

# *Torah Wellsprings*

*Collected thoughts  
from  
Rabbi Elimelech  
Biderman  
Shlita*

*Mikeitz*

*Zos Chanukah*





# Torah WELLSPRINGS

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## Torah Wellsprings - Mikeitz

### Prestige is from Hashem

Who appointed Yosef to be the ruler of Mitzrayim, Pharaoh or Hashem?

Pharaoh said (41:41) ראה נתתי אתך על כל ארץ מצרים, "See that I have appointed you over the entire land of Mitzrayim." He wanted Yosef to think that he appointed him and raised him to this high rank.

Yosef, on the other hand, told his brothers (45:8) וישימני לאב לפרעה ולאדון לכל ביתו ומשל בכל ארץ מצרים, "[Hashem] made me a father to Pharaoh, a lord over his household, and a ruler over the entire land of Mitzrayim." Yosef recognized that his honor and power came from Hashem, not Pharaoh.

Who freed Yosef from prison, Pharaoh or Hashem? Yosef knew that only Hashem could free him from jail, and Pharaoh had no say in the matter. We will prove this from two sources:

1) It states (41:14), ויריצוהו מן הבור, "They rushed [Yosef] from the dungeon." The Rebbe of Ostrova zt'l (*Toldos Adam, Chanukah*, 7<sup>th</sup> night) writes:

"Let's think about this. Yosef was in prison for so long, unable to see the sunshine for years. There were no breaks or off-days. After twelve years, there finally seemed to be hope. He could speak to Pharaoh and plead for his case! Why would they need to rush Yosef out of the dungeon? We would assume that Yosef would run with all his might to speak to Pharaoh and plead for his life. But it states, ויריצוהו מן הבור, Pharaoh's messengers rushed Yosef out of prison. This

is because Yosef HaTzaddik believed and understood that everything is from Hashem. His freedom was from Hashem. It wouldn't happen a moment earlier or later than was planned Above. So, why rush for no reason?"

2) When Yosef stood before Pharaoh to decipher his dream, we would assume that Yosef would plead his case and say, "I was imprisoned for no reason... Please free me from jail..." But he didn't speak about his imprisonment. This is because he knew that only Hashem, not Pharaoh, could save him from jail.

Yaakov sent his children down to Mitzrayim with a gift for the ruler of Mitzrayim. (43:11) קחו מזמרת הארץ בכליכם והורידו לאיש מנחה מעט צרי ומעט דבש נכאת ולט בטנים ושקדים "Take in your baskets from the land's harvest and bring a present to the man. A drop of balsam, a bit of honey, wax, almonds," etc.

Notice that Yaakov sent "a drop of balsam, a bit of honey." Shouldn't he have sent a more significant gift to the mighty ruler of Egypt?

The answer is that Yaakov Avinu knew that, ultimately, only Hashem could help. He needed to do *hishtadlus*, and he knew that minimal *hishtadlus* was sufficient.<sup>1</sup>

### Parnassah is from Hashem

Yosef told his brothers that if they bring their younger brother Binyamin (42:34) ואת הארץ תסחרו, "You may travel around the land." Rashi explains that תסחרו means to "go around." And Rashi explains that

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1. On Chanukah, the custom is to play with a dreidel. When one spins the dreidel, there is nothing that he can do to influence the dreidel to fall on the winning letter. Even if he is the best spinner in the world and spins the dreidel with all his might, he still cannot predict or arrange the outcome. Similarly, one works for a living, and one makes *hishtadlus*, but the results remain in Hashem's hands.

The dreidel turns on a tiny point. This hints that with a small kabbalah, everything can turn around.

businesspeople are called סוחרים because "they go around looking for merchandise."

Why aren't businessmen named for their profession, which is to buy and sell? Why are they called for their travels from one place to another?

This is because parnassah comes from Hashem. Their hishtadlus is to go around, travel from here to there, and ultimately, Hashem sends them their parnassah.

There is a renowned story that many people say on Shabbos Mivorchim Nissan as a segulah to have all one's needs for Pesach. We write it now, as it is associated with our topic:

A poritz told his Jewish employee, "You should thank me because I support you. What would you do without me?"

The Yid replied, "You don't support me. Hashem supports me."

The poritz said, "You ungrateful Jew! You're fired! And now we will see who supports you!"

The Yid wasn't afraid. Hashem supported him until then, and Hashem would continue to help him.

The poritz sat in his home, counting gold coins. He bit each coin to ensure it was real, not just gold-coated. The poritz's pet monkey watched his owner bite into the gold coins. When the poritz left the room, the monkey began copying the poritz. The monkey thought he was eating the gold coins, so the monkey did the same. After swallowing many gold coins, the monkey died.

The poritz saw the dead monkey, and he said to his servant, "Throw the corpse into the house of the Yid who I just fired."

The monkey fell in the Yid's home, its stomach opened, and many coins rolled out.

On the night of the seder, the poritz came to the Yid's home. He expected to see a dark and cold room with hardly any food on the table. He found a well-lit, warm home with

plenty of food. He said, "Now I see that Hashem supports you, not me."

This story reminds us that Hashem supplies us with parnassah, not the boss or the job. Instead, they are just the means through which He sends it.

People say, "Money doesn't fall from heaven." Rebbe Bunim of Pshischa zt'l noted that this isn't necessarily true. Hashem can send money down from heaven. Suddenly, you can find money in your wallet or your bank account. How did it get there? Hashem put it there.

Rebbe Bunim proved this from this week's parashah when the overseer of Yosef's house told the brothers (43:23) ואלקיים ואלקיים נתן לכם מטמון באמתחתים, "Your G-d and the G-d of your fathers gave you a treasure in your sacks." The brothers were perplexed about how the money they thought they gave Yosef ended up in their bags. האיש אשר על בית יוסף, the overseer of Yosef's home, whom Chazal say was Menasheh, told them that they don't have to worry about that. Hashem put it there.

