



TORAH ACTION LIFE

This edition is dedicated by Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

להצלחת אלנה בת שלום אליהו ורפאל משה בן דוד ימין ווסף

Wishing Mazal Tov to Rafi and Alana Yamin Joseph on their wedding. May HaShem Bless them to build a Bayit Ne'eman BeYisrael!



THE MARSHMALLOWS AND YOUR FUTURE!

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil's Message

There was a psychological study done in 1970 at Stanford University known as the “Marshmallow Study”. The purpose of the original study was to understand when the control of deferred gratification, the ability to wait to obtain something that one wants, develops in children. The experiment took place at a Nursery School with children aged 4 to 6 as subjects.

The children were led into a room, empty of distractions, where a treat of their choice (Oreo cookie, marshmallow, or pretzel stick) was placed on a table, by a chair. The children could eat the marshmallow, the researchers said, but if they waited for fifteen minutes without giving in to the temptation, they would be rewarded with a second marshmallow. Some would “cover their eyes with their hands or turn around so that they can't see the tray, others start kicking the desk, or tug on their pigtailed, or stroke the marshmallow as if it were a tiny stuffed animal,” while others would simply eat the marshmallow as soon as the researchers left.

In over six hundred children who took part in the experiment, a minority ate the marshmallow immediately. Of those who attempted to delay, one third deferred gratification long enough to get the second marshmallow. Age was a major determinant of deferred gratification. As the children who participated in life were followed into adulthood, it was discovered that the ones who had shown resistance to temptation, had actually achieved more, and gone on to live more successful lives.

The results of the study should not come as any surprise to us. Perhaps the hidden meaning behind the test was whether the child's animal soul, which can only grasp and be grasped by present tangible stimuli is going to be the dominant force or whether the G-dly soul, the intellect, is able to override the

sirens of temptation.

As children we soak in a great deal from our home environment as well as our teachers and educators. The best teacher is one who can prepare a student so well, that they will be able to answer the questions successfully at a time in the future when the teacher will no longer be there.

In our Parasha, Yosef faced a similar trade off. Yosef rose to become the overseer of the house of Potiphar. Eventually, Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Yosef.

“And Yosef came home to do his work...” [Bereishit 39:11] At that time, Mrs. Potiphar tried to seduce him. According to one opinion in the Talmud, Yosef haTzadik's intention, when he entered the house that day, was in fact to be intimate with her, but at that very moment, the image of his father appeared to him from the window and caused him to abstain from carrying out his intentions.

What did this image of his father imply? Why was Yosef able to move so swiftly away once he saw his father's image?

The Talmud [Sotah 36b] relates that a certain Roman matron asked Rav Yossi the following question: How can it be that a 17-year-old boy, who has been away from his family and all family influence, immersed in the sensuality of Egyptian society — how was it possible for him to be able to withstand this temptation? The Talmud elaborates that it was that vision of his father in the window telling him “Yosef, in the future your brethren will want to inscribe your name among the stones of the Ephod worn by the Kohen Gadol, together with the names of the other tribes. Do you want to do something that will cause your name to be blotted out from amidst the names of my other sons? Do you want to have ‘a shepherd of prostitutes’ as your



title?” When Yosef heard that, he backed off. This fear of losing his connection to his father is what held him back from sinning.

By natural instinct and logic, as the Roman matron asked Rav Yossi, this temptation required superhuman powers for a 17-year-old young man to resist. However, it was the image of Yaakov — how can I do this to my father? — that held Yosef back.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky explains that the image only works if the father has built a great repo with his son. He has nurtured the son in a way that the son is one with the father. He respects and honours his father and realises that his actions can affect not only his future but also the name of his respected father.

We as parents need to act in a manner that will cause our children to contemplate “how could I ever let my father down and do this to him?”

When describing Yosef's heroic restraint, the Torah uses the word “Vayimacine” - “and he refused” (Bereishit 39:8). The word “Vayimacine” appears earlier in Parashat Vayeshev as well. After Yaakov is presented with the distressing forensic evidence of Yosef's grisly demise, the Pasuk says, «And all of his sons and daughters attempted to console him, but - ‘Vayimacine - he refused’ to be comforted” (Bereishit 37:35). The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh claims that Yaakov's children tried to alleviate his suffering with a demonstration of their abundant and united family. However, despite the size and solidarity of his family, Yaakov “refused” to be consoled, because he was unable to cope with the absence of Yosef.

The Netivot Shalom suggests that Yaakov was “Vayimacine - he refused” to be comforted because he

deeply believed in Yosef's resiliency and boundless capacity to succeed. Therefore, he subconsciously concluded that despite all that he had been told, Yosef must still be alive. The Nesivot Shalom continues, that the word “Vayimacine” is used again later in the parsha to indicate that it was precisely Yosef's awareness that his father had faith in his immense potential and divine destiny which gave him the strength to refuse the advances of Potiphar's wife and flee from the house at that pivotal moment in his life. It was the indelible image of his father's unyielding support and love that enabled him to prevail in his darkest hour.

It is for this reason that the trup (musical cantillation note) on the word “Vayimacine” is the rare Shalsholet. The Shalsholet is in the shape of a zigzagging line and is pronounced with a prolonged sound which repeatedly goes up and down. Rabbi Yosef Ibn Caspi (Mishnah Kesef) postulates that the fluctuating shape and sound of the Shalsholet always indicates an internal struggle and moral hesitation. In addition, the Alshich Hakadosh notes that the word Shalsholet literally means “a chain.” Therefore, the Shalsholet here signals that it was specifically the “chain” of tradition and Mesorah, the unbreakable relationship between a father and his son, that rescued Yosef from drowning in the quicksand of ethical uncertainty and personal doubt and enabled him to refuse the seductions of Potiphar's wife.

Rabbi Naftali of Ropshitz (Zera Kodesh) observes that the word “Chalon - window”, where Yosef initially saw the vision of his father Yaakov, is spelled Chet, Lamed, Vav, and Nun, which is an allusion to the eight days (Chet) of Chanukah and the 36 (Lamed-Vav) candles (Nun - Nerot) we light.

Chanukah as the name suggests relies on Chinuch – education. The Chashmonaim were able to tap into their ancestor's passion of serving Hashem and through their efforts rededicate the Temple.

What starts off in life as marshmallows can sprout to life changing experiences. Let us ensure our children's future instilling in them the beauty of Torah and service of Hashem. By doing so we are securing their future and ours.

CANDLE LIGHTING

1ST NIGHT



The Ben Ish Chai (Chacham Yosef Chaim:1832-1909) writes it is a good Segula for protection, to say Viyhi Noam and Yoshev Beseter Elyon 7 times after candle lighting.

סגולה לשמירה לומר כל לילה אחר הדלקת נרות חנוכה ויהי נועם ומזמור יושב בסתר ז' פעמים

ויהי | נעם ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ בּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ בּוֹנֵנָה:

(תהילים צ"א): **יִשָּׁב** בְּסֶתֶר עֲלֵינוּ בָּצַל שְׁדֵי יִתְלוֹנְנוּ: אָמֵן | ה' מַחְסֵי וּמַצֻּדֹתֵי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹתֵינוּ: כִּי הוּא יִצְלֵנוּ מִכָּל יָדָיו מִכָּל מִדְּבַר הַנּוֹת: בְּאֲבֵרֹתָ | יִסֵּף לָךְ וְתַחַת כִּנְפֵי תַחֲסֶנָּה צִנָּה וְסִתְרָה אֲמֹתָ: לֹא־תִירָא מִפֶּחַד לֵילָה מִחַי יְעֹיף יוֹמָם: מִדְּבַר בְּאֶפֶל יִחַלֵּךְ מִקְטָב יִשׁוּד צִהָרִים: יִפֹּל מִצִּדָּךְ | אֶלֶף וּרְבֵבָה מִיִּמִּינְךָ אֶלֶיךָ לֹא יָגֵשׁ: רַק בְּעֵינֶיךָ תִּבְטֵי וּשְׁלֹמֹת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה: כִּי־אַתָּה ה' מַחְסֵי עֲלֵינוּ שְׁמֶת מְעֻנָּה: לֹא־תִאֲנַח אֶלֶיךָ רַעַל וְנִגַּע לֹא־יִקְרַב בְּאַחֲלָד: כִּי מִלֹּאכֵי יִצְוֶה־לָךְ לְשֹׁמְרֶךָ בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ: עַל־כֵּפֶיךָ יִשְׁאֹנֶנָּה פְּתִילֶיךָ בְּאֶזְבֶּיךָ רִגְלֶךָ: עַל־שֹׁחַל וּפִתָּן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמָם כִּפִּיר וְתִנֵּן: כִּי בִי חֶשֶׁק וּפְאֻלָּתָהּ אֲשַׁבְּעֶנָּהוּ כִּי־יִדַּע שְׁמִי: יִקְרָאֵנִי | וְאֶעֱנֶה עֲמוּאֲנִי בְּצִרְחָה אֲחַלְצֶהוּ וְאֶכְבְּדֶהוּ: אֲרָךְ יָמִים אֲשַׁבְּעֶהוּ וְאֶרְאֶהוּ בִישׁוּעָתִי:

