* 21b, that is essential to candle lighting on Chanukah. The School of Shammai teaches that on the first night of Chanukah one kindles eight lights, and on each successive night the number of lights continuously decreases. The School of Hillel teaches that on the first night, the obligation is to kindle one light, and on each successive night the number of lights continuously increases. *The law is followed according to the School of Hillel*, and that is our current practice. Rabbi Yosef Karo (1488-1575) is best known for three major works: 1) The *Shulchan Aruch* (שולחן ערוך) - the classic Code of Jewish Law. 2) The *Beis Yosef* (בית יוסף) - a commentary on the *Tur Shulchan Aruch*. 3) The *Kesef Mishneh* (קסף משה) - a commentary on the Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*. In the *Beis Yosef* (*Orach Chayim* 670), Rabbi Yosef Karo asks, why is it that we celebrate Chanukah for eight days? Since there was enough oil for one day, and the oil only burned miraculously for seven days, why isn't the holiday observed for only seven days?

This is a well-known question that many of our Sages have addressed. The *Beis Yosef* himself offers three answers for this question. The *Book of Our Heritage* by Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov (1912-1976, born in Poland and immigrated to Israel where he first worked as a construction worker before writing several important scholarly books) offers *ten answers to explain why we celebrate Chanukah for eight days and not seven.* (I will not present these answers because they are somewhat

lengthy and not directly pertinent to this essay.) Rabbi Benjamin Blech is a communal leader, teacher, and author of *The Secrets of Hebrew Words*. Rabbi Blech points out that *these two major laws of Chanukah are hinted at in the word חנוכה*, which is an abbreviation for "ח' גזרות ונהלכה קבית הלל" "Eight candles and the law is according to the School of Hillel."

There are two other major laws of Chanukah that are beautifully hinted at in the word חנוכה. Even though it is our practice to light the Menorah inside the house, the *Gemora* in *Shabbos* 21b clearly states, "The requirement is to place the Chanukah light outside (מבחוץ) the doorway of one's house." Rabbi Sholomo Ganzfried writes in the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 139:7, "This was the practice in the era of the *Mishna* and the *Gemora*." (*Moadim U'Zemanim Hashalem*, volume 2 - entry 140, presents an extensive discussion as to why we no longer follow the law as stated in the *Gemora*, to light outside the doorway.)

Another important law described by Rabbi Yosef Karo in the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chayim* 672:1&2) is that the Chanukah light should optimally be kindled at the end of sunset, "but if this time happened to pass..., he may carry on the kindling of lights all night" (see the commentary of the *Mishna Berurah* that discusses under what circumstances one may say a blessing, if one is lighting late).

Rabbi Benjamin Blech also points out that *these two laws - that the Chanukah lights should be kindled outside, and that the lights can be kindled all night, are hinted at in the word חנוכה*, which is also an abbreviation for "חוצה נדלקים וזמנם כל הלילה" "Outside they are lit and their time is all night."

Thus, the word חנוכה (Chanukah) is not only an abbreviation for חנו כ"ה, "They rested [from their enemies] on the twenty-fifth [day of the month of Kislev]," but also for four of the major laws of Chanukah: 1) Chanukah is to be celebrated for eight days. 2) The law is according to the School of Hillel regarding the number of lights that are kindled each night. 3) The Chanukah lights should be kindled outside. 4) The Chanukah lights may be kindled all night.

