

# LAMPLIGHTER

27 Kislev  
Parshas Mikeitz  
Chanukah  
**1170**  
19 December  
5775/2014

PUBLISHED BY THE CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD

## LIVING WITH THE TIMES

In this week's Torah portion of Mikeitz, we read that Jacob reluctantly acceded to his sons' request that they be allowed to return to Egypt together with their youngest brother, Benjamin. The viceroy, whom they did not recognize as their brother, Josef, had ordered them not to return to Egypt for more grain unless they brought Benjamin. Jacob's reply to his sons was: "May G-d, Almighty grant that the man have pity on you and release your other brother and Benjamin."

Jacob's fear and trepidation was greater than that of his children. Although they, too, were aware that this whole event had unfortunate undertones, as they themselves said, "We deserve to be punished because of what we did to our brother...that is why this great misfortune has come upon us," nevertheless, they looked upon it as a personal misfortune.

Jacob, however, saw this event as a continuation of his previous hardships. Jacob viewed all events that transpired with, or were related to, him as a "sign" and forerunner of events that will occur with later Jewish generations.

The tribes, however, were only able to view them in terms of a personal misfortune.

Since Jacob was on a far superior spiritual plane than the tribes, he was able to see these events as they transcended the boundaries of nature.

This closely relates to the festival of Chanukah. Although the events surrounding Chanukah actually came about through miraculous means, superficially one may think that these miracles were bounded by nature. One may be led to think so, because the salvation of the Jewish people and their deliverance from the hands of the Syrian-Greeks involved actual physical warfare.

In truth, the victory involved nothing less than miracles that completely went beyond the realm of nature. The reason for this is that the victorious Jews overcame vastly superior odds - "the mighty into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few..." (from the Chanukah Al HaNisim prayer).

Whenever a Jew engages in something, even if it seems to be completely within the realm of nature, he should not think that one's only response is the natural. His actions must always be preceded by prayer to G-d that he should succeed in his actions.

When a Jew acts in this manner he merits to see the miracles that are clothed in the garments of nature, the miracles that totally transcend nature, and ultimately, the miracles that will be revealed with the coming of our Righteous Moshiach.

*Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

## Finding Light

*By Mendy Herson*

"For You light my flame; G-d illuminates my darkness."

That's a quote from King David (Psalms, 18:29), and he seems to be saying that our souls - while they are Divine - aren't always ablaze, glowing and brilliant. Sometimes we need extra ignition or accelerant to get it aflame.

That's interesting. When is my soul afire? And when does it need kindling?

When I'm finding comfort and beauty in life's purpose, in my contribution to the world, in my committed relationships and my reason for being, then my soul is shining. My internal world has clarity; life makes sense and there is no darkness to battle.

But when my attention is distracted by life's glitter, by the beckoning flicker of pleasurable self-indulgence, then my soul isn't flaring; it's obscured and ignored.

That's Darkness.

Because darkness doesn't necessarily mean evil; it means the absence of light. Darkness equals confusion. When life's meaning seems inscrutable, when I'm running from task to task oblivious to the need for meaning, that's called darkness. I may even be having fun, and convincing myself that pleasure equals light, but my soul - my life's purpose - is obscured from my mind's eye. And that's darkness.

The soul needs to shine, to blaze forth and dispel the psycho-spiritual haze.

And this blaze is a joint effort between myself and my Creator. I must find the strength to find my internal "jug of pure oil." In Kabbalistic teachings, oil symbolizes faith-faith that "You [G-d] light my flame."

And that's one of Chanukah's messages. While we celebrate the Jews' victorious military struggle against the Syrian-Greek Hellenists, we are also celebrating their own inner struggle with themselves. Hellenism equalled materialism and pleasure; those are things that can make a more disciplined life seem boring by comparison.

Each Jew needed to make a deeply personal choice: Would he struggle to find his internal lamp, to ignite his soul? Or would he acquiesce to the "beauty" of self-indulgence, and label darkness as light?

In searching themselves, the Maccabees found their internal flames and personal victory. This led to public victory and the Miracle of the Lights.

So this Chanukah, as we recite the blessings and light the Chanukah candles, let's look at the flames and see ourselves, our soul and its light.

Let's commit to our personal Chanukah victory.