Some have the custom to sing
Yah Hatzel Yona on Chanuka

יְהִי הַצֵּל יוֹנָה מִחֶבֶה	וְדַמְעָתָה לָךְ מִפֶּחַה
וְתִשְׁמַח בְּךָ אֵתָה מִלֶּבָה	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:
הוֹדוּ לְנֶאֱמָר עַל גֵּאִים	וְנוֹרָא עַל כָּל נוֹרָאִים
הַצִּיל אֶת גֵּינ חֲשׁוֹנָאִים	מִיֶּד צָר כִּי בָהֶם הִכָּה:
וְתִשְׁמַח בְּךָ אֵתָה מִלֶּבָה	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:
וְיִשִּׁירוּ עִמּוֹךְ שִׁירוֹת	וְזִמִּירוֹת מִפּוֹ יִקְרוֹת
בְּהַדְלִיקָם אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:
וְתִשְׁמַח בְּךָ אֵתָה מִלֶּבָה	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:
דְּרָשׁוּ לֹאֵל כָּל לִבְבוֹת	כִּי גִמַּל עָלֵינוּ טוֹבוֹת
שְׁמַחוּ בָנִים עִם הָאֲבוֹת	בְּדַת מִנֵּי יָם אֲרָכָה:
וְתִשְׁמַח בְּךָ אֵתָה מִלֶּבָה	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:
הֶאֱלָ יִמִּינוּ יְחִידִשׁ	וְצָר לְהַרְיָגָה יְקִדִּשׁ:
יִשְׁלַח עֲזָרָךְ מִקִּדִּשׁ	וּמַצִּיּוֹן יִסְעֶדֶךָ:
וְתִשְׁמַח בְּךָ אֵתָה מִלֶּבָה	בְּשִׁמּוֹנֵת יְמֵי חֲנֻכָּה:

Blessed are You, Lord our Gd, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

After the Chanukah lights are kindled, it is customary to recite or sing the Haneirot Halalu hymn.

אחר שידליק נר אחד יאמר:

הַנֵּרוֹת הָלָלוּ אֱנָחֵנוּ מִדְּלִיקוֹן עַל הַנְּפִסִּים, וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת, וְעַל הַנִּפְלְאוֹת, שְׁעֲשִׂיתָ לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ עַל יְדֵי בְּהִנִּיחַ הַקְּדוֹשִׁים. וְכָל־שְׁמוֹנֵת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה הַנֵּרוֹת הָלָלוּ קִדְשֵׁנוּ, וְאֵין לָנוּ רְשׁוֹת לְהַשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בָּהֶם, אֶלָּא לְרְאוֹתָם בְּלֶבֶד כְּדֵי לְהוֹדוֹת לְשִׁמְךָ עַל נְפִסֵּי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְיִשׁוּעוֹתֶיךָ:

Translation:

We kindle these lights [to commemorate] the saving acts, miracles and wonders which You have performed for our forefathers, in those days at this time, through Your holy priests. Throughout the eight days of Chanukah, these lights are sacred, and we are not permitted to make use of them, but only to look at them, in order to offer thanks and praise to Your great Name for Your miracles, for Your wonders and for Your salvations.

(תהילים ל'א-ב') **מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר־חֲנֻכָּת הַבֵּית**
לְדָוִד: אֲרוּמָמָךְ ה' כִּי דִלִיתִנִי וְלֹא־שִׁמּוֹחַת אֵיכִי לִי: ה' אֱלֹהֵי שְׁוַעֲתִי אֶלֶיךָ וְתַרְפָּאֵנִי: ה' הַעֲלִיתָ מִן־שָׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי חַיִּיתִנִי מִיּוֹרֵדִי וּמִיִּרְדֵּי־כּוֹר:
זָמְרוּ לָהּ חֲסִידֶיהָ וְהוֹדוּ לִזְכָּר קִדְשׁוֹ: כִּי רִנַּעַ | בְּאֶפֶס חַיִּים בְּרָצוֹנוֹ בְּעָרֵב יִלֵּן כִּי וְלִבְקָר רִנָּה:
וְאֵנִי אֲמַרְתִּי בְּשִׁלּוֹי כָּל־אֲמוֹנֹת לְעוֹלָם: ה' בְּרָצוֹנֶךָ הַעֲמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרִי עוֹ הַסִּתְרָתְךָ פָּנֶיךָ הֵיטִיתִי גִבְהָל: אֶלֶיךָ ה' אֶקְרָא וְאֶל־אֲדוֹשִׁם אֲתַחֲנֵן: מִה־בִּצֵּעַ בְּדָמִי בִּרְדִיתִי אֵל שְׁחַת הַיּוֹדֶךָ עֶפֶר הַיּוֹגֵד אֲמַתְךָ: שְׁמַע־ה' וְחַנּוּן ה' הִנֵּה־עוֹר לִי: הַפֶּכֶת מִסְפְּדִי לְמַחֹל לִי פִתְחַת שִׁקִּי וְתַאֲזַרְנִי שְׁמוֹחָה: לְמַעַן | וְזָמְרֶךָ כְּבוֹד וְלֹא יָדָם ה' אֱלֹהֵי לְעוֹלָם אוֹדְךָ:

חנוכה פֶּדֶר הַדְּלָקַת נְרוֹת חֲנֻכָּה

לְשֵׁם יְחִיד קִדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשְׁכִינָתָה, בְּהִילָו וּרְחִימוּ, וּרְחִימוּ וְדַחֲלוּ, לְיַחְדָּא שֵׁם יו"ד ק"י בּוֹא"ו ק"י בְּיַחְדָּא שְׁלֹמִים, בְּשֵׁם כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, הִנֵּה אֲנַחְנוּ בָּאִים לְקִים מִצְוֹת הַדְּלָקַת נְרוֹת חֲנֻכָּה כְּמוֹ שֶׁתִּקְנֵנוּ לָנוּ רְבוּתֵינוּ וְזָכוּנוּם לְכִרְכָּה, עִם כָּל־הַמִּצְוֹת הַכְּלוּלוֹת בָּהּ, לְתַקֵּן אֶת שְׁרָשָׁה בְּמִקּוֹם עֲלִיוֹן, לַעֲשׂוֹת נֶחֱם רוּחַ לְיוֹצְרֵנוּ וְלַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן בּוֹרְאֵנוּ. וְיִהְיֶה | נָעִם ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ בּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ בּוֹנֵנָה:

First Blessing

בְּרִיךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלֶּךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר חֲנֻכָּה:

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-be-nu Me-lech ha-olam a-she-ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner Cha-nu-kah.

Blessed are You, Lord our Gd, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah light.

Second Blessing

בְּרִיךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלֶּךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעֲשֵׂה נִסִּים לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵי הַהוּא:

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-be-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-a-sa ni-sim la-avo-te-nu ba-ya-mim ha-hem bi-zman ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time.

Third blessing - recited only on the first night (or the first time lighting this Chanukah):

בליל ראשון מברך גם ברכה זו:

בְּרִיךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלֶּךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחִינּוּ וְקִיְּמֵנוּ וְהִעֲנֵנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַהוּא:

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-be-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-he-che-yu-na ve-ki-yi-ma-nu ve-higi-a-nu liz-man ha-zeh.



יְהוֹנָתָן נִקְבְּצוּ עָלַי אֲזִי בַיּוֹמֵי הַשְּׁמוֹנִים.
Greeks gathered against me, then in Hasmonean days.