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### פרשת מקץ

#### Couldn't Yosef Have Been a Little Nicer?

After not seeing his brothers for twenty-two years, Yosef hid his identity from them and "וידבר אתם קשות..." "...And he spoke with them harshly..." (*Bereishis* 42:7). Instead of greeting them warmly, Yosef devised an elaborate scheme which included slandering his brothers as spies, imprisoning Shimon, and framing Binyamin by planting his goblet in Binyamin's sack. Yosef's scheme caused his elderly father, Yaakov, much anguish, since it delayed the return of Yaakov's children and left Yaakov alone at home worrying what happened to them. Our Sages refer to Yosef as "יוסף הצדיק" "Yosef the Righteous" (*Bereishis Rabbah* 93:7; *Zohar, Parshas Vayeshev* 189b). How could "Yosef the Righteous" devise a false scheme that would cause his elderly father and brothers so much anguish? Many of the great and holy Biblical commentators have asked this question. In the words of Rabbi Shlomo Ephraim of Luntshitz (1550-1619, Rabbi of Prague and author of the Biblical commentary *Kli Yakar*), "ישתומם כל משפיל מה ראה יוסף על ככה לצער את אביו ואת אחיו חנם" "Every intelligent person should be astonished why Yosef [devised a scheme] that caused his father and brothers pain for no reason." The Ramban (1194-1270, great Biblical and Talmudic commentator, philosopher, Kabbalist, physician, and poet), in his commentary on *Bereishis* 42:9, explains that "...[Yosef] conceived of the strategy of devising a charge against them so that they would also bring his brother Binyamin to him, in order to fulfill the first dream [which is described in *Bereishis* 37:7]. It is for this reason that he did not wish to tell them at this time I am Yosef, your brother'..." According to the Ramban, Yosef devised this entire elaborate false scheme and caused his brothers and elderly father much grief, in order to fulfill his dreams. Rabbi Yitzchak Arama lived from approximately 1420-1494, and is the author of the Biblical commentary entitled *Akeidas Yitzchak*. He also wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *Ethics*. Both the *Kli Yakar* and Rabbi Yitzchak Arama find the same difficulty with the Ramban's explanation. Rabbi Yitzchak Arama writes, "...I am astonished at the Ramban's explanation...As for the dreams, leave it to Him who sends them to make them come true. It seems infinitely foolish for a man to strive to fulfill his dreams, which are matters beyond his control" (quoted in commentary of Professor Nechama Leibowitz on *Parshas Mikeitz*). Professor Nechama Leibowitz (1905-1997) wrote a widely studied "teach-yourself" commentary on each of the weekly Torah portions. She ended each chapter with questions for further study and remarked that she received hundreds of thousands of responses to these questions. She wrote:

I am enthralled...for our joint studies involved no certificates, examinations, marks, prizes; no credits, scholarships, income-tax rebates but simply the joy so deep of the one who studies Torah (quoted in *Introduction to Studies in Bereishit*, English edition).

Rabbi Don Yitzchak Abarbanel (1437-1508) was a Biblical commentator, statesman, and philosopher. He was the Treasurer of Portugal. Because of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal, both the Abarbanel and Rabbi Yitzchak Arama resettled in Italy. Professor Nechama Leibowitz quotes Rabbi Yitzchak Arama and Rabbi Don Yitzchak Abarbanel, who offer an alternative explanation for the false and elaborate scheme that Yosef devised. The *Gemora* in *Yuma* 86b teaches that to accomplish "תשובה" "repentance," one must succeed in not committing the same sin again when given the opportunity. The *Gemora* adds that the opportunity must be identical, באותו פנים "באותה אשה באותו זמן" "with that same woman, at that same time, and at that same place."

Therefore, in order to make it possible for his brothers to truly repent for what they did to him, Yosef needed to create a similar set of circumstances so that the brothers could prove that they would be willing to give their lives to protect Binyamin, Rachel's other son. Subsequently, Yosef slandered his brothers by calling them "מרגלים" "spies" (*Bereishis* 42:9), and held Shimon hostage in prison, so that the brothers would bring Binyamin to Egypt. He then framed Binyamin by putting his goblet in his sack, so that the brothers would then have an opportunity to truly repent for the way they treated him, Rachel's

oldest son. They would show that they would give their lives to protect Rachel's other son, Binyamin. When Yehuda, as spokesman for Yosef's other brothers, makes it clear that he is willing to give his life to protect Binyamin and to spare Yaakov the anguish of losing another child of Rachel's (*Bereishis* 44:31-34), the brothers achieve complete repentance for the way they treated Yosef.

At that point the Torah says, "...וְיֹסֵף אֵל אֶחָיו וַיֹּסֵף אֵלָיו וַיֹּסֵף אֵלָיו וַיֹּסֵף אֵלָיו..." "Now Yosef could not restrain himself...And Yosef said to his brothers, 'I am Yosef...'" (*Bereishis* 45:1&3). A simple understanding of this is that Yosef emotionally could no longer restrain himself and therefore finally admitted his true identity. Rabbi Shmuel Bornstein, the Rebbe of Sochaczew (1855-1927, author of the Biblical commentary *Shem MiShmuel*), as quoted in *Likutei Yehoshua* and *Eiturei Torah*, explains that *Yosef could no longer restrain himself because he had achieved the objective of creating a scenario whereby the brothers could achieve complete repentance*. Once Yehuda, as spokesman for his brothers, achieved complete repentance, Yosef couldn't restrain himself because he no longer had any reason to conceal his identity.

Rabbi Moshe Green, in *Impressions on the Heart*, which is a book that is culled from the thoughts of Rabbi Shlomo Freifeld, זצ"ל (who founded Yeshiva Sh`or Yeshuv in 1967), summarizes the above and writes that Yosef "proved to be a master educator...He created a set of circumstances that would touch the heart of his brothers. He put them in a situation that would simultaneously make crystal clear the mistake they had made by selling him, yet draw them near at the same time."