# Slice of LIFE

This story takes place about one hundred years ago in Baghdad at the Shabbat table of Mr. Avraham Pinchas, a rich Jewish merchant. Usually Mr. Pinchas had a table full of guests but this Shabbat he only had one; a poor man that he had invited from the Bait Knesset (Synagogue).

The guest was awed by the plush richness around him; the thick Persian rugs, gold inlaid dishes and beautifully decorated walls. Only one thing perplexed him; in the middle of the table stood an old, empty, broken bottle that looked like it once contained olive oil about twenty years ago.

When Mr. Pinchas noticed how his guest was staring at the bottle he said. "I see that you are wondering about my bottle. Do you want to hear a wonderful story?" When the guest nodded 'yes' he began the story: "My father was a respected businessman here in Baghdad, but he was always busy and he left me in the hands of my grandfather.

Every morning my grandfather would wake me, make sure I washed my hands, said the morning blessings and didn't forget my lunch. Then each time, just before I left the house for school, he would give me a kiss on my forehead; raise his hands to the heavens and say:

"VAANI ANA ANI BAW" (lit. And I, where will I go?! Bereishit 37:30 - last week's section, Vayeishev)

Later I learned in school that this is what Reuven cried out when he discovered that Yosef was not in the pit and that it was impossible to save him. But I had no idea what it had to do with me.

Then, when I was about fourteen years old, tragedy struck; my grandfather passed away. There was no one to take care of me in the morning so I started to go with my father to work. My father tried to make sure that I prayed and learned a little but he was always very busy, and the business he did fascinated me so I didn't pay much attention to my studies.

Then, two years later, tragedy struck

again; my father died suddenly and now, besides the fact that I was alone, there was another problem; what to do with the business? I was given the choice either to sell it and save the money, or to try my luck managing it for a while and I decided, against the advice of the lawyers to try the latter.

Well, I took to it like a fish to water. It wasn't long before I was making big business deals with the best. But I began to feel out of place with a Yarmulke and Tzizis, and not eating with everyone else, and the keeping of Shabbos prevented me from making big contacts.

So I began to stop being so observant and I discovered that the more Commandments I dropped, the more successful I became. Several years passed and I rose higher and higher until, one day I was walking home after landing a really big deal and I noticed a young Jewish boy, maybe thirteen years old, sitting on the sidewalk crying.

You know how it is when you feel happy you can't stand to see someone miserable, right? So I went over to him and asked him what was wrong. 'Oh thank you sir,' he said 'but this is something for Jews, I don't think you would understand'.

When he said those words I felt like someone stabbed me in the heart. 'You should know that I am Jewish' I said to him, 'I even learned Talmud in Torah School'.

'Oh, I'm sorry' he answered 'I didn't mean to make trouble, I just feel so bad. You see at home we don't have any money.' He looked up at me and wiped his eyes with his shirtsleeve, 'My father died a while ago and my mother has to work and also feed us, me and my six brothers and sisters, so things are not good.

Well, this morning my mother said that it is Chanukah tonight and we have to look through the house for money to buy oil so we can light the Menorah and that maybe Hashem will make a Chanukah miracle for us and we'll find something.

We looked and searched and were just about to give up when my little sister found a coin behind one of the drawers. We were all so happy! So my mother told me to run to the store and buy the oil before it closes. I ran and just as he was closing I got there and bought the oil. I was walking home, holding the bottle and dreaming. I imagined how good it's going

to be to light the lights, how everyone will smile. I remembered how the warm yellow light would shine on everyone's faces and make everyone look so pure and happy. Maybe we'll even sing and dance like we did last year. Maybe Hashem will really send Moshiach this time, like my mother says, and then she will start to smile again. I was walking faster and faster, I was so excited. It's Chanukah! It's Chanukah!!

And then... I tripped.

I fell in the street and the bottle flew from my hands! I watched in horror as it arched in the air and came down on a stone and broke!!! It broke!! And all the oil spilled out .... and ANI ANA ANI BAW!!!' The boy began crying again but when I heard those words I suddenly remembered my grandfather and understood what he meant, he must have known that this would happen.