וּפְרָצוּ חוֹמוֹת מִגְדָּלִי וּטְמְאוּ כָל הַשְּׁמֵנִים.
they broke down the walls of my towers,
and defiled all the oils;

וּמִנֹּחַת קַנְקָנִים נַעֲשֶׂה גַם לְשׁוֹשָׁנִים.
And from the one remnant of the flasks,
a miracle was wrought for the roses.

בְּנֵי בִינָה יָמִי שְׁמוֹנָה קָבְעוּ שִׁיר וְרִנָּנִים.
Men of insight – eight days established
for song and jubilation

The Final stanza asks the Master of the Universe to bare His holy arm and end our longest exile, the exile of Edom, the Red One, and usher in the Epoch of the Mashiach.

חֲשׂוֹף זְרוּעַ קִדְשְׁךָ וְקַרְבֵּךָ קֵץ הַיְשׁוּעָה.
Bare Your holy arm and hasten the End for salvation –

נִקְם נִקְמַת דָּם עֲבָדֶיךָ מֵאִפְסָה הָרָשָׁעָה.
Avenge the vengeance of Your servants' blood
from the wicked nation.

כִּי אֶרְכָּבָה לָנוּ הַשָּׂעָה וְאִין קֵץ לַיּוֹם הָרָעָה.
For the triumph is too long delayed for us,
and there is no end to days of evil,

דָּחָה אֶדְמוֹן בְּצֵל צִלְמוֹן, חָקֵם לָנוּ רוּעָה שְׁבָעָה.
Repel the Red One in the nethermost shadow
and establish for us the seven shepherds.



קֵץ בָּבֶל, זֶרְבָּבֶל, לִקְצֵן
שְׁבָעִים נוֹשְׁעָתִי.

*At Babylon's end Zerubabel
came. At the end of seventy
years I was saved.*

בְּרוֹת קוֹמַת בְּרוֹשׁ,
בְּקֶשׁ אֲגָגִי בֶן הַמִּדְתָּא.
*The Agagite (Haman), the
son of Hamedata, sought to
cut down the lofty fir tree
(Mordechai)*

וְנִחַיְתָהּ לוֹ לִפְחָ וּלְמוֹקֶשׁ וְנֶאֱתָוָה נִשְׁבָּתָהּ.
but his design became a snare to himself,
and his pride was brought to an end.

The Fourth stanza recalls the potential disaster, due to our sins, and our miraculous salvation, due to our repentance, from the fiendish plan of Haman, at the time of Purim. Haman wished to destroy Mordechai and, with him, all the Jews, male and female, young and old. But G-d, by a hidden miracle, using apparent coincidence, plus the bravery of Queen Esther, saved the Jews. Haman's plan was overturned, and he, together with his ten sons, were hung on the very same gallows which he'd prepared for Mordechai.

רֹאשׁ יְמִינִי נִשְׂאָתָהּ וְאִיֵּב שְׁמוֹ מְחִיתָהּ.
The head of the Benjamite
You lifted and the enemy, his name You obliterated

רַב בְּנָיו וְקִנְיָנָיו עַל הָעֵץ תָּלִיתָהּ.
His numerous progeny – his possessions –
on the gallows You hanged.

This stanza takes us back to Chanukah and describes the spiritual (not to mention physical) attack of the Greeks, under Antioches. He advocated an intense campaign of Hellenization; The Greeks breached the walls of the Temple and defiled all the oils prepared for use in the daily lighting of the Menorah in the Temple. But one cruse of oil was found, and the Miracle of Chanukah was performed in behalf of the "roses," a reference to Shir HaShirim (The Song of Songs), in which the mutual love between G-d and the Jewish People is the main theme.

The Chashmonaim also achieved a miraculous victory, with the help of G-d, and they eventually gained independence for Israel for a time.



MAOZ TSUR

The initial letters of the first five stanzas yield the acrostic Mordechai, indicating an author named Mordechai who lived in Germany in the early 13th century. Which Mordechai it was has not been established. There is a theory that he was Mordechai the son of Isaac, author of a Sabbath song called Mah Yafit. The sixth stanza («Chasof Zero'a Kod'sh'cha»), if it is authentic, begins with the three letters of «Chazak» (Be Strong!), following a style that often appears in medieval religious hymns to produce an acrostic that reads "Mordechai, may he be strong"

*They had embittered my life with hardship,
with the calf-like kingdom's bondage.*

וּבִידּוֹ הִגְדֹּלָה הוֹצִיא אֶת הַסִּגְלָה.
*But with His great power
He brought forth the treasured ones,*

חֵיל פָּרַעָה וְכָל זֶרְעוֹ יִרְדּוּ בְּאֶבֶן בְּמִצְוֹלָה.
*Pharaoh's army and all his offspring went down like a
stone into the deep.*

דְּבִיר קִדְשׁוֹ הֵבִיאָנִי וְגַם שֵׁם לֹא שָׁקַטְתִּי.
*To the holy abode of His Word He brought me.
But there, too, I had no rest,*

וּכְאֵן נִוְגַשׁ וְהִגְלָנִי כִּי זָרִים עֲבַדְתִּי.
*And an oppressor came and exiled me.
For I had served aliens,*

The third stanza recalls the period of time when we lived in peace in Eretz Yisrael, when the First Temple, built by Shlomo, was with us. Yet somehow, we fell prey to the blandishments of idol worship, and, for that sin, the Kingdom of Babylon, under the leadership of Nevuchadnezzar, besieged Yerushalayim, and destroyed the Temple. But after seventy years, Babylon fell to the Persians, and under the leadership of Zerubabel (identified with the Prophet Nechemiah) we once again obtained permission to rebuild the Temple.

וַיֵּין רַעַל מִסְכָּתִי כְּמַעַט שְׁעִבְרָתִי.
And had drunk benumbing wine. Scarcely had I departed.

The First stanza pleads for the reestablishment of the Temple Worship. It praises G-d as the "stronghold of our salvation," Who has always come to our aid. He will take vengeance on His enemies, and restore the Temple as a House of Prayer for all nations.

מַעֲזֵי צוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי לָךְ נֶאֱחָה לְשִׁבְחָה.
*O Mighty stronghold of my salvation,
to praise You is a delight*

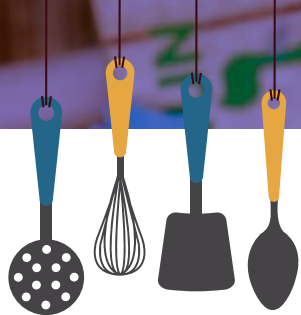
תִּבְנוֹן בֵּית תְּפִלָּתִי וְשָׁם תּוֹדֶה נִזְבְּחָה.
*Restore my House of Prayer, and there we will bring
a thanksgiving offering.*

לַעֲת תִּכְוֵן מִטְבַּח מִצַּר הַמְּנַפֵּחַ.
*When You will have prepared the slaughter
for the blaspheming foe,*

אֲזִי אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמָּר הִנַּכְתָּ הַמִּזְבֵּיחַ.
*Then I shall complete with a song of hymn,
the dedication of the Altar.*

רַעוּת שְׁבָעָה נִפְשִׁי בִּיגוֹן כְּהִי פֶלָה.
*My soul had been sated with troubles, my strength has
been consumed with grief.*
חַיִּי מְרֹרֶה בְּקוֹשֵׁי בְּשַׁעְבוּד מִלְּכוּת עֲגֹלָה.

The second stanza praises G-d for our liberation from the Egyptian bondage. Maharal explains that Israel's destiny as a nation is not dependent on the general natural, physical, social or economic laws that govern the destinies of the other nations. Israel as a nation is placed directly under G-d's protection. It was this nation that was brought forth from Egypt, in order that they "obey faithfully and keep his covenant."



DATE BALLS

by Chloe & Celine Foulad
A PINCH OF C&C

SERVINGS:
roughly 30 balls

COOK TIME:
fridge one hour

INGREDIENTS

- 300g raw almonds
- 250g pitted dates
- 30g pretzels
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons almond milk or water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Desiccated coconut for coating/ dark chocolate for drizzling

Method

1. Mix raw almonds, pitted dates, pretzels, salt, almond milk or water and vanilla in a food processor until it all starts to clump together. (Can add a bot of tahni at this point if you fancy)
2. Taste mixture to see if it needs more vanilla or salt.
3. Roll into small balls.
4. Cover with desiccated coconut or drizzle with melted dark chocolate.
5. Put in fridge for 1 hour to set.
6. Keep them in the fridge or freezer because they are way better cold



PARSHAT VAYESHEV

Rabbi Danny Fisher

Director - TAL Boys After School Programs



In this weeks sedar the possuk tells us, “וַיָּשָׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל” (Hebrew: וַיָּשָׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל), that Reuven returned to the pit.

