



Moor Lane More Torah

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רבים ביד מעטים

The Many in the Hands of the Few

Rabbi D. Y. Schlama

• **Who are the Many; Who are the Few?**

We may be used to thinking that "many" refers to the numerous Greek battalions, and "few" refers to the small Jewish army. However, there is a different reading, based on the Michtav MeEliyahu:

• **Who is responsible?**

We find in Sefer Yehoshua that after a Jew called Achan secretly put aside part of the booty of Yericho, Hashem revealed this to the Navi in the following way: "The people of Yisrael sinned, they have stolen..." All Jews had to do Teshuva!

Now, imagine: one schoolboy damages the classroom, then the principal sanctions the whole class. Would we call that fair?

The Michtav MeEliyahu explains: had most Jews been unwavering regarding the severity of theft, no one would have done Achan's deed.

Why? Because when most of Am Yisrael commit fully to a mitzva, no individual can possibly neglect it.

• **Full commitment lasts forever**

And that's the reason why the Sages say "Every mitzva that Yisrael accepted

BeSimcha-wholeheartedly will be performed Besimcha in all generations". This is the only way we can understand how Jews of all religious levels happily bring their new-born to its Brit Mila... because the whole body of the Jewish people, as one, perpetually connects to [and through] that mitzva.

• **What with Chanukah?**

The Midrash Raba on Parshat Vayishlach explains that when Yaakov Avinu's thigh was struck by the Malach, the damage became apparent much later: "he sapped the uprightness of some future righteous Jews that were forced into assimilation". When? During the Greek persecutions, a great number of pious Jews vacillated when exposed to Hellenistic lures and threats.

• **The Chashmonaim's exploit: the Few did it**

To conclude, Rav E.E. Dessler points out a contrast: in the classic episode of Yehoshua and Achan, Hashem's expectation was that every individual's heart should be swayed by the majority's determination.

Chanukah was different: it was one single family, a minute group who prevailed. Through their perfection of heart, they deeply revitalised Am Yisrael; they led it to success in the service of Hashem. So much so that we were encouraged and invigorated forever, unbelievable!

On Chanukah it was "Rabim"-the majority of Jews saved by "Me'atim"-this minority of Jews who uplifted them to such an extent, that the influence goes on today.

We have to learn from this: first, the extent of our responsibilities as individuals: we have considerable influence on others. Also, the amount of gratefulness we must have towards Tsadikim.



Halachot of Chanukah

Rabbi Namir Cohen

1. Sefardim read only the Nasi of the day. E.g. on the second day we read the Nasi of Yissachar. Cohen and Levi share the Nasi, then the Yisrael reads the Nasi of Yissachar again. By contrast in an Ashkenazi minyan the Yisrael reads the Nasi of Zevulun. A Sefardi may accept shlishi in an Ashkenazi minyan, since the Chayei Adam and Birkei Yosef say that even if the wrong Nasi was read the kehilla is yotse.
2. If one forgot to say 'Al Hanisim' in the Amida, once one has said the name of Hashem in 'hatov shimcha', one does not say 'lamdeni chukecha', rather one just carries on. The same applies for birkat hamazon.
3. The time for lighting: best to worst
 - a. Nightfall.
 - b. Within half an hour of nightfall.
 - c. If lighting in the window: when people are still around.
 - d. As long as there are three people around. [If not, one does not say a Beracha.]
4. Children living on their own have to light for themselves, even if they eat at their parents.
5. Sefardi bachurei yeshiva, students rely on their father's lighting.
6. If they are in a different time zone, they have in mind to exclude themselves from their father's lighting and they should light themselves.
7. If the father is away on business, then even according to the Ashkenazim he may not light with a berachah and rather is yotse with his wife's lighting. Even so, he must try to listen the berachot from another person who is lighting, to hear the berachah of 'she'asa nissim', which according to the Mordechai he is obliged to make. However, if his wife has moved into her parents', then he must light with a berachah.
8. A person staying in a place where there are no Jews should light without a berachah.

9. A person who is travelling away and leaves after 'plag' [around 3.03pm in Manchester this year] lights at home before travelling.
10. If one is eating at a friend or family member, he lights at home – after coming home. But, on Shabbat he gives the host a perutah.
11. A single person who is on a journey and will not arrive home until very late should try to have someone light for him. If that is not possible then he makes the berachah when he sees another person's menorah.
12. If he forgot to make the berachot, he may make 'lehadlik' as long as he has not finished lighting all the lights. He can say 'she'asa nissim' and 'shehecheyanu' until half an hour after he lit.
13. A single person who lit in the Bet Haknesset may not repeat the berachah of 'she'asa nissim'.





Questions & Answers About Chanukah

by Rabbi Stamler

1. Where are hints to Chanukah in the Torah?

Answer:

- a] The 25th word in the Torah is אור. [The word before it יהי = 25 in Gematria]
- b] The 25th place where the בני ישראל camped is called חשמונה.
- c] The מנוחה of the פרשה in מועדים is followed by the פרשה of the פסוקא וטורא פרשת בהעלותך
- d] Ramban: There is a well-known midrash that when Aharon saw all the נשיאים bringing the dedication קרבנות [end of נשא] he was upset that his tribe had no share in this. ה' comforted him: 'Your share is greater: you will light the מנורה'. Hence the מנוחה at the start of the פרשה right after the end of the נשא.

Ramban questions why the menorah is so special. Why not comfort him that his tribe brings sacrifices and incense?