So, we see that money can indeed fall from heaven.

### **Shalom with Everyone**

When one knows that everything is from Hashem, he will be at peace with everyone.

There is a mashal of someone who came home after a hard day's work. He comes to the sink to wash his hands for supper, but no water comes out. He turns the knobs in all directions, and he bangs on the faucet until it breaks. He then looks under the sink. He opens the pipes to find the problem. Why isn't water coming through?

His wife sees him doing this, and says, "Why don't you call the water department? They are the ones who always bring us water, and they can bring you water now, too. You just need to pay the debt you owe them, and they will reconnect the water to our home." The husband thought that there

was a problem with the knobs, faucet, or pipes, but the problem came from the source of the water.

The nimshal is that people are angry at this one and at that person because they think that their problems are from them. They forget that everything comes from Hashem, and there isn't reason to be angry at anyone.

This can be the meaning of the pasuk (Mishlei 16:7) *ברצות ה' דרכי איש גם אויביו ישרים אתו*, "When Hashem favors a man's ways, even his enemies will make peace with him." When a person finds favor in Hashem's eyes because he attains the emunah that everything is from Hashem, he is at peace with everyone. He isn't angry at the person who spoke lashon hara about him or who took away his parnassah, and not at anyone else, because he knows that everything comes from Hashem. Ultimately, if this person didn't cause him harm, someone else would have done so.

There is another wonderful counsel from Rebbe Bunim of Pshischa zt'l, which can be used to resolve all disputes. We will be at peace with all Yidden if we follow this counsel. The counsel is: (1) Focus on your fellow man's qualities. (2) Think about your own faults.

Your fellow man has many qualities. Perhaps you don't recognize his good side and focus on his faults but think about it a little and train yourself to find the incredible good in your fellow man.

Think about your own faults, as well. You will probably find that you lack many of the wonderful qualities that your fellow man has. Think about these matters, and you will be humble before your fellow man and at peace with him.

Yosef taught his brothers the process so there should be peace among them. He told them (42:18), *וזאת עשו וחיו את האלקים אני ירא*, "Do this and live, I fear Hashem." Yosef told them to focus on the fact that he has Yiras Shamayim. Yosef's brothers thought about

their faults, as it states (42:21), *אבל אשמים אנחנו*, "We are guilty of what we did to our brother..." They had two thoughts that led to peace. They thought about Yosef's qualities and their own faults, and this helped them respect and be *b'shalom* with their fellow man.

It states (42:20), *ויעשו כן*, "They did so." Rebbe Bunim explains that they followed Yosef's counsel to focus on his greatness (and on their faults), and thereby, they were able to be at peace with him.

### Humility

It states (Mishlei 3:34) *ולענוים יתן חן*, "To the humble, Hashem gives *chen*."

There was a tailor who had an excellent reputation. The poritz bought clothes from him, giving him a good name. People said, "If he is good enough for the poritz, he must be an excellent tailor."

Once, the poritz asked the tailor to make him a suit and added, "Make sure that it comes out good."

The tailor replied, "Can I make something that isn't nice?"

Not the humblest thing to say.

The tailor sewed the suit, and the poritz brought it to his home to show it to his wife. His wife wrinkled her nose and made a foul face when she saw it. She said, "I can't look at it. It has no *chen*."

The poritz returned the suit to the tailor and said, "I can't wear this. It has no *chen*... Make it again, and this time, make it good."

The word went out. The poritz wasn't happy with the tailor's work. People stopped buying their clothes from him. He was more expensive than other tailors, and if the poritz wasn't satisfied with his work, his clothing obviously weren't worth the price.

Brokenhearted, the tailor told Rebbe Bunim of Pshischa zt'l that his parnassah



was at stake because people stopped coming to him.

Rebbe Bunim replied, "Undo the seams and sew it up again exactly as you made it the first time. This time the poritz and his wife will like the suit."

The tailor asked, "If they didn't like it the first time, why would they like it the second time if I make it exactly the same way?"

"Just do as I say," Rebbe Bunim told him.

The tailor had *emunas chachamim* and did as he was told. Upon seeing the garment, the poritz's wife said, "This is a beautiful suit. I'm so glad it turned out well this time."

The poritz thanked the tailor for doing such a good job.

Everyone heard that the poritz and his wife were happy with the tailor, and they began asking him again for his service.

But how did it happen? Wasn't it the same clothes as before?

Rebbe Bunim explained, "Whatever is made with humility has *chen*, as it states ולענוים יתן חן. The first time you made the clothing, you were proud, you thought you make the best clothes in the world, so your actions didn't have *chen*. But the second time you sewed up the clothing, you did so with a broken heart and humility. And that's the reason it had *chen* in their eyes."

Yosef blessed Binyamin (43:29) אלקים יחנך בני, "May Hashem grant you *chen*, my son." The Yismach Yisrael says that Binyamin received *chen* because בני, which means child, alludes to young and humble. He felt humble, and humility is mesugal for *chen*.

The Kli Yakar discusses Hashem's name הוי"ה and shows that these letters have the smallest gematriya when spelled out in full. ו"ה" for example, is gematriya 6. ו"ה" is gematriya 13. יו"ד is gematriya 20. All other letters have a much higher gematriya. Take א"ל"ף, for example. The gematriya is 111. ב"ת is 412, גימ"ל is 83, דל"ת is 434, and so on. Hashem's name is comprised of the letters with the smallest gematriya to indicate that Hashem resides among the humble.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. One aspect of humility is to be mevater.