But the question is why was he returning to the pit? Where had he gone, that he now needed to return?

Chazal explain that רְאוּבֵן was returning from doing teshuvah after having switched his mother's bed.

It goes on to say that since רְאוּבֵן was the first person who had done a cheit and then teshuvah, as a reward he was promised that his descendent, Hosheiah ben Beri instigated the concept of Klal

Yisroel doing teshuvah for their aveiros.

In the Haftorah of Shabbos Shuva we say the famous words “שׁוּבוּהַ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד ה'...”; “Return Yisroel to Hashem your G-d because you have stumbled with your aveiros” Hosheiah perek 14. These famous words were said by Hosheiah Hanovi, in his attempts to bring Yisroel back from their bad ways.

The Yalkut Meamloeiz asks a profound question, prior to רְאוּבֵן there were many people who had done aveiros and consequently teshuva for those aveiros. Odom Horishon and Kayin both did teshuvah, why is it that רְאוּבֵן is singled out for having been the first for doing teshuvah?

He answers that רְאוּבֵן was the first to do teshuvah

for an aveiroh which he thought was a mitzvah. Says Hosheiah “שׁוּבוּהַ יִשְׂרָאֵל”, “return Yisroel” even when you think that which you have done is a mitzvah, but in reality it is in aveiroh, you must still do teshuvah for that.

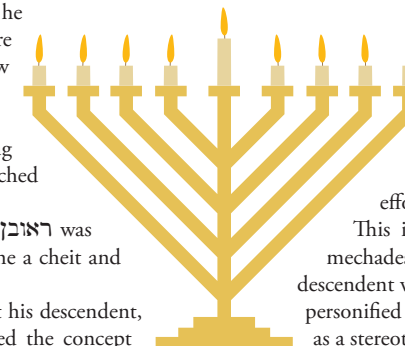
This is a huge challenge, to change ones mind-set toward actions, which they previously thought were aveiros, and do teshuvah for those very things. This takes effort and perseverance.

This is the concept which רְאוּבֵן was mechadesh, and was therefore zocheh to a descendent who also personified this idea and who's nevuah is used as a stereotype for teshuvah.

We say in Maariv “וְהָסֵר שְׂטֵן מִלִּפְנֵינוּ” “ומאחרינו” “remove the Soton from in-front of us and from behind us”. What is the Soton in front of and behind us?

The Soton in front of us is the obvious Soton, which makes us slip up repeatedly. In comparison the Soton behind us, is the Soton, which pretends to us that, that which we are doing is moral and correct. That Soton is a lot harder to combat and to fight, and we need tremendous amounts of siyatah dishmayah for that.

May we all be zocheh to discern that which is correct and just in Hashem's eyes.





DREIDEL CROSSWORD

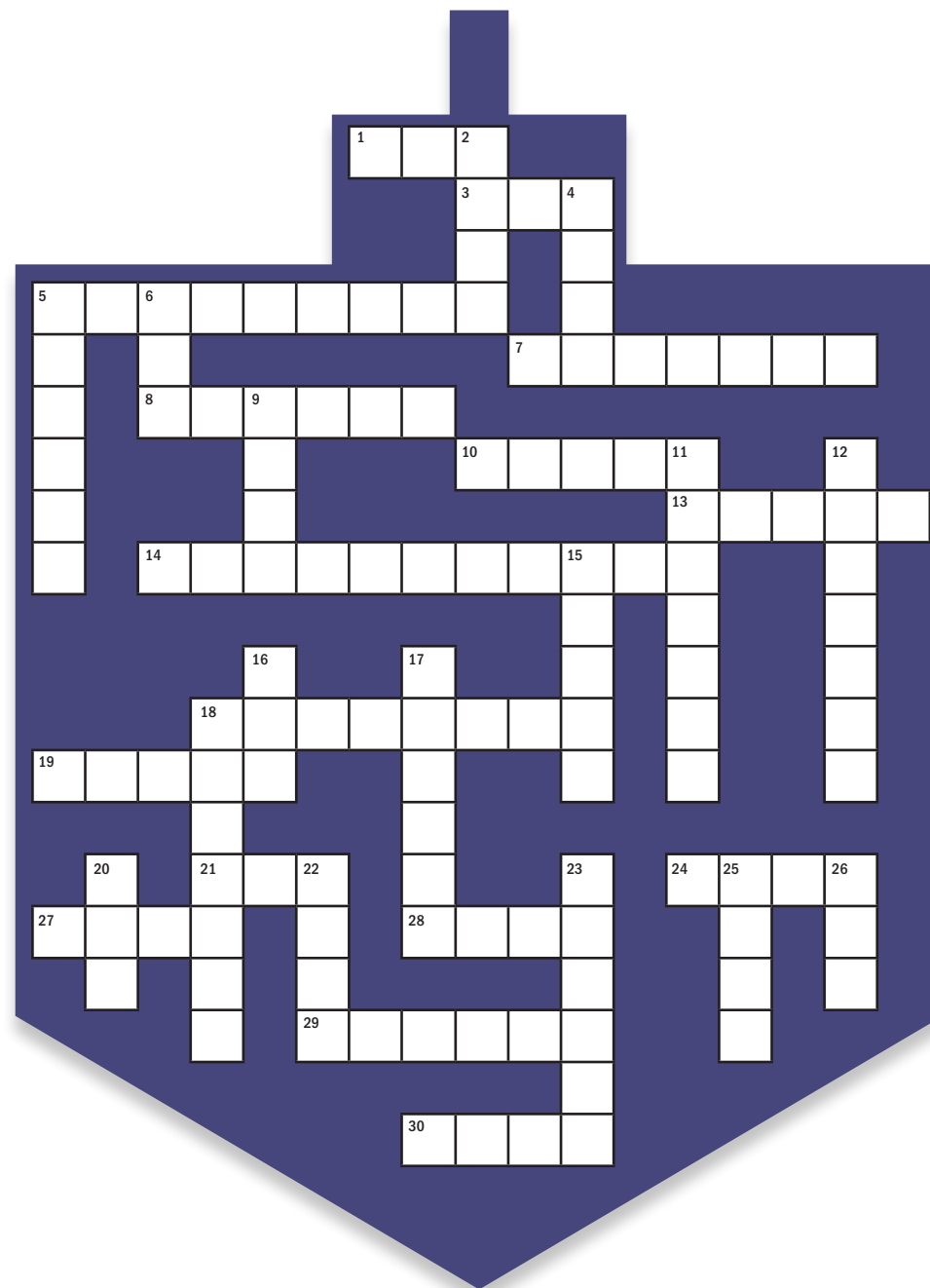
Find the words

Across

1. The Maccabees found one _____ of pure olive oil.
3. I like to _____ fried donuts.
5. Fried donuts in Hebrew are called _____.
7. Some people place the Menorah opposite the _____.
8. Others put their Menorah in the _____.
10. Yehudis fed the Greek general cheese to make him thirsty. That's why we eat _____ foods.
13. The oil they found lasted for _____ days.
14. Chanukah begins on the _____ day of Kislev.
18. A Jewish warrior was called a _____.
19. Mattisyahu was the son of Yochanan _____ Gadol.
21. To remember the miracle we eat food fried in _____.
24. We play _____ the dreidel.
27. We re-tell the story of Chanukah every _____.
28. A miracle: They found one jar of pure oil with the _____ of the Kohen Gadol on it.
29. Chanukah comes in the month of _____.
30. The shamash candle is often made of _____ wax.

Down

2. Money given out on Chanukah is called Chanukah _____.
4. "In those days, at this _____"
5. A beautiful Menorah may be made of _____.
6. The Greek armies were many, but the Jews were _____.
9. The _____ of the Maccabees' home town was Modin.
11. The most famous Maccabee.
12. The candle we use to light the Menorah is called the _____.
15. Many Chanukah foods, like latkes and donuts, are _____ in oil.
16. The Greeks wanted to _____ certain Mitzvas.
17. Potato pancakes are also called _____.
18. We light the _____ on Chanukah.
20. The candle we kindle first is the _____ one.
22. We can _____ at the light of the Menorah, but we may not use it for anything else.
23. Oil for the Menorah is made from _____.
25. We all love to _____ dreidel.
26. First letter on the dreidel.