That broken bottle is me! And the spilled oil is my Jewish soul; I've lost my Jewish soul!! As in a trance, I took out a bunch of money from my pocket, gave it to the boy and told him to go back to the store knock on the window and just tell him Avrohom Pinchas sent me. Go! Buy what you want, have a happy Chanukah! Go! When the boy was gone, I lifted the bottle from the street and carried it home, still in shock. I sent the servants away for eight days and then, when I was alone, I just stood there, looking at that broken bottle and weeping.

Then the thought struck me; 'a Jew can't lose his Jewish soul. Maybe I ignored it or put it to sleep, but I'm sure it's still there'. So I took my grandfather's Menorah out of the cabinet, dusted it off, found some oil and a wick and lit the first candle. The light!! I felt like I was alive again! I even decided that I would do something... I would begin putting on Tefillin starting tomorrow morning!

The next night I lit two candles and decided from now on to eat only kosher food, the following night, that I would begin learning Torah. The night after that I made the decision to keep Shabbos. Until when on the last night eight candles were burning, I felt that I had become a new man; a renewed man. The lights of Chanukah saved me.

So that is the reason I keep the broken bottle; to remind me where I was and how that miracle of the oil "saved my life".

Published by **The Chabad House of Caulfield** in conjunction with the **Rabbinical College of Australia and N.Z.**

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ISSUE 1170

## MOSHIACH MATTERS

Every Jew believes in the coming of Moshiach, and is in a state of "I await his coming every day." But a Jew needs to know that it is not enough to decide by himself that "I await him," meaning that he hopes and wants that he will wake up tomorrow morning and see that Moshiach is here. This is good, but it doesn't bring to action, and "the action is the main thing." A Jew needs to know that when he goes to sleep tonight, it should be in a way that when he wakes up in the morning and sees Moshiach standing next to him in his room - he himself will be found in a state which is fitting to greet Moshiach! (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe, 13 Nisan 5741 - 1981*)



# INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Chanukah, 5724 [1963]  
To the Participants in the  
20th Annual Testimonial Dinner of the  
Beth Rivkah Schools for Girls

## Greeting and Blessing:

This year's Annual Dinner, coming just a few days after Chanukah, will surely find all the participants amply imbued with the spirit of the Festival of Lights. The Beth Rivkah Dinner offers an excellent opportunity to translate this inspiration into action.

The message of the Chanukah Lights contains three basic points which are applicable - in an immediate and practical way - to the crucial problems of our day:

- a. The Chanukah Lights (symbolizing the light of the Torah and Mitzvoth [commandments]) have to be kindled after dark. This indicates that one should not be discouraged by the prevailing "darkness" outside, for even a little light of Torah and Mitzvoth can dispel a lot of darkness.
- b. The Chanukah Lights are required to be kindled in such a way that their light should be seen outside. This indicates that it is not enough to illuminate one's own home with the light and warmth of Torah-true Yiddishkeit [Judaism], but that it is necessary to spread it also - outside, in the neighborhood and in the community at large.
- c. The Chanukah Lights are kindled in a growing number each night of Chanukah, teaching us to make a steadily growing effort to spread the light of the Torah and Mitzvoth, and that these efforts contain in themselves the assurance of ever-growing success.

Our Sages of the Talmud declare that the Mitzvah of the Chanukah Lights must be shared by the women no less than by the men, because women also contributed to the miraculous deliverance "in those days at this season." The Jewish women are particularly credited with the self-sacrificing determination to safeguard the sanctity of the Jewish home and the chastity of Jewish womanhood.

Nowadays, more than ever before, Jewish girls must be educated and trained to carry on their historic role in the preservation of the Jewish way of life and the preservation of our people. It is precisely for this purpose that the Beth Rivkah Schools for Girls were founded by my saintly father-in-law twenty years ago. I hope and pray that everyone will realize the personal responsibility and privilege to support the Beth Rivkah Schools in a growing measure, all the more so as such support is also a channel to receive G-d's blessings with increasing abundance, in all one's needs, materially and spiritually.

With the blessing of utmost success,

## CUSTOMS CORNER

### "Chanukah Gelt"

It has also been customary in many Jewish communities to focus public concern on Chanukah on matters affecting the education of the children. Community officials would gather to discuss methods to enhance the study of Torah among the children as well as in the community as a whole, for the Hebrew root of the word Chanukah connotes "education" as well as "inauguration," and the essence of Jewish education is teaching Torah to the children.

