



Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Mikeitz – Shabbos Chanukah – Shabbos Rosh Chodesh 5782

1 – Topic – A Thought on the Parsha

As we celebrate Chanukah and of course Parshas Mikeitz which after a one year hiatus has once again resumed its place as Shabbos Chanukah. Let me share with you a thought for Parshas Mikeitz and a thought for Chanukah. First we will start with the Parsha.

In the Parsha I had a Kasha and I don't know why it never bothered me before. The Kasha is this. It says when the Shevatim came to Yosef as is found in 43:33 (וַיָּשְׁבוּ לְפָנָיו--הַבָּכָר כְּבִכְרָתוֹ, וְהַצְעִיר (כְּצַעְרָתוֹ) כְּצַעְרָתוֹ). That Yosef sat them down by age order. It was a Pele in their eyes. How did he know? Rashi says that he pretended to be doing magic. (מכה בגביע). He would bang on his goblet which he told them he does magic with it and he said (ראובן שמעון לוי ויהודה יששכר וזבולון, בני אם אחת) That is what he did and in that way he showed them that he is a sorcerer and he is like all the people in Mitzrayim. It bothered me because Kishuf is Assur and the Avos kept all of the Mitzvos in the Torah. He is Over on (Devarim 18:13) (תָּמִים תִּהְיֶה, עִם יְרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים), he is Over on doing Kishuf. Certainly according to the Rambam who holds that all Kishuf is fake the whole thing is a bluff. Certainly he is Over on (תָּמִים תִּהְיֶה, עִם יְרֵךְ אֱלֹהִים). He is Over on a Mitzvas Asei. He is Over on Vayikra 19:26 (לֹא תִגְזֹפוּ) a Lo Sasei. How could Yosef do it?

I know that you are going to tell me that the Ramban says that in Chutz L'aretz the Avos didn't necessarily keep Kol Hatorah Kulah as Yaakov married sisters. I understand, however, of course they kept Kol Hatorah Kulo. In Chutz L'aretz if there is a Tzorech, if they had some reason then they didn't but Mistama they kept Kol Hatorah Kulah. It definitely needs a Hesber and it sounds like a great Kasha.

At the end of the Parsha when the Gevia is supposedly stolen from Yosef, and Yosef's servants come and chase after the Shevatim, and they find the Gevia in Binyamin's package. So it is interesting that we find in Chazal that the Shevatim said to him you are a Ganef the son of a Ganef. Your mother stole the Terafim and here you are a Ganef also. It means that they were really Choshed him of doing it. It is a Davar Pele.

It could be that Davka Yosef treated this Gevia as a magical tool and Binyamin was Tak'e the son of Rochel and Rochel Tak'e kept such a Chumra that she stole people's Avodah Zorah to prevent them from doing Avodah Zorah. So it may be that that is why they were Choshed Binyamin not that Stam he was a Ganef, but that he kept his mother's Middah L'sheim Shamayim of stealing people's things that they shouldn't do Aveiros.

Maybe that was Yosef's plan. Yosef's plan was to do it. We asked how could he be Over am Aveira without a Tzorech. Maybe he did it for a Tzorech and the whole Tzorech was that when they catch Binyamin it should be at least a little believable that they will come and we will see what will happen. It could be. Who knows? Maybe it was for that reason. I don't know. Ulai.

2 – Topic – A Thought on Chanukah

What is Chanukah all about? As you know, there are two miracles. The miracle of the Pach Shemen and the miracle of the Nitzachin Hamilchama. We celebrate them. The miracle of the Pach Shemen we commemorate by lighting the Menorah and singing Maoz Tzur, and the miracle of Nitzachin Hamilchama we say Al Hanisim. Those are the two faces to the Pirsumai Nisa of Chanukah.

The Rama in Siman Taf Reish Ayin says that it is a Mitzva L'harbos Seudos K'tzas. It is a Mitzva to add to the Seudos. Why? Because of Chanukas Hamizbai'ach. Because there is a third aspect of Chanukah the Chanukas Hamizbai'ach. Three questions:

1. Where did the Rama get this third reason of Chanukah? We have the Neis of the Pach Shemen and we have the Nitzachin Hamilchama where did he get this third reason about Chanukas Hamizbach?

2. What is Chanukas Hamizbaiach? Chanukas Hamishkan. Chanukas Habeis Hamikdash. What is Chanukas Hamizbaiach? Chanukas Hamizbaiach is one of the Klei Shareis in the Beis Hamikdash. What is Chanukas Hamizbaiach? (אָז אָגמור בְּשִׁיר מִזְמֹר תִּנְכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ). What is Chanukas Hamizbaiach? It should be Chanukas Hamishkan? What is the Inyan of Chanukas Hamizbaiach?

3. On the 25th of Kisleiv the Chashmonaim did not do a Chanukas Hamizbai'ach. Chanukas Beis Hamikdash perhaps, but not Chanukas Hamizbai'ach. The Gemara says in Maseches Avodah Zorah 52b (וּבְאוּ בֵּה פְּרִיצִים וְחַלְלוּהָ). The Yevonim were Mechaleil. The Baal Hamaor says on this Gemara that they were Mechaleil all of the Keilim of the Beis Hamidash. As a matter of fact the stones of the Mizbai'ach were stored forever in one of the Lishchos of the Beis Hamidash. They had to put together a new Mizbai'ach. The Rambam says that on the 25th of Kisleiv that they were still fighting the war. They won the war that day. There was no Chanukas Hamizbai'ach that day. This whole thing is such a Pele!

To answer it let me tell you something that I heard from Rav Pam. Rav Pam gave Shiur in Yor'e Dai'a and I attended his Shiur for two years. Rav Pam's Shmuz was his Shmuz and his Shiur was his Shiur. During the Yor'e Dai'a Shiur he did not speak Mussar except for once according to my recollection. Once there were two sentences. We were learning Hilchos Shechita and the Halachos of whether the Shochet makes a Shehecheyanu the first time he Shechts. Rav Pam stopped and looked at us and said when a person gets married why doesn't he make a Shehecheyanu at his Chasunah? He paused for a moment and then he said when a person gets married he doesn't know what it is. It is what you make of it. He doesn't know if it is good. It is what you make of it. Then he went back to learning Yor'e Dai'a. When something happens to a person it is what you make of it.

It reminds me of something that Rav Moshe said. Rav Moshe said that Moshe Rabbeinu had two children the first he named Gershom as it says in 18:3 (גֵּר הָיִיתִי בְּאֶרֶץ נֹכְרִיָּה). I was a stranger in a distant land. The second one he named Eliezer (כִּי-אֶלְרִי אָבִי בְּעֶזְרִי, וַיִּצְלַנִּי מִחֶרֶב פְּרָעֹה). That HKB"Y saved me from Pharaoh's sword. So Rav Moshe asked the order is backwards. First he was saved from Pharaoh's sword and only subsequently was he a Ger B'ereetz Rechoka. So the children should have been named Eliezer the Bechor and Gershom the second one?

Rav Moshe answered when a miracle happens to you, is it good or bad? It depends what you make of it, it depends what you do with it. He was saved from Pharaoh's hand and he ran away. If he would have run away and assimilate that would be a terrible thing that happened to him. He ran away (גֵּר הָיִיתִי בְּאֶרֶץ נֹכְרִיָּה). I did not assimilate in this strange land. Now you can thank Hashem for saving you because something good came of it.

Ocasionaly I have people who tell me you will never believe what happened to me a mirale and they tell me that they were diagnosed with an illness and it went away, it disappeared. Or something happened and there was a big Tzar in the family and there was a Yeshua. I say to them NU? What is the end of the story? The beginning of the story is that something miraculous happened to you. Nu? What is the end of the story? Tell me what you did with it? You didn't do anything with it so what is the big deal that a miracle happened to you. It is a story. It is only worth something if something good and something positive comes from it.

Back to our Kasha. What happened on Chanukah? Miracles, Nitzachin Hamilchama and the Neis of the Pach Hashemen. Klal Yisrael what are you going to do with it? On that day there was a Chanukas Ha'Beis Hamikdash, of course they came to the Beis Hamikdash. Klal Yisrael what are you going to do with it? Klal Yisrael went (אָז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמָּר תִּנְכַּח הַמִּזְבֵּחַ). The Mizbai'ach was Posul and they went and they built a Mizbai'ach, they celebrated a Mizbai'ach, they put into it the Kochos that were befitting. Once that happened then it is worth celebrating. The celebration is not on the miracles alone. It is what happens afterwards. After the miracles take place. What happens next? (אָז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מְזֻמָּר תִּנְכַּח הַמִּזְבֵּחַ). After they did a Chanukas Hamizbai'ach. Now we see from the behavior afterwards. On that day of course they were moved, but subsequently they got to work and did things in a Lechatchila way. Now it is a time to celebrate.

It is an important lesson. Something good happens to you make something of it. Do something with it. Rav Pam used to tell the story of once when he went on vacation in a city in Massachusetts in the summer, and he had a kidney stone or something similar and he had to be helicoptered to a hospital in NYC in order to save his life. After that, he didn't gon vacation again. From then on his vacation was that he would stay at home and sit and learn. He didn't go on vacation again.

Now my lesson is not that you should never go on a vacation again, my lesson is if something happens to you Nu? Where is the rest of the story? The Ribbono Shel Olam did something for you or he did something to you. Nu where is the rest of the story? There has to be a cause and an affect. Chanukah there was a Neis, Klal Yisrael did something. Purim there was a Neis and Kimu V'kiblu Hayehudim so then Leshana Haba they made it a Yom Tov. When the Neis happened they didn't make it a Yom Tov. They waited. What are you going to do with it? Klal Yisrael did something with it. Kimu V'kiblu, so then we are going to make it into a Yom Tov. It is what you do with it.

Marriage is what you make of it. Miracles are what you make of it. Nisyonos, illness what do you make of it? Let's make good things out of it.