KID'S TIME



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CHANUKAH HONEY AND SPICE COOKIES

Method

Making the dough

1. In a large mixing bowl, cream margarine and brown sugar until well combined, and then beat in honey and egg. In a small bowl, combine flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and cloves; add to honey mixture. Beat on low speed until well blended. Cover dough and refrigerate at least 1 hour. Grease cookie sheets and set aside.

2. Working with 1/4 of the dough at a time, roll out on floured surface to 1/4-inch thickness. Cut into desired shapes. Using a spatula, place on prepared cookie sheets 1 inch apart. Reroll and cut scraps. Bake in a preheated 350° F oven for 7 minutes, or until done. Transfer to wire racks to cool.

3. Meanwhile, prepare the icing. In a large mixing bowl, combine egg whites, confectioners' sugar, lemon juice and salt. Beat on high speed until mixture holds soft peaks. Makes about 2 cups. Decorate cooled cookies with icing around edges, using a pastry bag fitted with tube.

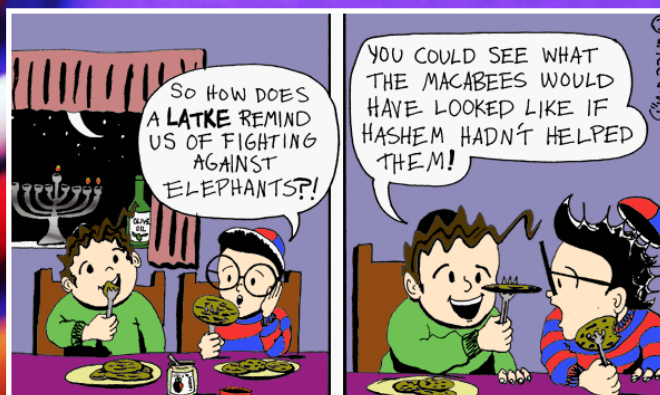
4. Makes about 4 dozen.

INGREDIENTS FOR DOUGH:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) margarine, softened
- 1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 egg
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves

ICING:

- 2 egg whites
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/8 tsp salt



Chanukah quiz

- 1 What does the word "Chanukah" mean?
- 2 Where is the best place to light the Menorah?
- 3 Who is the Greek-Syrian leader that took harsh steps to destroy Judaism?
- 4 On Friday afternoon, the Menorah should stay lit for at least for?
- 5 What is the name of the courageous Jewish woman who defied the Greeks and killed one of their generals?

Answers: 1 Dedication 2 Outside your front door 3 Antiochus Epiphanes 4 30 minutes after nightfall 5 Yehudit



HILCHOT CHANUKAH

Summary of the laws of Chanukah

- ◆ Both men and women are obliged to light the Chanukah candles. For Sephardim, in any one household, only one Menorah is lit. This is usually done by the father of the house. If two or more families live together in the same house but eat separately, then they should share the cost and light together. When a child brings a Menorah from school, and wishes to light it, he/she should hear the beracha from the parent before lighting.
- ◆ The Askenazi custom is that every member of the household light their own Menorah.
- ◆ The Chanukah lights should be lit preferably with olive oil. There is a custom to put a small amount of water in the glass containing the oil. Candles can also be used they should all be of the same size.
- ◆ The correct time for lighting is at the beginning of night; this year, this will be about 4:45pm, and into the next half-hour. However, it is possible to light throughout the night as long as two members of the family are awake. If not, then one should light without a Beracha.
- ◆ Sufficient oil must be put in the Menorah to last at least half an hour. On Erev Shabbat, we must put enough oil or use large enough candles to last until about 5:15 pm or about 2 hours. We have to kindle the Chanukah lights before the Shabbat lights are lit (Kabalat Shabbat Friday 11 December is at 3:33pm). We should not kindle the lights of Chanukah or Shabbat before 3:01 pm. Preferably, one should pray Mincha early on Erev Shabbat before lighting the Nerot Chanukah. On Motzei Shabbat, at home, we should make Havdalah on wine etc. before we kindle the Chanukah lights. But in synagogue we light the Menorah before Havdala, in order to publicise the miracle (Pirsum Hanes). If less oil than the required quantity was put, the Menorah must be re-lit with the required amount of oil.
- ◆ Since we light inside the house, the Menorah should be placed by the doorpost opposite the Mezuzah where it can be seen by the members of the household. Preferably the lights should be at

a height of about 24 inches above the floor, but a height of up to around 10 meters is permitted. If we have a window facing the street at a height of less than 10 meters from the street, it is preferable to place the Menorah there and not by the door inside the house.

- ◆ The first night we start with one light (plus the Shamash, which is lit at the end) and we increase by one for every night until the last night when we have eight lights. We position the lights so that we always light from left to right, eg. On the second night we would start from the new light placed on the left side of the first light and so on.

- ◆ The Menorah must be in position when we light and not moved after lighting. For example, if someone is ill in bed, they cannot light it there, and then have it moved to its correct position, but they can make the Beracha and appoint a Shliach (messenger) who hears the Beracha will go and light it in its correct position. The Menorah must not be placed where it can be knocked over or blown out by the wind.

- ◆ We must not benefit from or use the lights of Chanukah. We therefore place the Shamash on a position higher than the other lights.

- ◆ Full Hallel is recited on all 8 days with the Beracha. We mention Al Hanissim in the Amida and in Birchat Hamazon, but if we forget to say this, we do not have to go back.

- ◆ The family should be present at the time of lighting. Women have the custom not to work while the Chanukah lights are on, i.e. for that half-hour.

- ◆ Once the Beracha is said, one should not speak until he has lit all the lights.

- ◆ There is a custom to eat milky foods on Chanukah to remember the miracle through the milk Yehudith fed the wicked Greek emperor. We also have the custom to eat Latkes and other food fried in oil to commemorate the miracle of the flask of oil.



STORY OF CHANUKAH

More than 2000 years ago there was a time when the land of Israel was part of the Syrian-Greek Empire, dominated by Syrian rulers of the dynasty of the Seleucids.

In order to relate the story that led up to Chanukah, we shall start with Antiochus III, the King of Syria, who reigned from 358 to 338 B.C.E. He had waged war with King Ptolemy of Egypt over the possession of the Land of Israel. Antiochus III was victorious and the Land of Israel was annexed to his empire.

At the beginning of his reign he was favorably disposed toward the Jews and accorded them some privileges. Later on, however, when he was beaten by the Romans and compelled to pay heavy taxes, the burden fell upon the various peoples of his empire who were forced to furnish the heavy gold that was required of him by the Romans. When Antiochus died, his son Seleucus IV took over, and further oppressed the Jews.

Added to the troubles from the outside were the grave perils that threatened Judaism from within. The influence of the Hellenists (people who accepted idol-worship and the Syrian way of life) was increasing. Yochanan, the High Priest, foresaw the danger to Judaism from the penetration of Syrian-Greek influence into the Holy Land. For, in contrast to the ideal of outward beauty held by the Greeks and Syrians, Judaism emphasizes truth and moral purity, as commanded by G-d in the holy Torah. The Jewish people could never give up their faith in G-d and accept the idol-worship of the Syrians.

Yochanan was therefore opposed to any attempt on the part of the Jewish Hellenists to introduce Greek and Syrian customs into the land. The Hellenists hated him. One of them told the King's

commissioner that in the treasury of the Temple there was a great deal of wealth.

The wealth in the treasury consisted of the contributions of "half a shekel" made by all adult Jews annually. That was given for the purpose of the sacrifices on the altar, as well as for fixing and improving the Temple building. Another part of the treasury consisted of orphans' funds which were deposited for them until they became of age. Seleucus needed money in order to pay the Romans. He sent his minister Helyodros to take the money from the treasury of the Temple. In vain did Yochanan, the High Priest, beg him not to do it. Helyodros did not listen and entered the gate of the Temple. But suddenly, he became pale with fright. The next moment he fainted and fell to the ground. After Helyodros came to, he did not dare enter again.

Short time later, Seleucus was killed and his brother Antiochus IV began to reign over Syria (in 358 - 174 B.C.E.). He was a tyrant of a rash and impetuous nature, contemptuous of religion and of the feelings of others. He was called "Epiphanes," meaning "the gods' beloved." Several of the Syrian rulers received similar titles. But a historian of his time, Polebius, gave him the epithet Epimanes ("madman"), a title more suitable to the character of this harsh and cruel king.