Reb Moshe Goldish and his wife z'l came from Romania. They came to America on the last ship that left Romania before the Nazis invaded. They were both niftar in Williamsburg on the same day. As soon as Reb Moshe's levayah was over, his wife was niftarah.

This is their story:

Mrs. Goldish's maiden name was Rosenberg. She was orphaned at a young age, and her older brother, Avremel, moved from Romania to America so he could earn enough money to support his siblings and provide them with a dowry.

Avremel himself got married only after setting up all his brothers and sisters.

One of his sisters married Moshe Goldish, and Avremel took care of all the wedding expenses. In addition, he gave them a large sum of money as a dowry to help them begin their lives together.

Moshe rented a dilapidated house in Romania and renovated it with the money from his dowry.

He didn't do this to live there. He planned to sublet it at a much higher rental rate.

The problem was that when the owner saw the beautifully renovated home, he wanted the Goldish's to pay more rent.

Reb Moshe could have fought in court. After all, he had a contract with the owner and agreed on a price. Furthermore, he could have demanded that the owner pay for the house's increase in value due to his

Chanukah lecht is lit lower than ten tefachim; one must bend to light the lamps. The Bas Ayin says that this is because miracles come from the Chanukah lecht, and the miracles begin when one bends over and is humble.

Reb Meir of Premishlan zt'l said that when a Yid bends to the will of others and is humble, he is "a Goldener Yid," a Yid of gold. He said that it is alluded to in a pasuk that we read each day of Chanukah: (Bamidbar 7) עשרה כף אחת עשרה זהב מלאה קטרת "One spoon [weighing] ten [shekels] of gold filled with incense." Reb Meir of Premishlan zt'l translated the pasuk like this:

עשרה, once to bend, איין בייג means כף אחת, ten, which is יי"ד, which stands for "a Yid." זהב is gold.

The pasuk is saying that for bending once, he is a Yid of gold.

The Kli Yakar (48:16) writes, כי הקב"ה בוחר ביותר בקטנים, וכל אדם שיש בו צד קטנות אז ביותר הקב"ה מגביהו לשיתו לאלפי רבבה, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu chooses the humble more. Whoever has humility, Hakadosh Baruch Hu will elevate him very high..."

The Shach al HaTorah says that the כף jug of oil that was found by the Chanukah miracle was the same פנים קטנים, small jugs, that Yaakov Avinu went back to retrieve (see Rashi Bereishis 32:25).

The key word is קטנים, small. Reb Moshe Leib Sassover zt'l says that the jug was small, and Hashem performs miracles for the small and humble.

### Bitachon

The Chidushei HaRim zt'l notes that the sofei teivos, final letters, of this pasuk (Tehillim 112:8) spells Chanukah: נכון לבו בטוח בה' סמוך, "His heart is confident with bitachon, relying on Hashem."

The parashah begins, ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים, "And it came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh was dreaming," The Or HaChaim says that Pharaoh had this dream every night for two years, only each morning, he forgot his dream. At the end of two years, Pharaoh had the dream again, but he didn't forget it this time.

Rebbe Pinchas of Koritz (Mikeitz 71) asks, "Why was it necessary that he have this dream for two years?"

He explains with a story:

The Baal Shem Tov traveled through a forest with his student, Rebbe Mendel, the Magid of Bar zt'l. On the third day of their travels, Rebbe Mendel was extremely thirsty. The Baal Shem Tov told him to trust in Hashem.

They came across a goy who asked them, "Did you see my horses? I am looking for

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investment. But Reb Moshe didn't want a fight and decided not to go to beis din. He preferred to be mevater and suffer the loss.

But he needed money. He sent a letter to his brother-in-law Avremel that he needed financial help.

Avremel replied, "I see you don't know how to take care of your money. If you want more money, come to America, yourselves. I'll help you here."

Not having much of a choice, they boarded a ship to America – the last boat to leave Romania.

The war began. Many Yidden in Romania were murdered immediately after the invasion.

Boyaner chasidim said, "Moshe Goldish was mevater, and the merit of the vatranus pushed off his death by sixty years."

This story is a lesson in vatranus, in living with humility and being extremely careful not to raise machlokes. In this story, this approach granted them life.



them for three days." They replied that they didn't see the horses. Reb Mendel asked for water, and the goy gave it to him.

Reb Mendel asked the Baal Shem Tov, "I am certain Hashem sent this man to bring me water. But why was he looking for his horses for three days?"

The Baal Shem Tov answered, "Hashem sent him out three days ago so he can bring you water the moment you acquire *bitachon*."

Similarly, Pharaoh had this dream for two years so that the moment Yosef perfected his *bitachon*, Yosef would immediately be released from prison.

The Imrei Pinchas writes, "This teaches us the greatness of *bitachon*. Hashem prepares a person's needs before he has *bitachon* so that the moment he acquires *bitachon*, salvation will be available for him. This is what happened to Yosef. Initially, Yosef trusted in the *sar hamashkim* and was punished. He remained in jail until he had [perfect] *bitachon*. Hashem sent this dream to Pharaoh every night for two years, so Yosef's redemption would be ready the moment he trusted in *Hashem yisbarach*."

### Battling the Yetzer Hara

There is an unusual expression of praise stated in the על הנסים. We thank Hashem על המלחמות, for the wars. If we said, "[We thank Hashem] for giving us victory, we would understand. But why do we thank Hashem for the wars themselves?! The Ponovizher Rav *zt'l* answers that we never finished the fight. Until Moshiach comes, we are in the midst of the battle. Therefore, על המלחמות is praising Hashem that we are not giving up, and we are still battling the war. We can't yet praise Hashem for being victorious in this war because we are still in the middle of it. Even if we aren't fighting the war in a literal sense, but spiritually, we are still battling a war against the influences and ideologies of the Yevanim, and we thank Hashem that we didn't give up and we are still fighting.