Wishing everyone a meaningful Chanukah, a wonderful Shabbos and the great joy of celebrating the Am Yisrael that HKB"H watches wherever we are, whenever we are as we resist the Yevonim. Good Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz 5781

1 – Topic – The Haftorah that is rarely read and an incredible Meiri.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz which is not Chanukah for the first time in about 20 years. We will be Laining the Haftorah for Parshas Mikeitz which as I said we have not Lained for 20 years. The Haftorah for Parshas Mikeitz is one of the most famous incidents in Tanach. After Shlomo Hamelech has his first Nevua in which he is promised Chochmo, he has the incident of the two women who come to him fighting over a baby. Each one had given birth to a child, one child died and one child did not and they are arguing. Each one says my child is the one that survived and your child is the one that died and as you know, Shlomo Hamelech Paskens Yachluku, that they should split it.

One mother said why cut the baby in half better give it to her while the other mother said as is found in Melachim I 3:26 (גַּם-לִי גַם-לְךָ לֹא יִהְיֶה--גְּזֹרֵי) cut the baby in half. Shlomo Hamelech figured out this trick in order to establish who is the real mother. A Pashut Pshat that's his wisdom, that is the Chochmoh.

There are a number of questions on this Haftorah, there is a lot to be said. I would like to share with you a most incredible Meiri. The Meiri says it is very strange that any human being would say about a baby to cut the baby in half. (גַּם-לִי גַם-לְךָ לֹא יִהְיֶה--גְּזֹרֵי). Cut the baby in half. What a strange thing to say. The Meiri explains an incredible thing based on a Medrash about this story.

The Meiri is in Yevamos 17b in the Sugya of Yibum and Yevama. He brings a Medrash that says that this was a mother in law and a daughter in law. The daughter in law had lost her husband, had no children and would fall to Yibum except that she was expecting a baby. Of course if she has a baby she doesn't have Yibum. The mother in law likewise had no surviving children but she was also expecting. Each one was expecting a child, the mother in law and the daughter in law. Both gave birth to boys.

The baby of the daughter in law died. The daughter in law realized that if this is going to happen then I am in trouble. I am going to fall to Yibum because the baby that this woman had was a Naifel, not a viable child, as the child died within 30 days. So she falls to Yibum. To who?

To the mother in law's baby who is a boy that can't do Yibum or Chalitzah for 13 years because a Kotton can't do Yibum or Chalitzah. She is going to be an Agunah for 13 years and she didn't want that. So therefore, she claimed the baby as hers, as if the baby is hers then of course she is Muttar. If Shlomo Hamelech would Pasken to cut the baby in half then it accomplishes the same

thing. She does not become an Agunah for 13 years as the baby is dead, then there is no surviving brother to her late husband, and she doesn't fall to Yibum.

So that is why she in her frantic attempt to avoid Yibum said either give me the baby in which case I am Patur from Yibum or cut the baby in half in which case I am also Patur from Yibum. This is how the Meiri explains the Sugya. An incredible Meiri.

On the ruling of Yachloku, splitting the baby in half, Rav Elchanan in Kovetz Shiurim to Baba Basra Os 156 takes it that Shlomo Hamelech really Paskened Yachloku. Now of course you don't divide human beings. You don't cut babies. But what he did at face value is to say this baby is a Safeik, and therefore, it should be Yachloku.

Rav Elchanan himself says there is a technical problem, because there is a rule of B'li Tainosaihem Ain Safeik L'bais Din Lo Am'rinan Yachloku, there is a rule that avoids Yachloku and he holds there should be Kol D'olam Gavar. Rav Elchonon does not come to a clear conclusion as to how technically the rule of Yachloku would have applied.

The Kasha is that this should be a case of Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya. If you are going with the regular rules of a dispute over money like a dispute over a Tallis, a dispute over an object, the rule is Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya. The one who is holding the object should get it. There should not be any Kol D'olam Gavar, there should not be any Yachloku. Why don't we say Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya? This Kasha is asked by the Alshich there on Tanach.

According to the Meiri it is not Shver. What does the Meiri have to do with this Kasha? The rule of Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya, that if someone is holding something it is a proof that it is his, is not true for Devarim Asuyim L'hash'il Ul'hazkir, objects which are normally loaned to other people there is no Din of Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya.

For example a pen, people lend pens to others, there is no Din of Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya. Now that we know this is a mother in law and daughter in law, so the baby of the daughter in law or the baby of the mother in law would normally be given over for babysitting or to be held by the other one, therefore, it is very good that there is no Hamotzi Mai'chavairo Alav Haraya, there is no Muchzak and Shalom Al Yisrael. Gevaldig! So, this is a Meiri on the Haftorah plus the fact of the Alshich's Kasha, Rav Elchonon's Kasha and a possible Yishuv.

2 – Topic – A Story with the Nod'e B'yehuda and the lesson therein.

I want to tell you a beautiful Nod'e B'yehuda story. It is very similar to Shlomo Hamelech where he used great wisdom to decide a Shaila. I am mentioning it not just for the story but for the lesson of the story. Once upon a time there was a wealthy man who traveled with a wagon driver from city A to city B. As they were driving through the forest, the wagon driver pulls over to the side, pulls out a knife and he tells his wealthy passenger take off your clothing, we are going to change clothing or I will kill you. He says what are you talking about?

He says look, I am a wagon driver and no one respects me, I have no money. You be the wagon driver. I am putting on your clothing, I am taking the goods you have, the money you have and we

are coming to the other town and I am you and you are me. The wealthy man had no choice and he changed his clothing with the wagon driver and he starts driving the wagon.

As soon as they come in to town they drive straight to the Beis Din. He goes running in and says my wagon driver look what he did. He switched clothing with me, he pulled out a knife. The wagon driver who was now the “wealthy man” said what is he talking about, he is nuts. They argue.

The Bais Din says go to the Nod’e B’yehuda who is the Rav in town and go to him for a Psak. The Nod’e B’yehuda hears the Shaila, he says it is late in the evening, be here tomorrow morning early at 7 AM. I have a busy day tomorrow. Make sure you are in the waiting room by my office at 7 in the morning. They wake up early to Daven and to eat breakfast and they appear at 7 in the morning and the Nod’e B’yehuda is inside learning and says wait I have a Seder before Davening, wait. They are waiting from 7 until 8. At 8 the Nod’e B’yehuda says I need a few minutes as I am going downstairs to Daven, just wait. The Nod’e B’yehuda of course Davens more than a few minutes so when he comes up it is 9 – 9:15 or whatever it is and he comes up and they are waiting there in the waiting room. He says okay good. I appreciate that you are here and I will see you shortly.

He goes in and he has his morning Chavrusos and they are just sitting there, hungry and tired and just waiting for him. The day goes by with one thing or another. Don’t leave, in a few minutes I will see you. He Shleps them a whole day and they are furious. Finally they are sitting there maybe 10 hours – 11 hours and the Nod’e B’yehuda is going to Mincha, they are hungry and tired and they are both furious. What kind of behavior is this from the Nod’e B’yehuda. If you can’t see me until the afternoon why do you tell me to come in the morning? They are both upset.

As they are sitting there angrily and it is already 8 or 9 pm, the Nod’e B’yehuda opens the door and says Baal Hagala Kum Eshrt, wagon driver you come in first. The real Baal Hagala got up to go in. He gave himself away. The Nod’e B’yehuda understood that to fool people it takes a certain amount of presence of mind. When people get angry they do things that they wouldn’t normally do. His whole plan was to have them sit there for hours and get upset and get angry. Get angry? So he said Baal Hagala you come first and of course the Baal Hagala who had been called Baal Hagala for the past 30 years he got up and he gave it away. That is the Chochmo of the Nod’e B’yehuda and it is recorded in all of the biographies of the Nod’e B’yehuda.

Of course, the lesson is that when you get aggravated, when you get upset or you get angry we do things that are foolish. We don’t keep our heads on straight. We do things not according to the way that we had planned on. Anger is a terrible thing.

3 – Topic – A thought on the Parsha.

Why did Yosef put the money back in the packages? They go back and buy wheat he sends them back. Why did he put the money back in, where does that fit in to the whole story? As the Posuk says (הַכֶּסֶף הַמְיוֹשָׁב בְּכַף אֲמִתּוֹתַיִם). Why does he put the money back, he never accused them of stealing it. Very strange part of this whole episode.

The Brisker Rav says that Yosef didn’t know they were going to come back even though Shimon was in jail there, he didn’t know they were going to come back. He knew accurately that his father

was not going to be quick to send Binyamin. He figured that if they are going to come back for food, I don't know. But if I put the money back and they have somebody else's money they are going to send it back. They are not going to go walk around with people's money. Therefore, in order to ensure that they come back, that is why he put in the money there and once he put in the money he felt that guarantees that they will come back.

When I saw this Brisker Rav I thought well it is a nice thought but why did they have to come back, they can just send the money back, they have to come back personally? They can send it by mail. They can send it with a Shaliach.

Then I saw a second Brisker Rav in the Sefer Talelai Ohr and he says the following. He is Medayeik from the Lashon of the Pesukim later where the Pesukim say that the Shevatim brought back the money in their hands. Why does it say in their hands? What is the Hesber in that? What is the meaning of the Posuk?

The Brisker Rav says that really Ta'us Akum we don't give back. If an Akum makes a mistake and gives us money because of his mistake there is no Mitzvah to give it back. An Aveida of an Akum we Davka don't give back. We don't give Mat'nas Chinam. Therefore, the only time you give it back is when you come and make a Kiddush Hashem. You go personally and you bring it back. You return it personally. If you return it personally so then there is a Kiddush Hashem. If you send it in the mail then there is no Kiddush Hashem. So Mimeila they would have to come back themselves to return it. Since they came back and they returned it personally so Yosef knew that they are going to have to bring the money back and they are going to have to bring back the money on their own, so that was the plan that they had to return it. This is a second Brisker Rav which as I said explains the logic of the first Brisker Rav.

The lesson of this is not so much the Vort. Did it really happen that way, was that really the reason? I don't know. I imagine there may be other reasons. However, the thinking of the Brisker Rav. Will they go back or will they not go back? If it is someone else's money then for sure they will go back. Just the whole Mehaleich Hamachshava, that honesty, is a great lesson.