Desiring to unify his kingdom through the medium of a common religion and culture, Antiochus tried to root out the individualism of the Jews by suppressing all the Jewish Laws. He removed the righteous High Priest, Yochanan, from the Temple in Jerusalem, and in his place installed Yochanan's brother Joshua, who loved to call himself by the Greek name of Jason. For he was a member of the Hellenist party, and he used his high office to spread more and more of the Greek customs among the priesthood.

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AN EMPOWERING CHANUKA LESSON

Rabbi David Baadani
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

There is something strange about the Chanukah tradition. We light the Menorah every night to commemorate the lighting of the Menorah in the בית המקדש. However there they used to light the Menorah in the afternoon, before sunset, and today we light the Chanukah Menorah only after sunset.

Why is that?

There is a very profound message here.

There are times in our lives which can be compared to the daytime. The sun is shining brightly, things are looking good, clear and wonderful. But then the sun sometimes sets over the horizon of our lives, and there is uncertainty, confusion and darkness.

The lesson we can learn from this is as follows. All darkness is an invitation for us to enter into that space and ignite a flame of love, light and hope. You should never fear darkness be that your own, or others. You are not the darkness. You were sent here to transform darkness into a springboard for deeper awareness, connection and love.

הנרות הללו שאנו מדליקין... קדש הם.
These lights we light... are sacred.

ואין לנו רשות להשתמש בהם,
Is it not permitted for us to make any secular use of them;

אלא לראותם בלבד,
But only to look at them, in order to thank G-d for the past and present, and to ask for the future.

These lights, הנרות הללו, these are our children, ואין לנו רשות, they are sacred, holy. קודש הם להשתמש בהם. We have no right to use our children for our psychological, emotional and even spiritual benefits. So that we say; 'What a successful father I am' or 'What a successful mother I am'. Our children

were given to us so that we are able to see them for who they really are, seeing a child for who they really are is the deepest and greatest thing that a parent can give their child. כדי להודות לשמן. We should say thank you Hashem for all of our children, each one of them with their unique personality and character. Because they were given to us by G-d, not for our own benefit, but for us to see them for who they really are.



HALLOUMI & MUSHROOM SALAD

by Sophia Hassoun
from @Syrian_in_israel

Method

For the salad:

- 1 bunch kale or other leafy green of your choice (washed checked and dried)
- 1 c shredded purple cabbage
- 1 large sweet potato cubed and roasted with a little oil and salt until soft OR 2c sweet potato crisps
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1 package halloumi cheese cubed
- 1 box fresh mushrooms (clean any dirt with a damp cloth and quarter them)
- 3 tbs teryaki sauce
- 1 tbs sesame seeds
- 1 tsp oil



Halloumi and teryaki mushrooms :

In a frying pan add cubed halloumi and brown (use non stick). Set aside

In the same frying pan pour 1 tbs oil and sauté mushrooms for 5 minutes until wilted

Then add in teriyaki sauce and let bubble and coat the mushrooms. Pour 1 tbs sesame seeds and mix .

Dressing - in a bowl mix 3 tbs mayonnaise

- 2 frozen garlic cubes
- 2 tsp vinegar
- 1 tsp honey
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a bowl layer greens, cabbage and tomatoes
Drizzle some dressing
Then top with halloumi, sweet potatoes and mushrooms.
Enjoy !

For more yummy recipes check my Instagram
@Syrian_in_israel



CHANUKA SPECIAL - THE HANDS OF THE PURE

By Rabbi Mashiach Kelaty
Dedicated to Yehudah ben Moshe Kelaty, Z"l

In "Al HaNisim" that we add during Chanukah, we read that G-d's miraculous deliverance included "the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the provokers into the hands of those who involve themselves with Your Torah." We understand the miracle of "the strong into the hands of the weak" and "the many into the hands of the few"—but why do we emphasize "the impure into the hands of the pure?" Is this necessarily miraculous? Rabbi Shlomo Brevda zt'l offers an explanation by Rabbi Yechezkel Levinstein zt'l of the progression from pure, to righteous, to involved with Torah. This teaches us an important lesson: the entire battle was spiritual. It may have looked like a war, but the battle was supernatural, and depended upon spiritual levels rather than physical strength. Thus, each level of evil, as embodied in a Greek soldier, could only be overcome by a Jewish fighter with a corresponding level of holiness.

The average soldier was not truly evil, but was merely dominated by the impure practices and beliefs of the Greek oppressors. To rebuff him, a Jew merely needed to avoid these impurities—and thus the battle brought "the impure into the hands of the pure."

There were other Greeks who were indeed evil (who helped to set up idols in the Temple and force Jews to abandon their faith). Such soldiers could only be beaten by those who were not merely free of Hellenist beliefs, but had dedicated themselves to observe Mitzvot even when self-sacrifice was involved - meaning it had to be "the wicked into the hands of the righteous."

Finally, there were those Greeks who were "great in

their wickedness," those who enacted the decrees to separate the Jews from G-d and Torah. These individuals could only be countered by those great Jews who were totally involved with the study of our Holy Torah—and thus "the provokers" could only fall "into the hands of those who involve themselves with Your Torah."

History often repeats itself, and we find ourselves today looking at a moral decline which might have surprised even the Greeks. Several decades ago, Rabbi Frand quoted a study of the top ten problems in the public schools then versus forty years earlier—and the comparison was mind-boggling: forty years before, gum-chewing in the halls was a problem; when he spoke, kids and teachers were watching out for knives. And since then, they've added school shootings to the national agenda in the United States. Any person of conscience must wonder, what can I do to reverse this? How can I make an impact? Rabbi Levinstein provides us with one answer, one route out of the pit. The Torah and its commentaries are repositories of ethical teachings and works of spiritual improvement. The more Torah that a person knows, the greater the "soldier" in society's spiritual battles. And the use of the various techniques and advice can indeed bring a person to a higher ethical and spiritual level.

The battle begins at home, or more accurately within oneself. One needn't be a great scholar, or even totally righteous - one merely needs to be free of a particular ill to be able to combat it. But the greater the person, the more a person has immersed him- or her - self in Jewish ethics and moral development, the greater impact he or she can have!

CHANUKA SAMEACH!!

THE - DREIDEL - SEVIVON - GAME



Dreidel - Sevivon

The traditional Chanukah dreidel is a throwback to the times when the Greek armies of King Antiochus controlled the Holy Land, before the Maccabees defeated them. The powerful regime passed a series of laws outlawing the study of Torah and many of the mitzvot. The Jews were compelled to take their Torah learning "underground."

Jewish children resorted to learning Torah in outlying areas and forests. It is said that if a Greek patrol passed by they would quickly pull out and play with small tops. Our Chanukah dreidel games are a salute to these Jewish heroes of yore.

What Is a Dreidel?

Sevivon (סביבון) comes from the root word Sovev - to turn.

The Yiddish word "dreidel" comes from the word "dreyen" ("to turn").

The classic dreidel is a four-sided spinning top made of wood, plastic, or the proverbial clay. On the four sides of the dreidel appear four letters from the Hebrew alphabet—nun (נ), gimmel (ג), hey (ה), and shin (ש). These four letters are an acronym for "nes gadol hayah sham"—"a great miracle happened there."

In Israel, the actual setting of the Chanukah miracle, the last letter, shin, is substituted with a pey (פ), which stands for "po"—"here."

Getting Your Dreidel Game Started

In addition to dreidels, you'll need the the currency—chocolate coins!!

All players sit around the playing area.

The currency is equally divided amongst all players. Everyone takes a turn at spinning the dreidel; the

one with the highest spin has first turn.

(Gimel is highest, then hey, Nun, and shin.) If there is a tie for highest, those who tied spin again.

Everyone puts one unit of the chocolate coin currency into the pot.

The one who has first turn is followed in clockwise direction by all the others.

How to Play Dreidel?

If the dreidel lands on a...

Nun - Absolutely nothing happens. Nun stands for the Yiddish word nul, which means zero. It's time for the player to your left to take a spin.

Gimel - You get to take the whole pot! Gimmel stands for gantz, which means whole. Everyone, including you, now puts another unit into the pot, and the person to your left tries his luck at spinning.