The holy *Chashmonaim* were a small group fighting a war against a mighty, large army. One wonders, "Was this a war? It appears to be a suicide mission. They will undoubtedly lose! The answer is that the *Chashmonaim* understood that they must wage this war to save Klal Yisrael, so they put aside logic and common sense and threw themselves into the battle.

It states in Daniel (7:6), וראו אחרי כנמר, that Balshatzar, the king of Bavel, saw a leopard in his dreams. Rashi writes, "This represents the kingship of Antiochus." A leopard has the attribute of עזות, as it states in *Pirkei Avos* (5:2), הוי עז כנמר, "Be brazen like a leopard." The Shem MiShmuel (תרע"ט ליל ד') says that this tells us that the Yevanim had the attribute of עזות. The *Chashmonaim* adapted and acquired this attitude from the Yevanim. Only, the *Chashmonaim* used the trait of עזות, brazenness, to be strong in their resolve not to allow anything to get in the way. A large army didn't frighten them. They went out to war and won.

We should do the same when it comes to our battle against the *yetzer hara*. We should be brazened, fearless, and determined to do what's right.

The *mechanach* Reb Moshe Blau Shlita tells a story that happened to his chavrusah back in the year תשמ"ה. His chavrusah once went to a dentist in Tel Aviv and was faced with difficult tests in *shemiras einayim*. His chavrusah was extremely upset and broken because he didn't pass every test. Reb Moshe Blau wanted to give him *chizuk*. He said, "It is 11:30 p.m. The Steipler's home is still open. Let's go to him now, and you can tell him about your worries." (This happened a half-year before the Steipler was *niftar*.)

In those days, the Steipler didn't hear, and all requests were written. The bachur wrote on paper what happened, how he failed to guard his eyes. The Steipler asked, "Were there times during your trip to Tel Aviv that you did guard your eyes?"

The bachur was so broken it was hard for him to focus on the successes, but when the Steipler repeated his question, the bachur acknowledged that there were many instances that he did guard his eyes.

The Steipler replied with words of chizuk. We have his exact words because Reb Moshe Blau wrote them down immediately after this meeting. The Steipler said, "I am not exaggerating, and I am not lying. I am not exaggerating, and I am not lying. If I had strength, I would stand up for you. It is about a thirty-five-minute drive from Bnei Brak to Tel Aviv. Each time that you guarded your eyes, you performed the mitzvos of ויראת מאלקיך... ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל... ואהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך, fearing Hashem, sanctifying Hashem's name, and to love Hashem with all your heart and soul. You will be punished for the times that you failed, but each time you were strong against the yetzer hara, you amended the past. Therefore, why should you cry? Each time you were cautious with kedushah, you were on the level of Yosef HaTzaddik, mamash, mamash, mamash (literally, literally, literally)! The main thing is to fight, battle, and keep waging the war!"

In a letter (Kreina d'Igrasa vol.1, 106), the Steipler writes to a bachur who failed a test: "Although you fail sometimes, r'l, nevertheless, there were many times that you conquered the yetzer hara and you overcame your temptations. When you overcome the temptations that burn so strongly in you, you draw a light of kedushah on yourself and all worlds... We cannot measure or imagine the great kedushah that comes on a person who overcomes his yetzer hara when the yetzer hara is burning in him. At these moments, he is like Yosef HaTzaddik. The rule is that when a person fights with the yetzer hara, sometimes he wins and sometimes fails. Just as the sin is very great, so too, when he succeeds and wins many times, he has great merit. He will amend in his lifetime all his sins."

The main thing is to set boundaries and gates that distance us from aveiros.

Let's learn from our enemies. This year, on Shmini Atzeres, the resha'im broke the fence that borders Gaza and Eretz Yisrael. After the gate was breached (פרצו חומות מגדלי), the Arabs were able to come in. Similarly, we must make boundaries that distance us from the yetzer hara because when boundaries are breached, we are at risk of sinning.

In parashas Vayeitzei, Yaakov told Lavan how he worked loyally for him. He said (31:40) הייתי ביום אכלני חרב וקרח בלילה ותדד שנתי מעיני "This is how I was: By day scorching heat consumed me, and frost by night." Why didn't Yaakov come into Lavan's home to warm up or get some shade? Why did he remain outdoors?

It is because Yaakov wanted to distance himself from Lavan, his avodah zarah, and his evil ways. This was among the boundaries he set for himself in Lavan's home so he could keep the Torah there. As Rashi (Bereishis 32:5) writes, על לבן הרשע גרתי ותרי"ג מצוות שמרתי, "I lived with Lavan the rasha, and I kept the 613 mitzvos." He accomplished this because he set boundaries for himself. He wouldn't even enter his home because he didn't want to be exposed to his bad influence. This is a lesson for us on how we should distance ourselves from tests!

### Rosh Chodesh

In the Musaf of rosh chodesh, we say, ראשי חדשים לעמך נתת זמן כפרה לכל תולדותם, "You gave Rosh chodesh to Your nation, a forgiveness for all their תולדותם." The Beis Yosef (Tur 423) writes that תולדותם means deeds. Rosh Chodesh atones for all the bad deeds we might commit throughout the coming month. תשובת נפש מיד שווא, "to save their souls from the enemy." The enemy is the yetzer hara. In the merit of Rosh Chodesh, Hashem saves us from our enemy, the yetzer hara.