And so we spoke a little bit about the Haftorah which has never been spoken about on this Shiur before and we spoke a little bit about the Parsha and we are ready for an extraordinary Shabbos. First Zos Chanukah which is a very important day. The highlight of Chanukah. Isn't it wonderful that it is a Friday so that hopefully we will have a little more time to learn. Get to Shul a little earlier and be able to sit and learn. IY"Y we should be Zoche that the Ohr of Chanukah should lead us to a Shana of Ohr for all of Klal Yisrael.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz - Rosh Chodesh - Chanukah 5780

As we prepare for Shabbos Chanukah, Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz. The perfect Shabbos to welcome in with participation in a Mishmar. What could be better than such a Helige Shabbos.

1 - Topic - A Question on the Parsha.

Let me begin with a question regarding Parshas Mikeitz. As is well known, the Rambam held that there is no such a thing as magic. Kishuf was all just to fool people. It was all tricks but really Kishuf doesn't exist. As is equally well known, the GRA in his Hagoas on Yor'e Dai'a takes the Rambam to task and he says of course magic existed and he says that the Rambam's pursuit of philosophy caused the Rambam to make a mistake.

I have a question. As you know, Mitzrayim was a place that was a Makom Kishuf. It was a place that was full of Kishuf. As Rashi says, when Moshe Rabbeinu starts with the Makkos, that Pharoh said to him, this is a place full of Kishuf - you want to bring in more magic tricks? Big deal! So it was a place of Kishuf.

I don't understand. In this week's Parsha in 43:33 the Shevatim come to Yosef and (וַיָּשׁבוּ לְפָנָיו--). The Shevatim wonder what is going on here? Says Rashi, Yosef pretended to be doing magic. (מכה בגביע וקורא ראובן שמעון לוי ויהודה יששכר). זבולון, בני אם אחת, הסבו כסדר הזה שהיא סדר תולדותיכם וכן כולם, כיון שהגיע לבנימין אמר זה אין לו אם ואני אין (לי אם ישב אצלי). He would strike his goblet and he would call out the Shevatim by name in the order of birth, each one to his mother. So they were saying wow what a magic trick, how can he do it?

I don't understand it. This is a hard magic trick? Turning water into blood is easier? If Kishuf truly existed then why were the Shevatim Matmia as this is a relatively small magic trick? I don't know an answer but I will leave you with the question.

2 - Topic - Rav Druk on why the Shevatim mention that Yosef wanted to take their Donkeys.

At the end of the Parsha we find that the Shevatim are taken by Yosef's men back to Mitzrayim because they stole Gevi'a Hakesef (the Goblet). They say as is found in 43:18 (אָנְחָנוּ מִבָּאִים--לְהַתְגַּלֵּל). The whole thing is a trick to take us as servants and to take our donkeys. A Pele! You are worrying about Yosef kidnapping all of you, some of you and you say (וְאֵת-חֲמֹרֵינוּ) and our donkeys? Where do donkeys come into the discussion?

Rav Druk in Darash Mordechai (page 269 and 270) says an interesting Teretz. He says that the Gemara says in Taanis 24a (דַּר' יוֹסֵי דַּמְן יוֹקֶרֶת). There was a Tanna Rav Yosi who had a donkey and this donkey was a real Frum donkey. He would be rented out to people by the day and at the end of the day they would put the money on his back and he would walk back to Rav Yosi. If you would put too much money or an insufficient amount of money he wouldn't walk. He would only walk if the amount of money was correct.

One day the Gemara says the Chamor didn't go and they realized that someone left Sandals on the donkey and it wouldn't walk around with stolen sandals. This is the concept that Chamoro Shel Pinchas Ben Yair, the donkeys of great people had a certain element of honesty in them, of integrity in them. Whether it was because they knew they were being honest or because the influence of the owner of the Chamor caused it to happen, but the Chamor reflected the honesty of the owner.

What about the donkeys of the Shevatim? Yosef Hatzaddik in order to see if the Ribbono Shel Olam was happy with his approach, he put the stolen goblet onto the donkey of Binyamin. He knew that if this is the wrong thing to do then the donkey won't walk, the donkey won't go. When the donkey went, Yosef understood that his plan was Ratzon Hashem. However, the Shevatim didn't know that.

So the Shevatim said what is happening? How could this be? Our donkeys, the Shevatim were far greater than Rav Yosi. Their donkeys wouldn't go with stolen items. It was a Pele to them. So they said, this man Yosef who is the Mishneh L'melech he is (לְהַתְגַּלֵּל עָלֵינוּ וְלְהַתְנַפֵּל עָלֵינוּ). He is building excuses to start up with us and (וְאֶת-הַמְרִינֵינוּ) with our donkeys. Because our donkeys also were the subject of this Bilbul. Donkeys why are you walking with a stolen goblet, it shouldn't be?

3 - Topic - A Chanukah thought from Rav Druk.

A thought on Chanukah from Rav Druk (page 278) that fits in to something that we have mentioned independently on occasion. Let me tell you what I think is an extraordinary Chanukah Kasha. In addition to the miracle of winning the battle and of the Pach Shemen, one of the aspects of Chanukah is the Chanukas Hamishkan. The Medrash says that in the Midbar, the Mishkan was completely built on the 25th day of Kisleiv. The Mishkan itself was not placed into service until the following Rosh Chodesh Nissan, 3 months later with the week before being the week of preparation where Moshe Rabbeinu assembled the Mishkan. So until about the 23rd day in the month of Adar nothing happened which gives us 3 months of nothing.

Since all of the parts of the Mishkan were put together by the 25th day of Kisleiv, so therefore, that is Chanukah a special day. Kasha. I don't understand. The 25th day of Kisleiv is a special day? The 25th day of Kisleiv was the false alarm. It was the day that they finished building and they thought that they will bring a Korban but found out that nothing doing you have to wait another 3 months. Chanukah should be the 23rd day of Adar. That would make sense as that is when they started being Makriv Korbanos on the Mishkan. The 25th day of Kisleiv was an empty day that they did not bring Korbanos or do any Avodas Bais Hamikdash. A very big Kasha.

We had mentioned in the past probably in Parshas Terumah a Yesod that Rav Schorr says in Ohr Gedalyahu and Rav Hutner says in the Pachad Yitzchok among others. That (מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר תְּנַכַּת הַבַּיִת) (לְדָוִד). The Bais Hamikdash is Dovid's building. But Dovid didn't build it? Or we find in Navi that Dovid asked Nosson Hanavi may I build the Bais Hamikdash and he said go do it. Dovid set out to build what he thought was going to be the Bais Hamikdash. The Navi came back and said no G-d said you cannot build it. You can prepare for it but you can't build it. So why is it called (מְזִמּוֹר) (שִׁיר תְּנַכַּת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד)? Dovid Hamelech wanted to build it but Shlomo Hamelech built it?

The answer is that Dovid Hamelech built it in his heart, in his Ratzon, in his desire, in his Cheishek. That was Dovid Hamelech's Avoda. To build it B'libo. HKB"H caused that he thought that he could build it. He had such a tremendous drive and desire to build it. If you know, he dug the foundation. As the Gemara in Makkos tells the story of him pulling out the stopper of the Mayanos Hat'hom. You have to have a Cheishek for it and the Cheishek counts. Shlomo built it. The Eitzim and Avanim, the stone and wood was built by Shlomo and then it was Chareiv (destroyed). Dovid's

Cheishek and Teshuka (desire) to build, Dovid built it with Machshava and Cheishek, desire and Ratzon.

On the 25th day of Kisleiv in the Mishkan the Jews finished assembling the parts of the Mishkan. The Yalkut Melachim quoted by Rav Druk (בכ"ה בכסלו נגמרה מלאכת המשכן ונעשה מקופל עד א' בניסן). The Mishkan stayed folded from the 25th day of Kisleiv until Aleph Nissan. (והיו ישראל מרננין על (למה לא הוקם המשכן מיד, שמא דופי אירע בו) (משה לומר Klal Yisrael was complaining). Maybe G-d isn't happy with us. They had a Cheishek and a desire. The desire remained unfulfilled until 3 months later. But desire counts, desire matters. When you build something because you desire something good or if you want something good it has meaning, it has Chashivus. It counts. For that Chaf Hei B'Kisleiv was the desire that lasted a thousand years until it happened. Until it finally came into the world of L'mayseh. But desire is something.

In the Beginning of Parshas Behaloscha, Aharon Hakohen feels terrible. All of the Shevatim have a part in the Chanukas Hamishkan and I don't. HKB"H said (שלך גדולה משלהם). I will pay it back to you. Zagt the Ramban this refers to the Menorah of the Chashmonayim. The same thing. Aharon Hakohen had Teshuka, he had an unfulfilled desire, it was a burning desire. HKB"H said desire, it will be paid back. It will take a thousand years, but it will be paid back in the time of Chanukah. Desire, Ratzon Cheishek.

Dovid Hamelech desired for the Bais Hamikdash and it is still with us. We in Galus talk all of the time about the Bais Hamikdash, both in our Davening and when you hear a Drasha, a speech at a Simcha we talk about B'vias Go'el Bim'haira B'yamainu, B'vinyan Bais Hamikdash Bim'haira B'yameinu. We talk about it, we have a desire for it, a Cheishek for it, a drive for it. Drive counts.

Rav Druk brings a Maiseh at the time of the Bais Halevi (page 279) with a Melameid in Brisk. Rav Mendel Der Blinder they called him. He wasn't blind but he was blind to anything but Torah. When he learned there was nothing else. One day he was learning with his Talmidim and from the Czar's army an officer walked into his Cheder. Rav Mendel slapped him across the face. He was immediately seized and thrown into jail and the whole community felt in danger. The Bais Halevi had to do a lot to bribe people to get Rav Mendel out of jail. When he finally succeeded and got him out of jail, the Bais Halevi asked Rav Mendel what got into you that you slapped an officer of the Czar's army?

Rav Mendel said you don't understand. I was in middle of teaching the boys a Geshmake Tosafos and the officer interrupted us so I slapped him. Don't try it but the Cheishek, the drive, the desire, the Teshuka counts.

Here we come to Chanukah every year and you need to have a Teshuka for those wondrous days, those days of wonder, not just for when HKB"H did Nissim but where we deserve Nissim, but where we opposed the assimilation that takes place all around us. I don't mean the Jews that are unaffiliated, I mean our own sad connection to things that we should have no connection to.