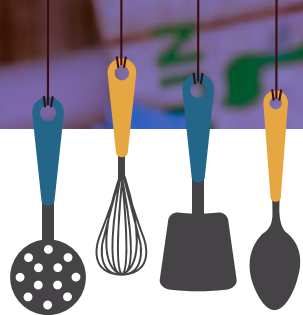
Hey - You get to take half of the pot. Hey stands for halb, half. If the pot has an odd amount of units, don't try to split chocolate in half. Leave the odd item there.

Shin - You put a unit into the pot. Shin is for shenk; yes, that means "give."

You can speed up the game by upping the ante, raising shin and post-gimmel contributions to two, three or even four units.

Any player that cannot contribute after landing on a shin or after a fellow player lands on a gimmel, is out of the game. The game ends when there is one player left.

And he or she gets to enjoy all the chocolates. Don't forget to share your winnings :)



TRADITIONAL CHANUKA POTATO LATKES

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 an onion
- 2 tbsp oil
- 3 tsp kosher salt, divided
- 1.5 lbs Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup flour
- Oil for frying



Method

1. Dice the onion and sauté it in 2 tbsp of oil and 1 tsp of salt until golden.
2. Grate the potatoes (by hand or in a food processor). Immediately transfer the grated potato to a bowl of cold water.
3. Place the eggs, flour, fried onion and 2 tsp. salt in a separate bowl. Drain the grated potato well, add it to the rest of the ingredients and mix immediately.
4. Heat 2-4 tbsp. of oil in a frying pan, over medium heat. Test the oil by dropping a tiny bit of the mixture into the pan. When the oil sizzles upon contact, it is ready.
5. For uniform latkes, use a 1/4 or 1/8 cup measuring cup. Scoop the batter and gently drop it into the oil. Press down gently with the back of the measuring cup to flatten. Fry 2-3 minutes until golden, then flip the latkes and fry 1-2 minutes on the second side.
6. Repeat until all the mixture has been fried. (You will need to add more oil to the pan every couple of batches.)



WHAT IS TAL?

TAL - was founded in 2011 by the highly-motivated and energetic Rabbi Jonathan Tawil, with the soul mission of helping people building their lives with Torah and Action. For close to a decade TAL has been proving the community youth with an opportunity to develop their leadership potential, foster a positive Jewish Identity, and develop relationships with other Jewish young professionals and students locally and around the country. The results have been outstanding.

TAL has opened its new center in Temple Fortune and has grown into a multi-facade organisation delivering a variety of services:



WEEKLY TIMETABLE



MONDAYS:

- 10am Yoga with Talia
- 11am Shiur with Ruthie
- 7pm Chavruta 6th Form
- 7:30pm Chavruta 19+
- 8pm Shiur 6th Form with Ruthie
- 8:30pm Shiur 19+ with Ruthie



THURSDAYS:

- 12pm Immanuel Lunch & Learn
- 4:30pm Bar Mitzva Learning
- 6-7pm Krav Maga

TUESDAYS:

- 1-2-1 UCL Chavruta Learning Boys
- 4:30pm Bar Mitzva Learning

WEDNESDAYS:

- 10am-12pm Mother & Baby Program
- 12pm Lunch & Learn Immanuel College
- 4:30-6pm After School Club Hasma
- 6-7:30pm After School Club Menorah
- 7:40-10pm Lads Chavruta Program

SHABBAT

- 4:30pm Shabbat Service with a hot Kiddush

SUNDAYS:

- 9:30am Pirkei Avot Zoom shiur
- 10am-12pm Bat Mitzvah Program
- 6-7:30pm Chazanut Program



FOR MONTHLY EVENTS CHECK OUT TORAHACTIONLIFE.COM



DREIDEL, DREIDEL, DREIDEL....

By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

The Ancient Greeks have contributed a great deal to society. They played an important part in the development of the alphabet (the first two letters of the Greek alphabet – alpha and beta – have given us the word ‘alphabet’) and their building methods and structures together with their admiration of sport have made their mark until today.

When the Greeks first officially met with Jewish society, there seemed to be a great respect towards Judaism. We are told that the Greek Ruler Talmi Hamelech demanded that the Sages translate the Torah into Greek.

The Talmud further relates that when Alexander the Great and his conquering legions advanced upon Jerusalem, they were met by a delegation of elders, led by the High Priest Shimon HaTzaddik. When Alexander saw Shimon approaching, he dismounted and prostrated himself before the Jewish Sage.

To his astonished men, Alexander explained that each time he went into battle; he would see a vision in the likeness of this High Priest leading his troops to victory.

In gratitude, and out of profound respect for the spiritual power of the Jews, Alexander was a kind and generous ruler. He cancelled the Jewish taxes during Sabbatical years, and even offered animals to be sacrificed on his behalf in the Temple.

Unfortunately, history would show that Alexander's heirs failed to sustain his benevolence. What happened? Why did it all go so wrong? Why did the Greeks turn, and what were they aiming for in their battle against us?

The word “philosophy” comes from the Greek philosophia, which literally means “love of

wisdom. The Greeks were a talented nation, they loved wisdom and depth. Yet when they got to know and understand the Jews, they realised that the Jews didn't just treat the Torah as a book of wisdom, rather they treated it as having a further dimension, one connected to Hashem.

For the Greeks, the Torah offered wisdom, and was a book like any other book of wisdom. They did not wish to connect the Torah to Hashem. Rather, they emphasised to the Jews that they should have ‘no part in the G-d of Israel’.

The Maharal states that the (numerical value) of the word Yavan (Greece) is 66. It shares the same Gematria as the word GalGal – circle (i.e., world), and the same Gematria as the words Haya, Hoveh, Yiheyeh (Was, Is, and Will be). The Greeks maintained that everything can be found in this world. The wisdom that one attains can be found by concentrating on the physicality's. The body rules and there is no need to bring in Hashem. All can be found with the circular world.

Am Yisrael differ. We believe that the Torah is not just a book of wisdom and science; rather it is a book of connection to Hashem – Who rules the world. He decides on the future not us.

Have you ever wondered what significance there is in a Dreidel?

Tradition has it that we spin it around and play games to commemorate how the Jewish children yearned for Torah but could not learn in public. Instead, they would hide in caves and learn. When the Greek soldiers would be near, they would take out their Dreidels and pretend to play. Our Sages offer a deeper meaning. The Dreidel has four distinct sides, representing the four directions of the compass and the four basic forms of matter – earth, water, air, and fire, in

other words, solid, liquid, gas and energy. A turn from above sets the Dreidel spinning and its features are obscured in one dizzying blur. But even as the eye beholds confusion, underneath everything comes together to one focal point, the vortex from which all power emanates, the unifying power of the Creator of the Universe. The Greeks thought that they were in charge of this world and through their wisdom could control all the events around them. We believe that our actions can make a difference in this world, but the underlying decision maker is Hashem. The Dreidel is spun, but at the end of the day it will land where Hashem wishes it too.

Once the Greeks realised that the Jews were learning the Torah as a service of G-d, they set edicts to destroy our link to Hashem. They forbid all Torah learning.

The Chaffetz Chaim was once asked, why is it that out of all the Avot Avraham Yitzchak and Yaakov the angel (Satan) decided only to attack Yaakov? Why didn't he attack Avraham or Yitzchak?

He answered that Avraham represented Chesed and Yitzchak Avodah (prayer). The Satan doesn't mind if a Jew gives the whole day or if he prays the whole day – that for him is ‘small fish’. But when a Jew learns Torah, then that is a threat to him that he must try and destroy.

The Torah is a gift from Hashem that carries us from generation to generation. It's the essence of the Jew.

The Greeks raged a war against our connection to Hashem.

It is for this reason that the miracle that occurred to us was through the Menorah.

A candle has two parts – the main body and the wick. Once you light the candle the main body slowly disintegrates but the light continues to burn the same. Similarly, we are made of a body and a soul. We might think that the body rules,

but as we get older, we realise that the body will not be the same forever. It is the soul that is eternal.

Shlomo Hamelech stated, “Ki Ner Mitzvah VeTorah Ohr, the mitzvah is a lamp and Torah is the light” (Proverbs 6:23).

The soul is spiritual, yet it is tied to man's body. In this respect, it compares to a lamp that emits lights – non-material – but is tied to the physical wick of the lamp (Maharal, Netiv HaTorah Ch.16).

The Greeks sought to extinguish our soul, they sought to extinguish our real-life thread. Our ancestors stood up and fought for the right path and were rewarded with finding the holy oil which miraculously lasted for 8 days.