Hashem promised Avraham that (Bereishis 15:15) תקבר בשיבה טובה, that he will be buried at

an old age. Reb Shamshon Ostropoli zt'l (in his commentary on sefer Karnayim 6:1) says that the first letters of **טב"ת** **תקבר בשיבה טובה** spell Hashem was hinting to Avraham Avinu that he will be niftar on Rosh Chodesh Teves. There are three great merits and kedushos on this day. It is Chanukah, it is Rosh Chodesh, and it carries the merits of Avraham Avinu, too, because it is his yahrtzeit.

We say Hallel on Rosh Chodesh. In addition to praising Hashem, Hallel is also a time for prayers and requests. In Hallel, we say (116:4) **אָנָה ה' מַלְטָה נַפְשִׁי**, "Please, Hashem, save my soul," and we say (116:16) **אָנָה ה' כִּי אֲנִי עַבְדְּךָ**, "Please, Hashem, for I am your servant," and we say (118:25) **אָנָה ה' הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא**, "Please, Hashem, save now." Tzaddikim say that when one says **אָנָה ה'** in the middle of Hallel, it is mesugal for yeshuos.

These are examples of tefillos said in Hallel. When we pray while praising Hashem, the tefillos are very powerful; therefore, all prayers in Hallel are very powerful.

Avraham davened for Sedom, but the cities were overturned. Lot davened for Tzoar, and it was saved. We can explain, b'derech tzachus, that this is because Lot began his tefillos by praising Hashem. He said in his tefillah (Bereishis 19:19) **הִנֵּה נָא מָצָא עַבְדְּךָ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְתִגְדַּל חֶסֶדְךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי לְהַחְיֹת אֶת נַפְשִׁי**, "See now, Your servant has found favor in Your eyes, and Your kindness was great which You did with me to save my life..." After this praise, Lot prayed that Hashem save Tzoar, and Hashem accepted his tefillos. This is because a tefillah said amidst praise is a very powerful tefillah.

Let's use this auspicious time of Chanukah when we praise Hashem to also ask Him for our *bakashos*.

### **Tefilas HaDerech**

The Imrei Emes zt'l would buy old *kisvei kodesh*, handwritten sefarim, and invest money to have them written legibly and

then get them printed. (Portions of the Meiri were printed with the Imrei Emes's efforts in this manner.)

Once, he came across Reb Chaim Vital's commentary to *mechilta*. This was a sefer that no one had, so he brought it to a publisher to handset the letters and bring it to print. That year, 5696, was very difficult for the Jewish community in Eretz Yisrael due to the Arab attacks, and the publisher didn't have time to work on it.

In the year 5699, the Imrei Emes lived in Poland, and the publisher returned the sefer to him. He wrote that he isn't getting around to putting out the sefer, so the Rebbe should find someone else to do the job.

The messenger who brought it back to Poland was Reb Avraham Elimelech of Karlin zt'l hy'd. Almost immediately upon arriving in Europe, he was murdered, r'l, hy'd, and the manuscript has been lost ever since.

The Imrei Emes returned to Yerushalayim. The publisher said to him, "I'm so sorry. I tried..."

The Imrei Emes replied that it was bashert and it wasn't his fault. "But tell me, did you see anything in the sefer that you remember?"

He didn't.

The Imrei Emes said that he remembers one thing. It states (Bereishis 44:4) **הֵם יָצְאוּ אֶת הָעִיר לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ וְיוֹסֵף אָמַר לְאִשְׁרֵי עַל בֵּיתוֹ קוּם רֹדֵף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים**, "They had exited the city, but had not gone far when Yosef said to the overseer of his house, 'Get up, rush after the men.'"

Reb Chaim Vital writes in his introduction, "After I finished writing this sefer, it became revealed to me in a dream: Why does the pasuk emphasize, **לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ**, "They had exited the city, but had not gone far?" And why did Yosef say, **קוּם רֹדֵף אַחֲרֵי הָאֲנָשִׁים**, "Get up and rush after the men"?



Shulchan Aruch states that one should say Tefillas Haderech within the first parsah outside the city limits. Yosef wanted to catch them before that time because after they said Tefillas Haderech, there was no way he could cause them any discomfort and distress.

There were yungerleit, who traveled to Meron one Thursday night. They stopped the car on the side of the road to say Tefillas Haderech with kavanah.

They continued driving to Meron, and the police were behind them. They quickly put on their seatbelts.

Soon afterward, a truck drove toward them, and they had to swerve quickly. It was raining, the roads were slippery, and the car fell off the road into a ditch. The car turned over, but their lives were saved because they were all buckled in safely.

This story teaches us the power of tefillah, particularly the power of Tefillas Haderech.

### Zos Chanukah

Rebbe Yisrael of Ruzhin zt'l taught, "What tzaddikim accomplish on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, simple Yidden can accomplish on Zos Chanukah." So, if a person needs a salvation, he can get it on Zos Chanukah.

The Vayaged Yaakov (of Pupa) zt'l said, "Don't feel bad if you didn't take advantage of Chanukah until now. Zos Chanukah means 'This is Chanukah.' The peak of Chanukah is before you, and you can benefit from it immensely."

The Maharal says that seven represents nature (as there are seven days in the week, seven notes for music, seven wisdoms, etc.) and Chanukah is eight days, because Chanukah is beyond nature. Zos Chanukah is even higher because it is doubly eight (the eighth day of the eight days of Chanukah, שמיני שבשמיני). It is a day of miracles, and even simple Yidden can draw *yeshuos* from this day.