May HKB"H grant us that the light of the Menorah should carry through and be with us all of the time. You should have a Gutten, wonderful, extraordinary Chanukah and an Avir of Chanukah

that lasts for a very long time. A Freilichin Chanukah, a Gutten Shabbos and a Hischadshus for Rosh Chodesh to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz - Shabbos Rosh Chodesh/Chanukah 5779

1 - Topic - A Vort regarding Seudas Hoda'a from the Netziv.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz - Shabbos Rosh Chodesh/Shabbos Chanukah a day of extraordinary joy in our service of the Borei Olam. I saw this week a new Pshat in a puzzling part of Parshas Mikeitz. In Parshas Mikeitz we find that when the brothers return to Mitzrayim with Binyamin and this Melech Mitzrayim invited them to have a Seuda with him, the Posuk says in 43:34 that (וַיִּשְׂתּוּ וַיִּשְׂכְּרוּ, עִמּוֹ) they drank to the point of Shikur (whatever you understand that to mean) together with Yosef. A Davar Pele.

Rashi says that until that day (ומיום שמכרוהו לא שתו יין, ולא הוא שתה יין, ואותו היום שתו) from the day that they sold Yosef they did not drink wine. On that day they drank. It is a puzzle why on that day did they drink if they were Mekabeil on themselves as a sort of Teshuva to abstain from wine, why change now that they were invited to a Seudah, and why drink Ad K'dai Shikrus?

The answer that is usually given is that they wanted to show that they were not spies as spies usually don't drink and spies don't get drunk. It is not such a satisfying Teretz but until recently the only Teretz we know. Zagt the Netziv in his Pirush on Chumash beautifully.

He says that the brothers had a Seudas Hoda'a. After all, they came down to Mitzrayim and had to redeem Shimon and were bringing with them Binyamin which was dangerous. As the Posuk says that they were very frightened because of the money that they had found B'amtichosai'hem and they came to Yosef and look this king of Mitzrayim says the money HKB"H put it in your bags and I got what I need. He brings out Shimon and gives him to them. He sits them down and gives them respect. They felt that it is a time to do a Seudas Hoda'a to the Borei Olam. Tehillim 116:17 (לֵךְ-אֲזַבְּחָ, נִבְחַ תּוֹדָה; וּבְשֵׁם יְרֵרָ אֶקְרָא). We bring a Korban Todah, a Korban of thanks, and at that meal (וּבְשֵׁם יְרֵרָ אֶקְרָא) we call out to HKB"H.

When there is no Bais Hamikdash, there is no Korban Todah so then Tehillim 116:13 (כּוֹס-יְשׁוּעוֹת) כּוֹס-). We pick up a Kos of Yayin with all of the Remzaim that Yayin has. (יְשׁוּעוֹת אֲשָׂא; וּבְשֵׁם יְרֵרָ אֶקְרָא). So that the Shevatim says the Netziv were having this Seudas Hoda'a at this point, a Seuda of thanks to the Borei Olam and that is why even though they had been Mekabeil not to drink, they understood that given the circumstances it was the right thing to do to celebrate in what HKB"H had done to help them.

A beautiful Machshava and of course this is the Machshava of the Seudos Chanukah. Seudos Chanukah are not B'etzem a Seudas Mitzvah but it still says in Shulchan Aruch that the Minhag is to have Seudos, and the Mishna B'rura says that to make it a Seudas Mitzvah we sing or we say Shvach and Hoda'a to the Borei Olam at these meals, and then a Chanukah meal becomes a Seudas Mitzvah because we say Shvach and Hoda'a.

I had a Kasha on this Mishna Brura. What has that got to do with Chanukah? Any time you have a Seuda and you say Divrei Torah it is a Seudas Mitzvah. Any time you have a Seuda with Shvach and Hoda'a it is a Seudas Mitzvah. Why is that unique to Chanukah?

The answer is as it says in the Netziv. When there is a Yeshua and a Yeshua comes, you celebrate the Yeshua with (פּוֹסֵי-יְשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא; וּבְשֵׁם יְרוּרֵי אֶקְרָא). You have to make sure that the Seuda is a Seuda of thanks. When you say Hoda'a at this Seuda, the entire Seuda becomes a Seudas Hoda'a. Mimeila it has a special uniqueness to Chanuka. All year round, of course you say a D'var Torah at the table, but the Seuda is not a Seudas Hoda'a. It is a Seuda and when you say a Dvar Torah it becomes a Seuda that is worthy. On Chanuka at a time of thanks, once you say Divrei Hoda'a the whole meal becomes a meal of Hoda'a.

2 - Topic - A thought regarding Kabbalas Achrayos from Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz.

Let's move on to a second aspect of the Parsha. Earlier in the Parsha when the brothers return without Shimon as is found in 42:37 (וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן, אֶל-אָבִיו לֵאמֹר) Reuvain begs his father to let Binyamin come down to Mitzrayim. He says (אֶת-שְׁנֵי בְנֵי תַמִּית, אִם-לֹא אָבִיאֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ). If I don't return Binyamin to you, let two of my sons die. Yaakov rejects it and says 42:38 (לֹא-יָרֵד בְּנֵי עִמְקָם). Rashi says (לֹא קָבַל דְּבָרָיו שֶׁל רְאוּבֵן). Reuvein what are you doing? You are saying that I will bring back Binyamin and if I don't bring back Binyamin then two of my children should die. (אִמַר בְּכוֹר שׁוֹטֵה). Yaakov said Bechor Shoteh Haya. (וְכִי בְנָיו הֵם וְלֹא בְנֵי). Two more children will die and that will make me happy? Therefore, what Reuvain said two of my children should die was considered an improper offer and Yaakov did not accept it.

A few Pesukim later, Yehuda comes and says as is found in 43:9 (אֲנֹכִי, אֶעְרָבְנִי--מִדֵּי, תִּבְקָשׁוּנִי). I am going to take Binyamin down and I guarantee him (אִם-לֹא הִבִּיאֲתִיו אֵלֶיךָ וְהִצַּגְתִּיו לְפָנֶיךָ, וְחֻטְאתִי לָךְ כָּל-). If I don't return him to you (הַיָּמִים). If I don't return him to you (וְחֻטְאתִי לָךְ כָּל-הַיָּמִים) then I will have sinned to you all of my days. What does it mean to sin to you all of my days? We understand that that means L'olam Habo as Rashi says.

I don't understand. Why did Yaakov accept Yehuda's offer. Why doesn't he say Ben Shoteh Hu Zeh, are you not my son? I want you to lose Olam Habo? The same complaint we have against Reuvain we can have against Yehuda. In truth, it is a Davar Pele in just the Pashuta Pshat.

In the second edition of Sichos Mussar in the print that has the added Shmoozen, there is a Schmooze, Maimar Vav, which explains why Yaakov Avinu accepted what Yehuda said. It really needs to be explained in two steps. The point he makes is that there is a Kocho Shel Achrayos. There is a certain power of someone who takes upon himself responsibility. Yehuda said (אֲנֹכִי, אֶעְרָבְנִי--מִדֵּי, תִּבְקָשׁוּנִי). It is my responsibility. He undertook the responsibility of doing what had to be done. If a person takes it as his responsibility, and didn't just offer something, his main offer was that I will be responsible for him. Accepting responsibility is a big thing.

As it says in Mishlei 22:7 (וְעֵבֶד לְיָהּ, לְאִישׁ מִלְוֶה). We find that when a person borrows money, the person who borrows, some people borrow and then it doesn't mean much to them. They feel a small responsibility to pay back. Eved Lov'eh L'ish Malveh. Shlomo Hamelech tells us that when you borrow money you accept responsibility to pay back that which you have borrowed. The idea of Kabbalas Achrayos, of accepting responsibility is a great thing.

In Chullin 84b (19 lines from the top) (לעולם יאכל אדם וישתה פחות ממה שיש לו). A person should live a life on a standard that is less than what he can afford. (ויכבד אשתו ובניו יותר ממה שיש לו). But on your wife you should be willing to spend more than what you can afford. (שהן תלויין בו). This is because your wife is dependent on you and (והוא תלוי במי שאמר והיה העולם) you are dependent on the Borei Olam. What does that mean? Where are you supposed to get the (יותר ממה שיש לו)? How can you spend more than what you have? Al Pi Pshat the Maharsha says that spending on yourself less than you can afford, that savings you should spend on your wife.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz says something else. He says, Kabbalas Achrayos, your wife is dependent on you. When you get married you are Mekabeil Achrayos to take care of your wife. You take a certain responsibility to take care of your wife. Why Mochel Lo Al Kol Avonosav? Why are his sins forgiven?

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz says when you are Mikbeil Achrayos and you take responsibility, it is an extraordinary thing. Responsibility of a wife and a family, that gives you strength to make it happen. The first point is that Kabbalas Achrayos is extraordinary. The second point is that when you are Mekabeil Achrayos and take responsibility for something, that empowers you and that gives you the energy to be successful.

Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz writes this elsewhere regarding Parshas Asafsuf in Parshas Behaloscha, when Klal Yisrael asked for meat and Moshe Rabbeinu said as is found in Bamidbar 11:12 (הֲאֲנִי הָאֵלֹהִים). Did I carry these people? (אִם-אֲנִי, יִלְדֹתִיהֶם) did I give birth? Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz says that if you carry someone and give birth you have extraordinary power to give a person what he needs. Kabbalas Achrayos gives a tremendous ability to be successful.

So again, a great person, that is a Baal Madreiga accepts responsibility for the things that are upon him to do and when you accept responsibility from Heaven, they give you the tools and opportunity to be successful.

Mimeila, says Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz, Reuvein said I will bring him back in a Lashon of I will bring him back and if not you will get this. (בכור שוטה הוא זה). Yehuda came and said (אֲעָרְבֶנּוּ). His point wasn't I guarantee that I will bring him back or else I lose my Olam Habo.

His point was (אֲנִי, אֲעָרְבֶנּוּ--מִיָּד, תִּבְקָשׁוּנִי). I guarantee it to the point that in Heaven that they understand that if I don't do what I am supposed to do I am sacrificing my Olam Habo. (אֲנִי, אֲעָרְבֶנּוּ--מִיָּד, תִּבְקָשׁוּנִי). Someone who rolls up his sleeves and takes responsibility and undertakes, then he is successful. We see this all of the time.