For this reason it is traditional for fathers to give "Chanukah gelt" [Yiddish for Chanukah money] to their children, as if to say: "These gifts are given to you today so that you will accept the yoke of Torah forever."

### Latkes and doughnuts

It is traditional to eat foods that are fried in oil like "Latkes" [fried potato pancakes] and doughnuts, to commemorate the jar of oil through which the miracle occurred.

## A WORD

*from the Director*

*The mitzvah of lighting the Chanukah menorah is derived from the menorah that stood in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. However, there is one important difference between that menorah and the one we light in our homes: the menorah in the Holy Temple consisted of seven branches, whereas the Chanukah menorah has eight.*

*In order to understand why, let's put the miracle of Chanukah in historical context:*

*The miracle of Chanukah took place after an extended period of time in which the menorah was not lit. It was impossible to do so, as the Greeks had issued harsh decrees forbidding the Jews to learn Torah and observe its commandments.*

*When G-d granted the Jewish people the strength to prevail over their enemies, it became necessary to perform an act that would bring an additional measure of light to make up for the deficit the darkness had caused. The Chanukah menorah would thus consist of eight lights instead of seven.*

*This teaches an important point: Above and beyond the fact that every Jew can transform his home into a "Holy Temple" by lighting the Chanukah menorah in commemoration of the ancient miracle, by lighting eight candles he causes an even greater light to shine than existed in the Holy Temple!*

*In exile, the Jewish people is "weak" and "few in number," while the nations of the world are "strong" and "many." Yet the miracle of Chanukah shows that even in a time of great darkness it is possible to overcome all impediments - even meriting a greater measure of light than existed before.*

*In the merit of observing the mitzvah of the Chanukah menorah may we very soon see the "lights of Zion" in the Third and eternal Holy Temple in Jerusalem.*

*J. I. Guterlich*

# IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Antiochus was determined to enforce his vicious edicts upon the Jews, effectively destroying their attachment to the Torah. He forbade the observance of all religious laws; anyone found with a Torah would be executed; circumcisions, kosher food, Shabbat, all vestiges of Judaism were outlawed. Phillip was appointed governor of Judea, and he set out to ruthlessly enforce the king's edicts. He decided to begin his campaign with the arrest of the notable sage and High Priest, Elazar. Elazar thwarted Phillip's design by choosing martyrdom over submission. Soon after, Chanah and her seven sons were arrested.

When the king, who was returning to Antioch, heard about the events which were taking place in Jerusalem, he decided to take an active role in enforcing his decrees. The mother and her sons were bound and brought before the king.

Antiochus tried to convince the eldest boy to abandon the Torah. The youth responded with great confidence, "Why do you bother with this long speech, trying to inflict your abominable religion upon us? We are ready to welcome death for the sake of our holy Torah!"

The king was furious and ordered the boy's tongue, hands and feet severed and placed in a fire. The soldiers proceeded to torture the boy, forcing his mother and six brothers to watch his excruciating pain. Antiochus was sure that this sight would intimidate his prisoners into unquestioning submission.

Instead, the martyrdom spurred the family to a deep resolve to accept their fate and to sanctify G-d's name. When the second brother was brought to the king, even the members of the king's retinue begged the boy to obey the king. The boy, however, replied, "Do what you will with me. I am no less than my brother in devotion to G-d." The second son's torture was as bitter as his brother's had been. As he died he told the king, "Woe to you, pitiless tyrant! Our souls go to G-d. And when G-d will awaken the dead and His martyred servants, we will live. But you--your soul will dwell in a place of eternal abhorrence!"

To the amazement of all, the third brother unflinchingly suffered the same fate. The fourth brother echoed his brothers' exhortations, and faced his brutal death with firm resolve. Before he was killed, the fifth brother turned to Antiochus and said: "Don't suppose that G-d has handed us over to you to exalt you or because He hates us. It is because He loves us and has granted us this honour. G-d will take His vengeance upon you and your progeny."

The blood-lust of the king was not assuaged, and the sixth brother was brought to the same end as his brothers who preceded him. His words bespoke his deep faith that G-d would ultimately requite the suffering of His servants.

Throughout this horrible sequence Chanah stood by her sons, giving them strength and encouragement. Now, only the youngest child remained to face the king. When they brought the boy, the king offered him gold and silver if he would do his will. The seven-year-old boy displayed the same courage as his brothers and taunted the king to carry out his threats.