The explanation is that throughout the year, we must construct miracles in heaven and then draw them down. Not everyone can construct miracles; therefore, the average person cannot perform miracles throughout the year. But on Zos Chanukah, a time beyond nature, miracles are already prepared in heaven. All that is needed is to draw the miracles down, so even simple Yidden can do that on this day.<sup>3</sup>

Reb Itzekel of Pshevorsk zt'l lived in Aix-les-Bains, France. The Rosh Yeshiva there was Reb Chaim Yitzchak Chaykin zt'l, a student of the Chofetz Chaim zt'l. A bachur in the yeshiva had a cancerous growth in his throat r"l. The doctors said that surgery was needed. It was the only chance for this bachur to survive. The problem was that the required surgery was very risky, because it was in the neck, and a tiny error could be fatal.

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3. The Beis Yisrael zt'l said that חנוכה-ל"ה indicates that Chanukah is for everyone, as they are. כה means - "As you are."

The Chidushei HaRim notes that not everyone can go to the king, certainly not prisoners. But when the king travels, it is his custom to visit the prisons, and then the prisoners can shout out to the king and beg his mercy. Chanukah is like Hashem visiting those in jail to draw them out.

Therefore, the Ruzhiner zt'l said that on Zos Chanukah, a simple Yid can accomplish what great tzaddikim can on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Reb Chaykin went to Reb Itzekel for advice. Reb Itzekel replied, "I still have wicks from Chanukah. [Chanukah was three weeks earlier]. Put the wicks on the bachur's neck, and he should stay home for three days, and b'ezzras Hashem, he will have a *refuah sheleimah*."

The bachur did as instructed. After three weeks, he returned to the doctor for a checkup. The doctor was shocked at the results. He was totally healed!

To perform such miracles, one must be a tzaddik of Reb Itzikel's caliber. But on Chanukah, and certainly, on Zos Chanukah, every Yid can bring salvation.

It states (Tehilim 92:7) איש בער לא ידע וכסיל לא "A boorish man does not know; neither does a fool understand זאת." We can explain that he doesn't understand the significance of זאת חנוכה. לו חכמה ישכילו זאת, if you were wise, you would understand the importance of זאת חנוכה, and בזאת אני בוטח, in the merit of Zos Chanukah, I trust and will experience Hashem's salvation.

Rebbe Shlomo (the first Rebbe) of Bobov zt'l said that the miracles of זאת חנוכה are alluded to in the *pasuk* בעינינו מאת ה' היתה זאת היא נפלאת בעינינו. The נפלאות, wonders happen because of זאת, because of זאת חנוכה.

The Bnei Yissaschar (*Kislev Teivos* 2:10) writes, "The earlier Rabbanim often said that Chanukah is *mesugal* for עקרות, for barren women to bear children. In my opinion, the *segulah* is primarily on Zos Chanukah." (Rebbe Aharon of Belz zt'l would

repeat this idea from the Bnei Yissaschar every year at his Zos Chanukah *tisch*.)

Someone came to the Chazon Ish zt'l complaining about his poverty. The man said, "I need a miracle, and לא בכל יומא מתרחיש ניסא, miracles don't happen every day."

The Chazon Ish corrected him and said that this phrase should be read as follows: לא בכל יומא מתרחיש ניסא, it isn't as people think! Miracles occur every day!" And this is undoubtedly true on Zos Chanukah, a day of miracles, a day beyond the laws of nature.

Rebbe Pinchas of Koritz zt'l said that Zos Chanukah is *mesugal* for *parnassah*. He learned this from the eight praises we say in לך ה' הגדולה (1). (I Divrei HaYamim 29:11). ויברך דוד והגבורה (2). והתפארת (3). והנצח (4). וההוד (5). כי כל בשמים ובארץ לך ה' הממלכה (6). והמתנשא לכל לראש (7). והעושר (8)

והעושר, wealth, is the eighth praise, corresponding to the eighth day of Chanukah.<sup>4</sup>

The other days of Chanukah are also *mesugal* for *parnassah*, as the Arugas HaBosem zt'l (*Vayigash*) teaches on the *pasuk* (*Bereishis* 45:5) כי למחיה שלחני אלקים לפניכם "for the sake of *parnassah*, שלחני, Hashem sent me before you..." The word שלחני is *roshei teivos* להדליק "To light the candles of Chanukah eight days."<sup>5</sup>

On Zos Chanukah, Rebbe Yisrael of Ruzhin zt'l saw chassidim playing *dreidel* with money. The Rebbe said, "Play. What a person earns during Chanukah, he might lose [at the next game]. But what one gains

4. It is good to get the aliyah of shlishi on Zos Chanukah because we read there about the immense wealth donated to the Beis HaMikdash for chanukas habayis. We say there (Bamidbar 7:84) קערת כסף שתים עשרה מזרקי כסף, "There were twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins and twelve gold spoons..." and so on. (However, remember that many brachos come from being mevatar, too. So, it certainly isn't worthwhile to create a fight to get this aliyah.)

5. Chazal say that a kameiah that heals man won't accomplish anything for an animal. The Meiri explains this because the kameia doesn't function if one doesn't believe in it.

We have to believe in these days and in the miracles and salvations we can attain from them, and then they will have their intended effect.

on Zos Chanukah, he won't lose." It will remain with him forever.<sup>6</sup>

גמר חתימה is a שמיני עצרת, a day when we are inscribed for a good year, the same occurs on Zos Chanukah]."

### **Zos Chanukah = Shemini Atzeres**

The Beis Aharon writes, "I think the eighth lamps of Chanukah are the same concept as שמיני עצרת. Tzaddikim say Zos Chanukah is the גמר חתימה when we are inscribed for a good year [because just as

*Parashas Emor (Vayikra 23)* lists the *yomim tovim*, concluding with Succos and Shemini Atzeres, and then the Torah discusses the menorah (see *Vayikra 24:2*). The Rokeiach says that the menorah hints at Chanukah. After the Torah discusses the *yomim tovim*, it

6. A grandson of the Divrei Chaim zt'l was poor and was collecting money to support his family. At one home, the homeowner said, "I will ask you a question, and if you give a reasonable answer, I will give you a nice sum of money."