In Inyanei Tzibbur, somebody undertakes what many people know has to be done and one person rolls up his sleeves and puts energy into it and puts Kochos into it at the end that person is blessed with tremendous success, with tremendous Hatzlacha in the things that he has to do. He has a Siyata Dish'maya.

3 - Topic - A Technical Point on the Parsha.

In 42:24 and 25 (וּלְהָשִׁיב כְּסָפֵיהֶם). The word Kesef is not really found in plural. Silver is not a plural word. Aish is fire. If you have a lot of fire it is still fire. The same thing is true with metal. Barzel is metal. There is no Barzelim. By Nechoshes which is copper there is no Nechoshosos or Nechoshosim. There is no such thing. The Even Ezer makes this point, the Chizkuni makes this point, the Rabbeinu Bachya makes this point on this Posuk that Kesef shouldn't have a plural.

As is found in Shemos 22:6 (כִּי-יִתֵּן אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ כֶסֶף אוּ-כֶלִים, לְשֹׁמֵר). Kesef or Keilim. The Gemara in Shevuos Darshuns that Ma Keilim Shnayim Af Keilim Shnayim. Kesef itself can't appear in the language of plural. Therefore, it is very strange that in this Posuk the word (וּלְהָשִׁיב כְּסָפֵיהֶם) instead of Kaspam appears in Lashon Rabbim.

Rav Yaakov Kaminitzky in Emes L'yaakov (on page 215) says it is not Shver. There are two different meanings to Kesef. Kesef could mean silver, the metal, and Kesev could mean money, or coins. It is true that there is no plural for metal but when Kesef means coins (וּלְהָשִׁיב כְּסָפֵיהֶם) to return their coins, that is a different story. Then it could appear in Lashon Rabbim.

This as Rav Yaakov hints is really dependent on the Yesodosdika Machlokes of the Sma and the Taz which we discussed in the beginning of Kiddushin the Avnei Miluim in Siman Chaf Zayin. Whether Kiddushai Kesef talks about money is Kesef Shav'yos, money represents value or whether money is a certain amount of silver. It is a Machlokes if a Perutah is Chatzi S'ora Kesef, a certain measure of silver and then Kesef means silver, or if Kesef is Kesef Shav'yos, something with which you can buy things with. We don't have time to go into it now, but those of you who have notes of your learning of Maseches Kiddushin should take a look. It is a Geshmake Machlokes if Kesef is Shav'yos or Kesef Mamash.

If you were lucky enough to be in my Shiur for Kiddushin you will find it in my first or maybe the second Shiur of the year. Pull out your notes and dust them off and take a look at the extraordinary beautiful Machlokes of the two ways to Teitch Kesef. Silver or money, does it mean coins or does it mean silver. Ahh Geshmak! I want to wish everyone a meaningful Shabbos Kodesh for this beautiful Yom Tov. The Yom Tov of Chanukah. The Yom Tov that you make of it what you want. If you want it to be nothing it will be nothing. But hopefully you will make it into something meaningful. A Geshmake Chanukah to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz 5778 (Shabbos Chanukah)

1 - Topic - A beautiful Vort about the Koach Hatefilla of the Shevatim.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz Shabbos Chanukah, a very special Shabbos in the year. First a beautiful thought on Parshas Mikeitz. At the end of Parshas Mikeitz we find that the Shevatim leave the palace of Yosef and head back to Canaan. The Posuk says as is found in 44:4 (לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ) they had not traveled a distance away, in other words they hadn't gone too far and then (הֵם נִצְאוּ אֶת-הָעִיר, לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ, וַיּוֹסֶף אָמַר לְאִשְׁרַי עַל-בֵּיתוֹ, קוּם רְדֹף אַחֲרַי הָאֲנָשִׁים). Why is it important (לֹא הִרְחִיקוּ) what is the Nikuda in the Torah?

It is brought that the Gerrer Rebbe said in the name of Rav Chaim Vital (לא הרחיקו) that Yosef wanted to catch the brothers before they said Tefillas Haderech. Once they are going to say Tefillas Haderech, once they are on the road out of the city and they are going to say Tefillas Haderech Yosef was afraid that their Tefilla (ומכל פּרענייות) (המתרגשות ובאות לעולם) will be Matzil them from Yosef's plan. So therefore Zagt Rav Chaim Vital (לא הרחיקו) he wanted to catch them before they said Tefillas Haderech. A beautiful Vort about the Koach Hatefilla of the Shevatim.

Lechora it is Shver. He should have given a different reason. If they are going to say Tefillas Haderech and then Yosef's men are going to catch them and then they are going to come back to the city, it is going to end up being a Beracha Levatala because L'mayseh they are not going to travel. They are going to start traveling (לא הרחיקו), they are going to say Tefillas Haderech and then they are going to turn around and it will be a Beracha Levatala. So why are you giving me a Mussar type of reason if it is Emes that Yosef made a plan (לא הרחיקו) to catch them before they said Tefillas Haderech then it could be a technical reason. This is a Litvishe Kasha.

But the question is really a general question Halacha L'mayseh. Let's say I am leaving the city, I am traveling out and I am going to Lakewood and I say Tefillas Haderech. I cross over into Staten Island and I go to NJ wherever you are Noheig to say Tefillas Haderech. I say Tefillas Haderech by the fresh kill area on the 440 which is where Rav Pam used to say Tefillas Haderech or wherever it might be. You are traveling Chutz L'ir and you say Tefillas Haderech and you get a call to come back. Are you Mechuyav to finish your trip because it will be a Beracha Levatala because you didn't travel yet the distance that is Chayuv Tefillas Haderech. Are you Mechuyav to finish the trip, to make it that you are not saying a Beracha Levatala? From this Rav Chaim Vital it is a Raya that it would be a Beracha Levatala. What is the Hesber what is the explanation?

I know that you are going to bring a Raya from the Ritva in Chullin. There is a Ritva in Chullin that asks what happens if you wash your hands for Hamotzi and you said the Beracha of Al Netillas Yadaim and you decide that you don't want to eat bread. Are you Mechuyav to eat bread to not be Over a Beracha Levatala of Netillas Yadaim? When you say Hamotzi you are Mechuyav to eat, what about Al Netillas Yadaim?

The Ritva says that he is not Mechuyav to eat because Beshayta it was a proper Beracha. You are going to want to tell me the same thing with Tefillas Haderech that Beshayta it was a proper Beracha. But it is not a Dimyon, it is not correct. This is because the Ritva is saying that in its time it was a proper Beracha because Al Netillas Yadaim is not a Beracha on eating, it is a Beracha on preparing the hands to eat and that you did prepare your hands for eating so you made a Beracha. If you don't eat it is not a Beracha Levatala because Netillas Yadaim is a Mattir and it was Takeh Mattir. It is not Shayich to Tefillas Haderech as Tefillas Haderech is not a Mattir. Tefillas Haderech is a Tefilla that you are Mechuyav to say when you travel a certain distance. The whole Chiyuv comes off.

In V'harev Na the second volume, this Shaila is brought in Parshas Mikeitz and a tremendous insight is quoted from the Chazon Ish. The Chazon Ish is not talking about Tefillas Haderech at all, the Chazon Ish is on Kiddushin Siman Samech Gimmel Os Chaf Gimmel. The Chazon Ish

there is coming to answer a similar Kasha. In cases where Chazal were Oker Kedusha L'mafrai'a, where someone got married and they were Oker Kedushin L'mafrai'a why isn't it a problem that you are making the Beracha of the Mesader Kiddushin into a Beracha Levatala by being Oker the Kiddushin it is making it as if they were never married? So the Mesadeir Kiddushin's Beracha is a Beracha Levatala?

It is a similar Kasha that the Taz asks in Siman Shin Chaf Gimmel in Yore Dai'a. If someone separates Challah and Challah gets mixed back into the dough so we are Mattir Neder for the person who separated the Challah. But if you are going to be Mattir Neder and make it Os Challah you are turning the Beracha into a Beracha Levatala. Here we have a whole slew of cases where a person made a Beracha in good conscience at the right time and something happens later that is going to change it into a Beracha Levatala.

Zagt the Chazon Ish, the Chomer of Beracha Levatala is not because you said Hashem's name in vain, it is in the Chisaron of Yir'as Hashem. The Mitzvah of Yir'as Hashem includes to be afraid to say His name for no reason. Zagt the Chazon Ish, Kol Shebashayta, the Beracha was not in vain as in its time it was the proper Beracha. When you were separating the Challah you didn't know that something will happen later. Or you were Mekadeish an Isha and the Mesadeir Kiddushin makes a Beracha and he doesn't know that later something will happen. Or in our case where you say Tefillas Haderech and you don't know that circumstances will change. In all of these cases the Nikudas Ha'issar of Beracha Levatala doesn't apply. Mimeila you are not Michuyav to finish the trip and you can be Oker Kiddushin L'mafrai'a and you can be Mattir Neder on Hafrashas Challah. Because as long as in its time the Beracha was a proper Beracha that is good enough. A beautiful Vort!

If you look in the Pischei Teshuva in Hilchos Challah he brings a Chasam Sofer. Now I understand the Chasam Sofer. The Chasam Sofer was asked how are you Oker Hafrashas Challah L'mafrai'a it turns into a Beracha Levatala. Zagt the Chasam Sofer very Sharf. He said Asher Kidishanu B'mitzvosav V'tzivanu Al Hafrashas Challah, you have a Mitzvah to separate Challah. The Mitzvah of separating Challah is as set down in the rules of the Shulchan Aruch in Yore Dai'a. One of the rules of Hafrashas Challah is that later you are allowed to be Mattir Neder. It is not a Beracha Levatala. You made the Beracha on the Mitzvah of Hafrashas Challah, the Mitzvah of Hafrashas Challah includes that sometimes it is Nekar L'mafrai'a. A very Sharf'e Chap but the Omek of the Chasam Sofer he is saying the same Vort. That Beshayta the Beracha is proper, there is a list of Halachos that follow when you are Mafrish Challah but the Beracha itself was proper. A very Geshmake thought in Halacha L'mayseh which Agav gives us two Mussardika D'hers. The D'her that the Shevatim's Tefilla would have been Po'el and Yosef's plan would have fallen away, how the Tefilla of a Tzaddik is Po'el and # 2 this idea that everything we do is Meshubad L'halacha. When we make a Beracha we make the Beracha with whatever Halacha brings forth, however, it may come out. This is a thought on the Parsha.