As we commemorate the courage of our ancestors and the miracle performed by Hashem with the lighting of the candles, we spin the Dreidel. The letters on it form acronym for nes gadol hayah sham – a great miracle happened there. The mystical teachers point out that the Gematria, of these four letters is equal to the Gematria of Mashiach.

Ultimately, when the mad spinning will finally come to an end, when the grey blur comes into focus and the true nature of creation is revealed, the world will be illuminated with the Divine Presence, which all will recognise, and we will enter the Messianic age.





CHANUKA AND MIKETZ

By David Yehuda Joseph

The name Chanukah divides the word into Chanu (encamped) and Ka (gematria 25). On the twenty fifth day of Kislev, Israel

encamped and rested after their victory over their enemies.

Chanukah is a time when the creation of the Heaven and the Earth is commemorated, since Chanukah falls exactly 3 months after the anniversary of their creation. The world was created on the 25th of Elul, and after 3 months Hashem confirmed the existence of the world. It is this confirmation which Chanukah commemorates, for Chazal tells us that on Chanukah, the process of judgement initiated during the 10 days of repentance cease.

The Chanukah light and the oil which fuels it, contain parallels to the different parts of man's soul. The word Ner - (candle) indicates the Nefesh (lower level of the soul) and the Ruach (middle part of the soul), while the letters of HaShemen (the oil) can form the word NeShama (highest part of the soul). The flame emitted by the wicks symbolizes the hidden light which illuminates the hearts of Bnei Yisrael on Chanukah. All this was made possible through the utter devotion of the Hasmoneans, symbolizing the victory over Yavan (Greece) – the Sefat Emet derives this from the word Honah (deceit). Greece endeavoured to deceive Bnei Yisrael and corrupt their minds with the impurity of philosophy. The Hasmoneans, a name built on the letters Chet Shin Mem, indicates the 3 measures through the Greeks tried to destroy the Jewish religion: Chodesh (month), Shabbat, and Milah (circumcision). These 3 mitzvot form the backbone of Jewish belief and are essential for the continuance and preservation of Bnei Yisrael's favour in the eyes of Hashem.

On Chanukah we read with dedication of the Aron Hakodesh by the princes of Yisrael, for these princes also contributed to the continuation of the holy light in this world by offering their sacrifices. The vessels brought by



the princes included 12 silver dishes, 12 silver bowls and 12 golden spoons, all together equalling 36 vessels. This corresponds to 36 Tzadikim in every generation upon which the world's existence depends. The Sefat Emet says that these 36 Tzadikim should be understood in relation to the 36 times the Torah mentions Ohr (light), and that they represent the light with which the world was created. This light is revealed also by the 36 candles which are lit on Chanukah, for just as the princes perpetuated this light with their sacrifices, so did the Hasmoneans, through their unwavering loyalty, bring this light to the mitzvah of the Chanukah candles.

The Bnei Yisrael were saved from the Greeks because they were willing to give their lives for a Kiddush Hashem (sanctification of Hashem's name). This is hinted in the word Shemen (oil), for the phrase «Shelemin Masuru Nafsham» - (those who were perfect risked their lives) is an acronym for Shemen (oil). Similarly, the first letters of the passuk «Shamram Melech Ne'eman» (the faithful king protected them) also form the word Shemen (oil).



HEALTHY TIPS ON CHANUKAH

Easy Overnight Breakfast Oats

Method

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 1/4 cup milk (dairy or non dairy)
- 2 tbsp almond butter
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1/2 tsp kosher salt

1. Pour all the ingredients into a container or glass jar. Mix. Refrigerate overnight.

2. In the morning, pour the oatmeal into two bowls.

3. Garnish with the fruit and nuts of your choice. I've used banana, nectarine, almonds, and dark chocolate.



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CHANUKA PRESENTS! EIGHTH NIGHT OF CHANUKA

By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

The delicious smell of doughnuts is in the air, and the beautiful candles across the community are alight as we delve into oil for the next eight days, sharing songs and presents with our loved ones.

The story is told of a grown up Jewish man, spoiled by his mother and still living at home.

Chanukah arrives and she gives him a beautifully wrapped present. As he opens it, he is happy to see that she has bought him two sweaters.

The next day he decides to proudly wear one of the beautiful sweaters.

As he comes down to breakfast his mother stares at him with a grumpy face.

"What's the matter?" she asks, as her eyes roll.

Startled, the man replies, "what's wrong, Mother?"

She approaches him and says, "What's the matter with the other sweatshirt I got you! Didn't you like the other one?"

Sometimes we are spoiled for choice; at other times it is difficult to please everyone, but what's behind the (not so ancient) custom to give out presents on Chanukah?

After being in jail for ten years, Yosef was finally approached with a way out.

Two of the King's officers were jailed with him, awaking with troublesome dreams.

Yosef interprets these dreams, telling the butler that in three days he would be returned to his

initial post and "you will place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as was the former practice..." [Bereishit 40:13].

These words seem to be superfluous! What do they add? What do they teach us?

Rabbi Akiva Eiger sent a letter to his son, in which he suggests a novel and insightful interpretation. Yosef tells the butler that he will be returned to his position and once again be Pharaoh's butler. When the butler heard those words, what went through his mind? Was there a great sigh of relief?

He might have been slightly happy, but then once he thought about it he was worried;

"What will be if something will fly into the cup again? My hand will be shaking so much that I will never be able to pour a cup of wine for the king again! Good, I got my job back, but how will I cope?"

To address that fear, Yosef responded: "You will have your job back AND you are not going to have to worry because it is going to be K'Mishpat haRishon – exactly like it was before. Why is that? It is because the whole incident of the fly falling into the cup was not your fault – it will never happen again! The only reason the fly fell into the cup is SO THAT you should be here in the dungeon with me, SO THAT you will be able to tell Pharaoh what a great

interpreter of dreams I am, and SO THAT I will be able to get out of jail because of the good words you put in for me with Pharaoh!"

Many are the thoughts in the hearts of man, and G-d's plan is what always finally emerges. (Mishlei 19:21)

From the young age of 17, Yosef was enslaved in Egypt. He had been a slave in Potiphar's house, a prisoner, and this week is brought in front of the mighty King of Egypt Pharaoh.

Yet one thing remains constant in all his ordeals – G-d's Name is constantly on his lips.

Rashi explains the phrase, Ki Hashem Ito (39:3), «Hashem was with him,» as Shem Shomayim Shagar B'fiv, «The Name of Heaven was fluent in his mouth,» to mean that he would regularly refer to Hashem in conversation.

In a land of many gods, Yosef was able to infuse everyone he saw with the knowledge of the Only One Almighty G-d.

Potiphar now knew there was an Elokim; the butler now knew there was an Elokim.

Finally after twelve years in prison, Yosef gets his break in front of the King.

Pharaoh is the god of Egypt; he is mighty and powerful.

Yet when Yosef is brought in front of him, he is not in fear or awe – rather, he recognises Pharaoh as another piece of the puzzle, bringing G-dliness to the world.

Even though Pharaoh compliments him, saying, "I have heard you know how to interpret dreams", Yosef answers, "Biladay, Elokim Yaaneh Et Shalom Pharaoh" (41:16) – "It is Hashem that

controls the world and can enable interpretation of dreams."

Eventually, many years later when Yosef reveals himself and sends a message to his father, he says,

"Koh Amar Bincha Yosef Samani Elokim Le'adon Lechol-Mitzrayim" – "G-d has granted me jurisdiction over the whole land of Egypt." (45:9)

Our Sages interpret this homiletically to mean that Yosef was saying – "Sam Ani" – I have put – "Elokim" – G-d Almighty – "Le'adon" – as a Master - over the whole land of Egypt.

The whole of Egypt now knows and understands that there exists such a concept of One G-d.

Through Yosef's actions and his personal conduct, the whole world could now see and learn about Hashem.

Chanuka is a time when the Greeks wished to cut us off from our past and to infuse us with their understanding of the world – no One G-d, no real spirituality in the world. We fought back.

But to fight back, you need to realise where it all emanates from, search out the source.

A present isn't just created. There is an idea; there is action of buying and sending. When you receive a present, you start to think "how kind!", and you search back to find who was the giver, in order to thank them.

Light enables us to see; it shows the way.

At the darkest time in the year, we shine the lights of the Menorah.

Chanuka is that time when we search back and reconnect to our G-d, recognising all that goodness He has bestowed upon us.

Chanuka Sameach!





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