He quoted the Gemara (Shabbos 151:), which says, "We have a kabbalah that a talmid chacham doesn't become poor...and if they become poor, they don't go around, door to door, collecting money."

The wealthy person asked the grandson of the Divrei Chaim, "But here you are, a talmid chacham and a grandson of the Divrei Chaim, and you are collecting money door-to-door!"

The grandson of the Divrei Chaim replied, "You didn't read the Gemara correctly. It means, "If you see a talmid chacham who is poor, it is because he doesn't go door-to-door to collect money."

The Beis Yisrael zt'l repeated this story and added, "Going door-to-door doesn't exclusively refer to worldly doors. The Gemara is saying that if he is poor, it is because he isn't knocking on the doors of heaven. If he would daven, especially at times of *eis ratzon* (such as Zos Chanukah), he would receive everything he needs.

The words of the Gemara are *אם איתא דמתעני אהדורי אפתחא לא מיהדר*, "If you see that the talmid chacham became poor, he doesn't go door-to-door." The Ahavas Yisrael says that the Gemara is hinting at Chanukah....*אהדורי אפתחא* hints to *hidur mitzvah*, and *אפתחא* is the doorway, where we light the Chanukah lecht. Chazal are saying, "If you see that someone is poor, it is because he wasn't cautious with Chanukah lecht, which is *mesugal* for many brachos, including wealth.

A hint that Chanukah is *mesugal* for wealth is in the custom of distributing Chanukah gelt.

A father brought his infant son to the Ribnitzer Rebbe zt'l, when the rebbe was in Los Angeles for Chanukah. The father told the rebbe that his son was born prematurely, and he was placed in an incubator, which has an intense heating light to keep the child warm. A bandage was placed over the child's eyes because the strong light is dangerous for the eyes. However, the bandage fell off, and the child went blind in both eyes.

The rebbe looked forcefully at the Chanukah lecht, then he looked at the child, again at the Chanukah lecht, and once again, at the child. After repeating this several times, the rebbe announced, "Baruch Hashem, the child sees with his right eye." The rebbe continued looking at the lecht and then at the child, and then he said, "The child still doesn't see with his left eye, but eventually he will."

Twenty years later, the rebbe received an invitation to the chasunah of this child, who could see well with both eyes.

Obviously, we aren't on the level of the Ribnitzer Rebbe zt'l; however, it is a lesson that the lights of Chanukah can lighten up the darkness and bring salvation to Klal Yisrael.

Reb Zundel Salant zt'l once spoke with people during Chanukah, and the conversation turned to something sad and disturbing. He told them not to talk about that matter because Chazal forbid *hespeidim* on Chanukah.



hints at Chanukah. Chanukah is for eight days. It is because it is written next to Succos and Shemini Atzeres, which are eight days.

Probably, the eighth day of Chanukah represents Shemini Atzeres. Rashi (*Vayikra* 23:36) explains the essence of Shemini Atzeres: "It can be compared to a king who invited his children for a meal for several days. When it was time for his children to leave, the king said, 'My children, please, remain with me one more day. קשה עלי פרידתכם, it's hard for me when you leave.'"

Similarly, after seven days of Chanukah, Hashem says to the Jewish nation, "I enjoyed your mitzvos so much. Your Chanukah *lecht*, your Hallel, your Al HaNisim... Stay with me one more day. It's hard for me when you leave."<sup>7</sup>

About Shemini Atzeres, the *Zohar* (vol.3, 32.) states, "At this joyous time, the Jewish people are alone with the King. And when one is alone with the king, whatever he asks will be given to him." We can say that the same applies to Zos Chanukah. Whatever we ask Hashem for on this day will be granted.

The Beis Aharon *zt'l* teaches that we should say *Tehillim* on Chanukah.

Certainly, one should say *Tehillim* on זאת חנוכה, because Hashem bestows His kindness on us on this day.

The Yismach Yisrael (*Chanukah* 53) says that when the Torah says זאת, it refers to something one can see with his eyes. זאת חנוכה means the *kedushah* is so great on this day, tzaddikim are literally able to see it. "But this revelation is only for the perfect tzaddikim. It states (*Tehillim* 118:23), מאת ה' היתה זאת, we believe that Hashem gives this revelation on זאת חנוכה; however, היא נפלאה, we can't see it... Although we don't see or feel this special revelation, we are happy for the tzaddikim, for we believe that they see it, and we rejoice in their joy."

בזאת ידעתי כי חפצת בי (*Tehillim* 41:12). The Yismach Yisrael explains בזאת, since you gave us זאת חנוכה, I know that You desire me and that You want to grant me goodness and chasdim.<sup>9</sup>

### Moshiach

The *Chesed L'Avraham* (Rebbe Avraham of Radomsk *zt'l*) states that Zos Chanukah is *mesugal* for hastening the redemption because this day we read זאת חנוכה המזבח ביום המושח אותו (*Bamidbar* 7:84) and המושח is similar to the word משיח.

Another hint to משיח is from מדר'יקין שמונת ימי חנוכה. The first letters spell משיח.

The gematriya of the letters נגה"ש on the dreidel is משיח.

It states in this week's *parashah* (41:14) וישלח פרעה ויקרא את יוסף וירצהו מן הבור summoned, and he called Yosef, and he was

7. This can be another answer to Beis Yosef's renowned question. True, Chanukah should be for seven days because there was enough oil for the first day, but Hashem requests that we keep an extra day, the eighth day, because it is hard for Hashem when we leave.