2 - Topic - A thought on Chanukah

There is a Yesod in Hiddur Mitzvah that you can only be Mehadeir in the Mitzvah when you are doing the Mitzvah. If you are finished doing the Mitzvah you can't do the Hiddur later. If you already shook the Lulav and Esrog and you are Yotzei, then you can't take a nicer Esrog later and

call that Hiddur Mitzvah. There is nothing to do. The Mitzvah is over, the Mitzvah is finished. Once a Mitzvah is done you can't do it later.

The Mekor for this is in all the Sifrei Mishpachas Brisk. The Beis Halevi says that Pshat in the Gemara according to some of the Rishonim when you do a Bris as long as you are still involved in the Bris you cut away Tzitzin She'aino M'akvin, you cut away the entire Orlah. Once you pull your hand back, the Mohel is done, and there are Tzitzin She'aino M'akvin, they are not M'akeiv but they are parts of the Orlah that should have been cut off you don't go back. Zagt the Beis Halevi this is because cutting off Tzitzin She'aino M'akvin is Hiddur Mitzvah and once the Mitzvah is finished you can't do Hiddur Mitzvah anymore. This is a famous Beis Halevi and the famous riddle of the Grach, Rav Chaim's riddle that if you are taking two Esrogim and one is Mehudar but it is a Safeik if it is Kosher and one is Vaday Kosher but it is not Mehudar and you are going to shake both which one should you shake first?

The Velt says first take the one that is good for sure and Rav Chaim says no because if you take the one that is good for sure then later taking the second one is meaningless because you were already Yotzei. First take the Mehudar and if it is Kosher then you were Yotzei in the Mehudardika way and then take the other one. This is a famous Yesod in this topic.

The Brisker Rav, the son of Rav Chaim and the grandson of the Beis Halevi, takes this in the Griz Al Harambam to explain the Minhag of the Sefardim. By Sefardim only one person in the house lights the Menorah. Mehadrin he lights as many Neiros as the days. Mehadrin Min Hamehadrin he lights as many Neiros as the days multiplied by the number of people in the house but only one person lights.

Zagt the Brisker Rav, Avada only one person lights. This is because of our Yesod. Our Yesod of Tzitzin She'aino M'akvin is a Rambam and there it is also the Shittas Harambam. Once the Baal Habayis lights the Ikkur Mitzvah is done because the Ikkur Mitzvah is Ner Ish U'baiso. When other members of the household light later that can't be Hiddur Mitzvah because once the Mitzvah itself is finished you can't do Hiddur Mitzvah at all.

Mimeila, Zagt the Brisker Rav the only person in the world who can do the Hiddur Mitzvah is the man who is lighting. Just like the Mohel that Kol Zman he is involved in the Milah he can do more, so too the one lighting the Menorah as long as he is involved in lighting he can do more. A beautiful Yesod in Hiddur Mitzvah.

One minute. The Kasha is what about Minhag Ashkenaz, once the Baal Habayis lights how does anyone else light? If the Ikkur Mitzvah is done how does the Hiddur Mitzvah come later?

This Yesod in the Beis Halevi Cheilek Bais Siman Mem Zayin and he writes there regarding Bris Milah that the whole Shtickel Torah is true because the Mitzvah of Bris Milah is when you do it. If you hold the Mitzvah of Bris Milah is a Mitzvah Hanimsheches, the Mitzvah of Bris is to have the Os on your body then you can do the Hiddur Mitzvah even later and that is the Shittah HaRama and Rashi.

The Brisker Rav has an explanation and says that Yosef was afraid that the Shevatim would not come back. That they would leave and not return. Therefore, Yosef said that as far as being hungry they will find an Eitza, maybe they will buy from someone who came. However, if I am going to put the Kesef back into their sack they will be obligated to return it and it is going to be an Aveida that they have to return and Mimeila they are going to come back. This is what the Brisker Rav said.

It is brought in the Talelai Oros that the Brisker Rav added an explanation. This is because they asked the Brisker Rav first of all an Aveida of a Goy you are not obligated to return at all and second of all they could return the Aveida through someone else and not come back the same way that they could purchase food from someone else. So the Brisker Rav added an explanation.

The Gemara says in Maseches Bava Metzia that we don't return the Aveida of a Goy. Farkert, since the Torah obligates returning the Aveida of a Yid so we don't return the Aveida of a Goy. The exception is by Kiddush Hashem. You can return it if you want to show that Yidden are honest and they return things.

I know someone who asked Rav Zelig Epstein Zichrono Livracha. He said the mailman delivered someone else's mail to his house. It is Aveidas Akum. Is he allowed to return it? Rav Zelig said return it but write on it that this was mis-delivered to my house and sign it Rabbi so and so even if you are not a Rabbi. Sign it in that way so that they know that Yidden return things. This depends on what your name is. If you have an obviously Yiddish name then you don't have to write Rabbi. The idea is that when there is a Kiddush Hashem then you are allowed to return the Aveida of a Goy.

Zagt the Brisker Rav, that is Pshat in why later we find that Yaakov Avinu says in 43:12 (וְאֵת-הַכֶּסֶף) (אֵת-הַמָּוֶשֶׁב בְּכַף אֲמִתְחֹתֶיכֶם) the money that was returned in your packages (תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיָדְכֶם) return to Paroh. Why does it say (תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיָדְכֶם) with your hand, that is a very unusual Lashon? He said that if you return it to a Shaliach it is a Shaila if you can return it. (תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיָדְכֶם) return it personally like the Brisker Rav said that in that way you have the Kiyum of the Mitzvas Hashava. So this is the Brisker Rav's explanation of why he returned the money. It is a little lacking because we don't find that it worked. It doesn't seem that is why they went back, but Al Kol Panim it is a Machshava.

Rav Chaim Kanievsky in Taima Dikra (page # 55 in 42:27 the paragraph that starts (יש להבין)) offers a different explanation. Why did Yosef return the money it has nothing to do with his whole big grand plan? Rav Chaim Kanievsky says that the plan of Yosef is to put his Geviya in the sack of Binyamin and Binyamin would be caught and brought back. He was afraid that the brothers would be Choshed Binyamin that he is really a Ganaf. He wanted to avoid that they would be Choshed Bichshairim. Therefore, he returned the money (בְּכַף אֲמִתְחֹתֶיכֶם) in the first place so that they see as Yaakov said in 43:12 (אִלְמָּוֶשֶׁב, הוּא) this person, this Yosef fellow, he returns things. When the Gevia is found he wanted that they should not be Choshed Binyamin. That is Rav Chaim Kanievsky's explanation. So much for Parshas Mikeitz.

2 - Topic - Chanukah

Let me move on to a thought on Shabbos Chanukah. In the Haftorah of Shabbos Chanukah we Lain from Zecharya. As is with most of Navi most people have no idea what is going on and what it is all about. Let me tell you about the Menorah that is described in the Haftorah in Zecharya 4:2 (זָהָב כְּלֵה וְגִלְהָ עַל-רֵאשֵׁי) and what it means.

In the vision, Zecharya sees a large gold Menorah. It is incredible the Menorah. It has a bowl on top of it full of oil and seven pipes from the bowl lead to each of the lamps of the Menorah, 29 pipes in all. This top bowl is feeding all of them and there are two olive trees alongside this big bowl. In the Pesukim later which we don't Lain in the Haftorah, the Malach explains that these olive trees have olives which by themselves fall off when they get ripe and they fall into a vat which is above the bowl, which is above the Menorah. That vat has crushing stones. The very first ever automatic Menorah. It falls from the olive tree into the vat where it gets crushed, the oil drips down into the bowl, from the bowl into the Menorah and the Menorah stays lit.

The Navi says in 4:4 (מָה-אֵלֶּה, אֲדַנִּי), what is this vision? The Malach says in 4:5 (הֲלוֹא יְדַעְתָּ). The Navi says I don't know. Very strange exchange. The Malach said you know what does it mean you don't know? Then the Malach says in 4:6 (לֹא בְחֵיל, וְלֹא בְכֹחַ--כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחִי, אֲמַר יְרוּר צְבָקוֹת). Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit. This needs explanation.

At the Hakhel gathering this past Monday, I explained at length, but I would like to give you the short version. The Menorah as you know represents Torah She'bal Peh. In lighting the Menorah there is a Halacha of Kaftza Ain Zakuk La. That it is Hadlaka Oso Mitzvah. If you light it and if it goes out, it doesn't matter. Rashi in Shabbos 22b says Hu Hadin in the Menorah of the Mishkan. You have to light the Menorah. If it goes out it is not your Achrayos. It is counterintuitive. It goes against everything. You light the Menorah and it goes out a minute later where is the Pirsumai Nisa? Why should it be that Kaftza Ain Zakuk La?

There is a beautiful explanation. In Torah She'bal Peh and I quote this from the Kuntras Al Hanisim from Rav Yechezkel Weinfeld of Yerushalayim and he writes beautifully. He says in Torah She'bichsav if it is not a Torah then it is not a Torah. If you make a mistake in writing a Sefer Torah then it is not a Kosher Sefer Torah. The Menorah represents Torah She'bal Peh. In Torah She'bal Peh the Ikkur is the Hur'vanya. Working on understanding what you are learning. Even if you learn wrong Pshat it is still Torah She'bal Peh. We have many Gemaras that present an opinion which at the end is knocked off and it doesn't have a Kiyum. Torah She'bal Peh is Torah She'bal Peh as long as you apply yourself. Whether you know or you don't know at the end. Kaftza Ain Zakuk La. You have to put in your effort. If you don't end up with the results that you dreamt of, Ain Zakuk La. Torah She'bal Peh is Torah She'bal Peh. People are Meya'aish when they try to work on a Gemara and have a hard time. Farkert, Hur'vanya doesn't mean answering a Stiras Harambam, Hur'vanya means figuring out Pshat that is Ameilus B'torah, figuring out what it means. Kaftza Ain Zakuk La. The result is not your responsibility.