The king couldn't believe such words coming from a mere child, and he called out to Chanah. Chanah stood before the murderer of her children and listened to his words. "Woman, have compassion upon this child. Persuade him to do my will so that you will have at least one surviving child and you too will live." She pretended to agree and asked to speak with her son.

When they stood together, Chanah kissed the boy, then said, "My son, I carried you in my body for nine months, I nursed you for two years and I have fed you until today. I have taught you to fear G-d and uphold His Torah. See the heaven and the earth, the sea and the land, fire, water, wind and every other creation. Know that they were all created by G-d's word. He created man to serve Him and He will reward man for his deeds. The king knows he is condemned before G-d. He thinks that if he convinces you, G-d will have mercy on him. G-d controls your life's breath and can take your soul whenever He desires. If only I could see the greatness of your glorious place where we would be illuminated with G-d's light and rejoice and exult together."

Chanah returned to the king, saying, "I was unable to prevail upon him." The exasperated king again addressed the child who answered him, "Whom are you seeking to overpower with your words and enticements? I laugh at your foolishness. I believe in the Torah and in G-d Whom you blaspheme. You will remain an abomination upon all mankind, loathsome and far from G-d."

The king was enraged. According to the Talmud, Antiochus gave the boy a chance to save himself by ostensibly bowing down to retrieve his signet ring, but the boy refused. As they removed him, Chanah begged to kiss him one last time. As if speaking to all seven children, Chanah said, "My children, tell your ancestor Abraham, 'You bound only one son upon an altar, but I bound seven.'" Then Antiochus ordered that the child be tortured even more than his brothers.

Chanah was left surrounded by the bodies of her sons, a prayer exalting G-d on her lips. Then the distraught woman threw herself from a roof and rested beside her martyred sons.

## Thoughts THAT COUNT

And Pharaoh was dreaming (41:1)

Should it not say, "and Pharaoh dreamed"? But this is to teach us that for those two years Pharaoh would see this dream each and every night, but would not remember it, until the time came for Joseph to come out of prison; that morning, he woke up and remembered it. (*Midrash HaGadol*)

And Pharaoh said to Joseph...there is none as understanding and wise as you (41:39)

"Understanding" (navon) is one who can deduce one thing from another; "wise" (chacham) is one who possesses wisdom. A navon who is not a chacham is like a mighty warrior who is unarmed; a chacham who is not a navon is like a weakling with armaments; a navon and chacham is a strong and armed warrior. (*Midrash*)

Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt. And Jacob said to his sons: "Why should you display yourselves?" (42:1)

I.e., why should you give the impression to the children of Ishmael and the children of Esau that you are sated? For at that time they still had food. (*Rashi*)

Speak to Aaron and say to him: "When you raise light in the lamps..." (Numbers 8:2)

Were not the lamps of the menorah also extinguished with the destruction of the Holy Temple? But this alludes to the Chanukah lights, which were instituted in the time of the Second Temple by the Hashmoneans, descendants of Aaron, and which did not cease. (*Nachmanides*)

### CANDLE LIGHTING: 19 DECEMBER 2014

BEGINS		ENDS
8:22	MELBOURNE	9:28
8:09	ADELAIDE	9:13
6:23	BRISBANE	7:21
6:51	DARWIN	7:44
6:22	GOLD COAST	7:21
7:02	PERTH	8:03
7:46	SYDNEY	8:48
7:58	CANBERRA	9:02
8:25	LAUNCESTON	9:35
8:20	AUCKLAND	9:25
8:34	WELLINGTON	9:44
8:30	HOBART	9:42
7:23	BYRON BAY	8:22
6:45	SINGAPORE	7:37



### CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD  
PARSHASHMIKEITZ  
27 KISLEV • 19 DECEMBER

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	8:22 PM
	MINCHA:	8:30 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	9:00 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	9:35 AM
	THE MOLAD FOR THE MONTH OF TEVET	
	WILL BE ON SUNDAY	10:31 PM
	FARBRENGEN FOLLOWING DAVENING	
	MINCHA:	8:20 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	9:28 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	8:30 PM
	MAARIV:	9:20 PM
	MINYAN #2 (ENDING TUES)	9:40 PM