He answers that the midrash is referring to the victory of the Chashmonaim against the Greeks, when the whole עבודה was stopped and the Chashmonaim started a war which restored it and was the catalyst for the miracle of the lights. This will be the great share of the tribe of Levi.

Now we can appreciate how this rededication is a comfort to Aharon who was upset at his שבט's absence from the dedication קרבנות of the משכן: It was not just a great mitzvah as a compensation for another; it was one Chanukah in place of another Chanukah.

Not only that; it was a greater Chanukah, as it lasted longer: 'They dedicated the משכן, but during the years of exile there will be no עבודה. Your offspring will rededicate the Bet Hamikdash and will be the cause of a new mitzvah of the Chanukah lights which will glow even in times of גלות.'

2. CHANUKAH: A BATTLE OF WORLD OUTLOOK – DOES IT MATTER WHAT A FEW PEOPLE THINK?

[based on an essay by R Aharon Kotler "וצ"ל]

The battle of Chanukah was not just a physical battle. It was as much about the purity of the השקפה [outlook] in the Jewish people. The one pure jar of oil is a symbol for the future: the מנוחה is the symbol of Torah. A handful of people who stick to the true השקפה can be the 'pure jar of oil' who can give the light to the rest of ישראל ככל.

We have seen this in the history since the 2nd World War. After the war many people thought it would be the end ח' of what they call 'orthodoxy' because so many people from the orthodox world had died, so many had lost their faith in the destruction, and the חינוך system had been so disrupted. Compared to the European קהילות before the war, there was left only a small fraction of dedicated people true to the Torah, who had the true השקפה and the right understanding of the value of learning Torah and keeping mitzvot.

From this 'pure jar of oil' has grown so many tremendous קהילות which we see today.

3. Why not have 9 days of Chanukah outside the Land of Israel? Abudraham: Since it is Rabbinical.

4. How come there is a whole tractate of Mishnah about Purim, but Chanukah hardly gets a mention in the Mishnah?

תתם סופר: After winning the war, the Chashmonaim later took on the role of kings, taking it away from the tribe of Yehuda. Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi, who compiled the Mishnah, came from the tribe of Yehuda and the royal line. He felt he had a duty to protect the honour of his family by minimising the importance of the Chashmonaim.

Rabbi Reuven Margolis does not find this reason acceptable, and answers that there was a political reason. The Roman powers in the Land of Israel had made it very hard to keep Torah. Rabbi Yehudah Hanassi compiled the Mishnah during a respite when he managed to achieve better relationships with the Romans. The story of Chanukah is of how the Jews in the Land of Israel threw off a foreign power and celebrate this achievement. To put it in the Mishnah might be interpreted by the Romans as encouraging the Jews to rebel against them.

5. The name מכבי:

Some say from מני כמור באלים ה'; others see it as the initial letters of מתתיהו כהן בן יוחנן; others have the spelling מקבי and say it means a hammer, because of the bravery of Yehudah, or the last letter of the names of the אבות.

6. What are some of the messages we can take out of Chanukah?

- a. That ה' is looking after us even in dark times.
- b. A little light dispels a lot of darkness. A little purity dispels a lot of darkness. See number two above about how a few people can save the day.
- c. [self-sacrifice] from us in serving ה' brings about a tremendous response from Him.
- d. עבודת ה' in חינוך: The decree came about because התרשלו בעבודתם; they became lazy in serving ה'. The יסועה came about when there was מסירות נפש.
- e. Even טבע is the will of ה' and can be changed when He wishes. Seen both in the נס of the נרות and of the war.



questions for the table

1. How many dreams in this פרשה?
2. Which phrase which many sing at the end of the Pesach Seder will be found in the פרשה תרגום אונקלוס near the start of this week's פרשה?
3. Who was the moon in יוסף's dream?
4. Which מלאך gets a mention in רש"י in this week's פרשה?
5. What's the connection to the פרשה in we say דודי חן?
6. What is the connection between one of the מנהגים of the month of אלול and a פסוק near the end of this week's פרשה? [הפטרה, not for חנוכה].
7. What foods get a mention on the פרשה?
8. Find the following in the פרשה: Spices • stars • snakes and scorpions • sheaves of wheat • a stone in a loaf • a woman holding a man's garment • a red thread on a baby's hand • goat's blood • a man wandering in a field • four mentions of 'cup' • a 'chain'.
9. Which word in יוסף and בצאת ישראל ממצרים occurs in the story of יוסף and אשת פוטיפר?
10. Which event in the פרשה has a connection with the ten martyrs who died at the hands of the Romans which we mention on 9th Av?

ANSWERS

1. שר המשקים ושר האופים 2 and יוסף 2
2. חד עשר כוכביא
3. Rashi: בלהה Ramban: all the household apart from Yaakov and the eleven brothers
4. גבריאל. This was the 'man' who directed יוסף to his brothers.
5. פרץ the son of יהודה is born in the פרשה, and משיח is called פרצי and he is descended from פרץ.
6. It speaks about blowing the shofar as a scary sign and is a source for blowing the shofar to warn about the coming of השנה ראש
7. Wheat, spices, bread, wine
8. Spices – traders' cargo • stars-dream • snakes and scorpions – pit • sheaves of wheat – dream • a stone in a loaf – שר האופים • a woman holding a man's garment-פוטופר • a red thread on a baby's hand – דח • goat's blood – מכירת יוסף • a man wandering in a field – יוסף • four mentions of 'cup' • the שלשלת on the word 'קט'
9. יונס
10. The sale of Yosef. The עשרה הרוגי מלכות were killed as a כפרה for it.