8. It states (*Shemos* 12:2), החודש הזה לכם, and Chazal explain that הזה indicates that Hashem showed Moshe the new moon. Because when it says זה, it's something that is visible.

9. The Divrei Chaim *zt'l* explains that there was a time when the yomim tovim from the Torah were sufficient, but the Chachamim understood that in the later generations, Yidden needed more holidays to help them survive in galus. This is why they added Chanukah and Purim.

These additions aren't solely for ruchniyos. They are also for gashmiyos. We wouldn't survive the galus, not even in gashmiyos, without the holidays of Chanukah and Purim; therefore, the Chachamim established these holidays.

rushed out of the dungeon." The Seforno writes, "[Yosef was saved quickly, as it states וירצוהו, they rushed him out], like all of Hashem's salvations that happen quickly and immediately. As it states (*Yeshayah* 56:1), כִּי קְרוּבָה יְשׁוּעָתִי לָבוֹא, 'My salvation is near.' This is what happened in Mitzrayim, as it states (*Shemos* 12:39) כִּי גֵרְשׁוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם, 'they were banished from Mitzrayim.' Chazal tell us that their dough didn't have time to rise before the King of kings, Hakadosh Baruch, redeemed them. This will also occur in the future, as it states (*Malachi* 3:1), וּפְתָאוֹם יָבוֹא אֵל הַיְכָלֹ הָאֵדוֹן אֲשֶׁר, 'Suddenly, he will come to his heichal, the master (Moshiach) whom you await.' May it be speedily in our days.

### Chanukah All Year Round

The Beis Aharon (p.45:) said, "Once, on Zos Chanukah, my father [Rebbe Asher of Stolin *zt'l*] asked his chassidim to sing, הָדָרִין עֲלֵינוּ מַסַּכְתָּ חֲנוּכָה, 'We will return to you, masechta Chanukah, and return to us, masechta Chanukah.'" The Beis Aharon adds, "Who am I to explain my father's words?"

We certainly aren't on the level to grasp the depths of Rebbe Asher of Stolin's ideas

and lessons, but one aspect of it could be to draw the impression of Chanukah for the rest of the year. At the end of Zos Chanukah, we have completed all the mitzvos of the holiday. We pray הָדָרִין עֲלֵינוּ, that the light of Chanukah should return to us. The spiritual impressions we gained on Chanukah and the miracles we attained should return and remain with us all year long.<sup>10</sup>

The Sfas Emes (Chanukah 5637) teaches that the purpose of miracles is so we can never forget that Hashem loves us and leads us in a special, unique way beyond the rules of nature. Hashem could save us from all troubles without performing miracles, but Hashem prefers to perform miracles at times so we can remember our special connection with Hashem. When the impression and inspiration from a miracle weaken over time, Hashem brings on another problem and then another miracle and salvation, so we will always remember Hashem's love for us.

The Chanukah miracle is the final miracle (see an indication to this from Yoma 29.). The Sfas Emes says that this means we don't need another miracle to receive inspiration. There is enough inspiration and awareness of

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**10.** Once, Reb Shmuel Minkus *zt'l* felt that he needed *chizuk* in *avodas Hashem*, so he went to the marketplace and sought someone who could take him to Liadi, where his rebbe, the Baal HaTanya *zt'l*, lived. A merchant of hard drinks (vodka, etc.) told him that he was traveling in that direction, but he only had seating room available for him in the uncovered section of the wagon, next to the barrels of spirits.

Reb Shmuel went with him. It was frigid in the uncovered wagon, and Reb Shmuel asked permission to drink some vodka from the barrels to warm up. Permission was granted.

When Reb Shmuel came to the Baal HaTanya, he said *shalom aleichem* and *tzeschem l'shalom* simultaneously.

"You just came!" the Baal HaTanya said. "Why do you want to leave so quickly?"

"I came because I needed *chizuk* in *avodas Hashem*. However, I received my inspiration on the way here. Therefore, I can go home now."

The Baal HaTanya asked, "What inspiration did you get?"

Reb Shmuel said, "I sat among barrels of alcohol, but the barrels didn't warm me up. I only warmed up when I drank the alcohol. I learned from this that it isn't sufficient to learn chassidic ideas. To become warm, one must allow these ideas to enter and to become part of his being."

In reference to Chanukah, now is the time to think about what we acquired over Chanukah and to consider how we can take those lessons, attitudes, and inspiration with us for the entire year.

Hashem's love for us from the Chanukah miracle to last us throughout the long galus.

We quote the Sfas Emes:

"Hashem doesn't necessarily need to perform miracles to save us because Hashem can make that the enemies don't harm us... Rather, the miracles' purpose is to show Bnei Yisrael that Hashem leads them...above the rules of nature. The miracles are uniquely the portion of Bnei Yisrael. The four malchiyos (galus) are so that Bnei Yisrael will always need miracles. And when Hakadosh Baruch Hu performed a miracle for our forefathers, they received chiyus, inspiration, from it. [They recognized that Hashem protects them and leads them with rules

above nature.] When the inspiration from one miracle wore off (the miracle became old to them due to the heavy galus), they needed another miracle (and Hashem performed another miracle for them). This was the pattern that recurred repeatedly in galus. After the Chanukah miracle, Hakadosh Baruch Hu didn't perform another revealed miracle for Bnei Yisrael. This proves that the inspiration from the Chanukah miracles continue to shine... The miracle of Chanukah has new inspiration for us, until the coming of Moshiach, speedily in our days, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu will perform new miracles for us. חֲנוּכָה, from the word חֲנִיךְ means newness, because this miracle is always new to us until Moshiach comes, speedily in our days."