Mimaila, in the vision of Zecharya the Menorah carries on on its own. The result is HKB"H makes sure Shelo Tishakach Mipi Zar'o. Hashem guarantees the continuity of Torah. When a person says as Zecharya says to the Malach I don't understand, the Malach says you do understand. If you Huruva and you work on knowing that is Torah She'bal Peh. The I don't understand is not a Stirah to Torah She'bal Peh. (לֹא בְחִיל, וְלֹא בְכֹחַ--כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחַ). It is not what you accomplish. It is that you do things B'ruach Hashem. You do things with the proper spirit of HKB"H.

The message of Chanukah is very much a message of doing. The end result is not your Achrayos. You light one Pach, you need eight days, that is not your Achrayos. You fight Milchemes Hashem, Ai you are M'at against the Rabbim? That is not your Eisek. You do what you have to do. Kaftza Ain Zakuk La, the result is not your Achrayos. The doing is your Achrayos.

This is very much the message of Chanukah and very much the message of Torah She'bal Peh. If the Yeitzer Hora can't get someone to stop learning L'maan Taiva, because he wants to run after other things, he has a Ratzon to do what HKB"H wants, then the Yeitzer Hora instead sticks it to him by telling him that you are a nothing, you haven't accomplished, you don't understand. You worked on something and it didn't work.

Why go to Mishmar if you are sleeping anyway? It is only the Yeitzer Hora speaking. The effort is what counts. If you go to Mishmar and you try and you are an Onus, you are not focused, you have a hard time. Kaftza Ain Zakuk La. But you have to go do it, you have to go and try to make it happen. This is the lesson of Chanukah. The lesson of Torah She'bal Peh. The lesson of the Menorah.

May HKB"H grant that the light of the Menorah should light up our lives, the light of Ruchnios. IY"H we should be Zoche to see the real Menorah lit by Aharon Hakohen B'karov B'yameinu Amen!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Rosh Chodesh & Shabbos Chanukah) 5776

1. I would like to share with you some thoughts regarding Chanukah, maybe something that we can take from this incredible Yom Tov. I have mentioned in previous years that the seven Yomim Tovim which are the three Regalim, Rosh Hashono, Yom Kippur and the two Derabanan Yomim Tovim which are Chanukah and Purim correspond to the Shiva Mashkim. Very simple, Rosh Hashono is honey, Yom Kippur is the Dam that we offer by our fasting, Sukkos is water (we Bentch Geshem), Pesach is dew (we Bentch Tal), Shevuos is milk, Purim is wine, and Chanukah is oil. Each one corresponds to one of the Mashkim.

I mentioned then as well, that all the other Mashkim besides for the ones that correspond to Chanukah and Purim, occur naturally. Water, milk, dew, blood. Chanukah and Purim are oil and wine which don't occur naturally. We get grapes and we get olives, wine and oil is something that we have to manufacture. So too, Chanukah and Purim are Yomim Tovim that Klal Yisrael had to create. This is something that I mentioned in a previous year.

Let me add as well, that the 7 Ushpizim, the 7 leaders of Klal Yisrael, correspond to the 7 Yomim Tovim. It is well-known that the Sholosh Regalim are Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov. Avraham

is the first one to make Matzos on Pesach, Yitzchok is Gevurah which is Mattan Torah and corresponds to Shevuos, Yaakov made Sukkos, Yosef came out of jail on Rosh Hashono, (עדות שמו ביהוסף שמו) we said in the Yom for today, for Thursday. Yom Kippur the Yom Hadin corresponds to Dovid the Melech Hamoshiach that will herald in the Din of the Yom Hadin Hagadol, Moshe and Aharon correspond to Purim and Chanukah. Purim is Kimu V'kiblu a repetition of Har Sinai which corresponds to Moshe Rabbeinu and obviously Chanukah is K'neged Aharon Hakohen, the Chashmanaim Ubanav. Here again, the two that are Derabanans which is Chanukah and Purim corresponds to Moshe and Aharon those who taught us Torah She'baal Peh, those who taught us the Hur'vania in creating new things and Klal Yisrael in that way created Chanukah and Purim.

This idea is a very simple idea but my point is that Chanukah is Aharon Hakohen. I would like to share with you a lesson from Aharon Hakohen as is taught regarding Chanukah. In the Kriyas Hatorah of Chanukah, we spend the seven days of Chanukah reading the Parsha of the Nesiim. Why? What does it have to do with Chanukah? Naturally, it is the Chanukas Hamishkan which it corresponds to. Chanukah, the Maharsha says it is the Chanukas Beis Hamikdash and therefore, the seven days correspond well. On the eighth day we have (אֶת-הַנֵּרֹת, בְּהַעֲלֹתָהּ), we mention Aharon, and the Menorah. The Laining is so to speak coincidentally (because nothing is really a coincidence) coming together with Chanukah and (אֶת-הַנֵּרֹת, בְּהַעֲלֹתָהּ).

Why are they together? Rashi at the beginning of Parshas Behaloscha tells us in 8:2 (למה נסמכה) (פרשת המנורה לפרשת הנשיאים). Why is the Menorah next to the Nesiim, a very appropriate question for the Chanukah laining. (לפי שכשראה אהרן חנוכת הנשיאים חלשה דעתו). When he saw the Nesiim's Korbanos he became depressed (שלא היה עמהם בחנוכה, לא הוא ולא שבתו). This is because he was not included, not him and not Sheivet Levi. (אמר לו הקב"ה חייך, שלך גדולה משלהם, שאתה מדליק ומטיב את). (הנרות). You have something even greater, you are going to be Maitiv Es Hanaeiros. This is Rashi that connects the 12 Nesiim, the 7 days of Kriyas Hatorah with the Kriyas Hatoah of Zos Chanukah (אֶת-הַנֵּרֹת, בְּהַעֲלֹתָהּ).

There are two Kashas on this Rashi. One is well-known and one is not so well-known. The well-known Kasha is the Kasha on the Ramban. Why did HKB"H choose the Menorah as that which with to be Mefayeis Aharon Hakohen. Aharon brought the Ketores which is a greater Kappara. All the Avoda in the Bais Hamikdash is through Aharon and his descendants and his Sheivet. Why Dafka the Menorah?

To that the Ramban says that this is really a Remez to Chanukah. Still, what does Chanukah (wonderful as it may be) have to do with the Nesiim bringing Korbanos? It is a Pele! Even when you finish the Ramban you wonder what does Chanukah have to do with the 12 Nesiim's Korbanos? That is Kasha # 1.

Kasha # 2 is a stronger question. The Korbanos of the 12 Nesiim that we Lain was not a Mitzva Chiyuves, they weren't obligated to bring these Korbanos. It was done in a voluntary way. Each Nasi brought a Korban on one day, on 12 consecutive days. There you have Aharon Hakohen watching this happen thinking that it is wonderful, Gevaldig! The Kasha is why didn't Aharon do it as well. Every one of the Nesiim chose to bring one of these Korbanos. Aharon Hakohen could have done the same thing. What is he doing standing on the side and when it was over, (חלשה דעתו) (שלא היה עמהם בחנוכה, לא הוא ולא שבתו)? It is L'havdil like you have a child that is not included and

everyone is involved in doing something and the child stands on the side and doesn't get involved and then afterwards he cries that he didn't get involved. It is a childish Midda which is not appropriate for Aharon Hakohen. Why did Aharon Hakohen stand on the side, not bring a Korban and then weep about it?

I saw a beautiful Teretz in the Sefer Al Hanisim which is a beautiful Sefer. He answers that there is another Rashi that answers the question. In Parshas Shemini when it came time for Aharon to bring Korbanos at the Chanukas Hamishkan in 9:7 Moshe says to Aharon (קָרַב אֶל-הַמִּזְבֵּיחַ) come to the Mizbaiach. Rashi says (שהיה אהרן בוש וירא לגשת). Aharon was ashamed and was afraid to step forward. Aharon had a hand in the making of the Eigel. He felt inadequate. (אמר לו משה למה אתה (בוש, לכך נבחרת). Why are you ashamed, you are chosen for this. Aharon was ashamed to step forth at the Chanukas Hamishkan, he felt that he was not Kedai. If this is the case, then when he was commanded on the Yom Hashmini, certainly on the days previous when the Shevatim brought Korbanos, Aharon felt Aini Kedai. He had the Midda of Baishanus and he felt that he wasn't Kedai to bring a Korban. That is why he was upset. Not that he was jealous, he was upset that he felt not Kedai, not worthy of bringing a Korban. That is the story of the Laining. 12 Shevatim bring, Aharon stays away because he is Bosh and he feels Aini Kedai. Then on the 8th day Chanukah we read that the Ribbono Shel Olam tells him (שלך גדולה משלהם) I have something bigger and that is the Menorah, and the ultimate Chanukah. How is that connected?

The answer is, is it a good Midda to be Bosh and say I am not Kedai? Is that an appropriate Midda? Chazal teach us that it is a good Midda to feel that Aini Kedai, I am not worthy. I am not on that level. It is a wonderful Middah of Baishanus. However, when there comes a time that no one is doing then you have to put away that Middah and step forward. Aharon Hakohen teaches us that. Here he is Bosh and he doesn't step forward and while 12 Nesiim are bringing their Korbanos he says Aini Kedai. This is a Gevaldige Middah to feel Aini Kedai. It is Aharon Hakohen Bain Adam L'chaveiro, the Midda of Baishanis. (שלך גדולה משלהם). Aharon Hakohen, the day will come that yours will be bigger than theirs. The day will come when no one will step forward. When the Chashmonoim will have to come forward even though they are Aino Kedai, even though they feel that they are not worthy. That it is a time of difficulty, of Misyavim among Klal Yisrael. They are going to step forward in a brave way and do that which has to be done. That is Zos Chanukah. That is what we walk away from Chanukah with. We Lain about the Chanukas Hamishkan, and great Nesiim did what they had to do. Aharon Hakohen felt not worthy, and practiced Baishanus. When push comes to shove and there is a need, he came forward with Azus. The Chashmanoim's Middah was Azus. Yavan is compared to a leopard in the dream of Daniel. (עז כנמר) the Middah of Azus. Aharon Hakohen came forward and did the things that had to be done. That is Chanukah.