Rabbi Yehoshua Scheinfeld, זצ"ל, discusses the ideas described above, in *Likutei Yehoshua*, which was published around 1958. Rabbi Scheinfeld explains that Yosef created an elaborate, slanderous scheme and accused his brothers of being spies, because he could not admit his identity immediately to his brothers. If he had told his brothers when they first arrived in Egypt that he was Yosef, it would have been impossible for them to repent properly. Had they apologized to Yosef after learning that he was the Prime Minister of Egypt, this would not have been an acceptable apology, as people tend to be intimidated by powerful people. In addition, how sorry could they be for selling him, if they knew that their sale led to Yosef's becoming the Prime Minister? By concealing his identity from his brothers when they first arrived in Egypt, he made it possible for them to properly repent for their actions. As discussed above, Yosef created a set of circumstances whereby Yehuda, speaking for Yosef's other brothers, made it clear that he was willing to give his life to protect Binyamin and to spare Yaakov the anguish of losing another of Rachel's children (*Bereishis* 44:31-34).

The *Kli Yakar* adds that Yosef specifically chose to accuse his brothers of being "מְרַגְלִים" "spies" (*Bereishis* 42:9), as opposed to some other profession, because he wanted to prevent his brothers from "snooping around" and asking a lot of questions. The Egyptians knew that Yosef was a "Hebrew" (see *Bereishis* 41:12). Yosef was afraid that his brothers might be looking for their long lost brother, since the caravans of Yishmaelites and Midianites to whom Yosef was sold frequently travelled to Egypt. *To prevent his brothers from asking a lot of questions and discovering that the Prime Minister was a Hebrew, Yosef accused them of being spies.*

The Torah teaches, "מְדַבֵּר שִׁקְרָה תִּרְחֹק..." "Distant yourself from a false word..." (*Shemos* 23:7). The first Gerrer Rebbe, Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter (1799-1866), teaches that this is the only instance in which the Torah commands us to distance ourselves from a sin. God dislikes falsehood (שִׁקְרָה) so much that He commands us to distance ourselves from it. *There is no Biblical command to distance ourselves from any specific sin, except for falsehood (שִׁקְרָה).* The *Gemora* teaches in *Sanhedrin* 64a and in *Shabbos* 55a that "אֱמֶת" "Truth" is the signature of God. Therefore, some of our Sages have suggested that there must be some truth hidden in the words of "יוֹסֵף הַצְּדִיק" "Yosef the Righteous," when he accused his brothers of being "מְרַגְלִים" "spies" (*Bereishis* 42:9). Rabbi Matis Blum, contemporary scholar and author of *Torah LaDaas*, quotes the author of *Shevet Mussar*, who points out that the word מְרַגְלִים is also an abbreviation for "מִן רֵחַל גְּנֹבִים לְאַרְחָת" "From the seed of Rachel you have stolen, to caravans of Yishmaelites you have sold him." This is reminiscent of the brothers' sale of Yosef, "וַיִּשְׁלְכוּ אֹתוֹ בְּבִרְאָה..." "...and they threw him into the pit...and, behold, a caravan of Yishmaelites was coming..." (*Bereishis* 37:24-25). Based on this abbreviation, a great deal of truth is hidden in Yosef's accusation that his brothers are "מְרַגְלִים" "spies" (*Bereishis* 42:9). Therefore, when Yosef called his brothers "מְרַגְלִים" "spies," it wasn't as blatant a lie as it appeared to be, and Yosef began to orchestrate a scenario, whereby his brothers were able to achieve complete repentance for having sold him. Perhaps this is another reason that our Sages call Yosef "יוֹסֵף הַצְּדִיק" "Yosef the Righteous," *because the ultimate righteousness is to help others be righteous*. Yosef worked diligently and successfully to enable his brothers to achieve complete repentance for having sold him, and thus, regain their *righteousness*.

Sam Friedman is a physician living in Teaneck, New Jersey. He is an alumnus of Yeshiva University and Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavne. He feels privileged to have learned Torah from Rabbi Shmuel Scheinberg, Rabbi Hershel Schachter, Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht, and Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. September 2008 ISBN: 978-1-934440-51-3 To order at a discount, click here [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_ss\\_gw?url=search-alias=aps&field-keywords=joyous+torah+treasures](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_ss_gw?url=search-alias=aps&field-keywords=joyous+torah+treasures)