Chanukah is in the darkest time of the year. The difficult time of the year. The time of the year when we feel we are not Kedai, we are not worthy. Nevertheless, from our low point, from a point in the Galus, Chanukah and Purim are the Yomim Tovim that come later, afterwards, in a time that we have no Neviim, we have a Chanukah. Aini Kedai, but there is a time you have to push. When there is no Beraira, you step forward, push, do what you have to do even though you feel you are not worthy of it. That is the Midda of Aharon and the Midda of Chanukah, that is the stepping forward that the Chashmonoim did. Aini Kedai, the oil is all Tamei, we don't have a way to do it. We don't have a Menorah, we have to put together spears to make a Menorah, you push and you do it.

We are accustomed to pushing when it comes to Gashmius. We push for Parnasa, we push to save money, we push to earn money and that is part of the Nisyonos of Olam Hazeh. We have to push when it comes to Ruchnios too. Push ourselves and do things that we are capable of doing.

2. Let me share a second thought for Chanukah. On Chanukah we have an unusual Din of Kafsa Ain Zakuk La. When you light the Menorah and it is lit properly, you are Mekayeim the Mitzvah. If later on someone blows it out, you don't have to re-light it. It is an unusual Halacha. If you put up a Mezuzah and it falls down you have to put it back. If you put Tzitzis on your Begeid and it falls off you have to replace them. Not by the Menorah. There is a 30 minutes time that the Menorah has to burn, you light it. If it goes out during the 30 minutes you are not obligated to re-light it. Kafsa Ain Zakuk La.

The Toliner Rebbe writes about his grandfather that one time his grandfather did all the Rebbishe Hachanos for lighting the Menorah, spent a lot of time preparing. The Chasidim came and he lit the Menorah and yet before he could sing Maoz Tzur a child ran by and knocked over the Menorah extinguishing the flames. The Rebbe said with great joy, now I can be Mekayaim the words of Chazal that Kafsa Ain Zakuk La. In Emunah we are Mekayeim the Mitzvah even if it doesn't keep on burning. Kafsa Ain Zakuk La. What is the lesson of this? It is a lesson that we have to do what we can do and if somehow we don't see the success on the result end, we still have to do what we have to do. We Daven with our hearts, with great Kavana. Even if we don't see the results, we learn, we push to understand even if in the end we have difficulty understanding. Kafsa Ain Zakuk Lo. We have to push. It is a message for Chanukah, for the Yomim Tovim of the dark part of the year.

3. I would like to end with a Shaila. This Shaila is printed in the Shiurim of Rav Elyashiv on Maseches Shabbos in the Chanukah Blatt (I believe Daf Chaf Beis). The author put in a notation underneath with the following Shaila which was presented to Rav Elyashiv. Somebody arrived to light the Menorah, I think that it was an Erev Shabbos and he only had a moment. He didn't have time to prepare the Menorah, to prepare the oil, to prepare anything. He arrived at the last minute to a home where he was going to stay for Shabbos and he had a minute to light the Menorah. He had a great idea. The Baal Habas of the house had already lit his Menorah earlier. He had this idea that he would go over to the Menorah, blow out the flames and then take a match and re-light them. He reasoned that the Baal Habas had already done the Mitzvah and Kafsa Ain Zakuk La, if it gets puts out, the Mitzvah is done. Now after it is blown out he will re-light them and he will get the Mitzvah on the same exact Menorah. To me it sounds like an incredibly genius way of resolving a very difficult problem in a difficult moment.

As recorded in the Sefer and as you know we don't Pasken Halacha from these things that are recorded, but it is recorded there that Rav Elyashiv's response was Zeh Hu Shaila Shel Amartzus. It is a question asked by an ignoramus. Well I am an ignoramus, because to me it sounds like a good Shaila. Hashkafa I know that everyone will tell me you don't blow it out to light it. Ok. We are talking Halacha. I don't know. A good discussion for the Shabbos table.

I wish one and all a wonderful, meaningful Shabbos. I hope that from Chanukah you learn that you push especially on Thursday nights. Push to learn, to achieve, to accomplish. Make your

Sundays which is a day off for most of you a day of Torah, Avodah, of going back to Yeshiva, of having at least a first Seder. Chanukah, look at the Ner. It is pointed out that Menorah is the Ner of Torah She'baal Peh. Let's make it work. A Freilichin Chanukah to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanukah) 5775

1. Shalom Aleichem and a freilichen Chanuka to everybody as we prepare for Shabbos Chanuka, Parshas Mikeitz, and I would like to start with a thought regarding the פרשה, and then we will move on to some Chanukah thoughts.

In לקט שיחות מוסר from R' Eizik Sherr, Parshas Vayigash (45:3), he has an absolutely wonderful thought. I would like to be makdim first with something which he does not say there, and that is in regard to the Gorel HaGra. As many of you know, there is a famous Gorel HaGra, something which is used to help Gedolei Yisroel make decisions. Under certain conditions a Chumash is used - it has to be a new chumash, without מפרשים - and it is used in a specific manner to try to get a message from Shamayim as to what a person should do. One of the conditions under which the Gorel Hagra may be used, is that it has to be in regard to a topic in which the person making the inquiry has a 50/50% ספק; that is, he is undecided whether to go one way or the other and the two possibilities are to him equal. If he has a leaning towards one side of the question that he's asking, the Gorel HaGra does not work.

When I learned this I wondered why it is so, and I figured that the reason might be that the Gorel Hagra should not be used all the time; it should be used sparingly and only on a genuine bona-fide ספק, so only on a 50/50 ספק should it be used.

Let us now learn the לקט שיחות מוסר. R' Eizik Sherr asks how the שבטים could have been wrong in the mistake they made. The Midrash Tanchuma (וישב ב) relates that when they made the decision to either kill or sell Yosef, they were מצרף הקב"ה - they took G-d with them into the מנין, into the counting, into the decision. Now, I am not sure exactly what that means. How does someone go about taking the Ribono Shel Olam into his מנין, into his decision, but the שבטי י-ה certainly knew what that meant, and הקב"ה Himself was included in their decision to either kill or sell Yosef.

The question is: If so, how could they be wrong if הקב"ה Himself was included in the decision they made?!

R' Eizik Sherr answers this with a rule, which is an important rule in our lives. He says: "לא יסמוך" - לא יסמוך "על רמזים מן השמים המסייעים אותו כנטייתו". Although we find cases in which a person is supposed to understand the signs from Heaven, "לא יסמוך" - he should not rely on what he perceives to be hints from Heaven, if those רמזים מן השמים go in the direction that he has a נטייה that he would like to go. There's a rule: "מוליכין אותו (מכות י, ב) - בדרך שאדם רוצה לילך מוליכין אותו" - the way a person wants to go, "מוליכין אותו" - G-d allows him and even helps him go in that direction. If it is for something good - הקב"ה allows him go in that direction; if it is for something better - certainly הקב"ה allows him go. I thought that he saw a sign from Heaven, that his going with the messengers from בעלם was desirable. "בדרך שאדם רוצה לילך מוליכין אותו".

days? And certainly the Chassidic stories of great Rebbes contain far greater miracles than the miracle of oil burning eight days!

So why is it worth commemorating "על הנסים"?

I would like to answer with a תירוץ that I once saw - unfortunately I don't remember where. In Hebrew a miracle is called a נס, a miracle, and sometimes it is called a "פלא" - an amazing feat; (שמות 3:20) וְהִפִּיתִי (שמות 15:11) "נִאֲדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ נוֹרָא תִהְיֶה עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא". Now, "פלא" is used for miracle פרשת כי תשא (34:10) נִגְדַּד כָּל פֶּלֶא. פלא, נפלאות are called נפלאות. We find that in פלא, נפלאות are called נפלאות. We find that in פלא, נפלאות are called נפלאות. We find that in פלא, נפלאות are called נפלאות. So "נפלאות" are used for miracles and "נסים" are used for miracles - what is the difference?

A פלא is something that is amazing; it amazes someone who looks at it, it is a פלא in the eyes of people. And that is it - we move on.

A נס, really, is also something amazing that happens, but it becomes a נס; the word נס is a flag or a banner, (שמות 17:15) "השם נָסִי" - G-d is my banner.

When a פלא takes place, an amazing thing takes place, from it comes a result of a person changing his life, or of people changing their behavior. That type of פלא becomes נס; it becomes something that is held very high. It is a miracle that caused people to change their lives. That is a נס.

Of course, to the מצריים - they didn't change their lives, "וְהִפִּיתִי אֶת מִצְרַיִם בְּכֹל נִפְלְאוֹתַי" - it was a פלא to the מצריים, but their lives did not change because of what they saw. On Chanukah we commemorate the miracle of the burning of the oil - not because G-d can do miracles, But because k'lal Yisroel responded to it. We find in the (שבת כא, ב) גמרא that after the miracles of Chanukah, the miracles - not only of the burning of the oil, also the battle - לשנה אחרת קבעום ועשאום ימים טובים - a year later they made it into a Yom Tov. Why a year later? Because they saw that this was a נס; this was something that brought change - positive change - to the Jewish People.

We find miracles such as הר הכרמל on אליהו, who did a much greater miracle; he brought a fire down from Heaven in the presence of multitudes of people. But do we see it commemorated? No commemoration of that miracle at all. Because if you learn ג"ך, you know that nothing remained. Nothing remained from the fact that the people said, "ה' הוא אלקים", and a day later they were back to their old ways.

A נס, "על הנסים ועל הנפלאות". In our lives פלאים creates הקב"ה. Is it a נס? Like everything else, it depends what you make of it. הקב"ה gives opportunities - we have to make something of those opportunities. "על הנסים" - that is what we commemorate.

3. For the third and final presentation today, I would like to present to you a rebuttal on the behalf of the חשמונאים. What I mean is this: There is a רמב"ן, a famous (פרשתויהי 49:10) פסוק: רמב"ן on the רמב"ן. The רמב"ן learns that יעקב אבינו commanded that once דוד becomes king, "לא יסור שבט מיהודה" - no other tribe should be king of Klal Yisrael. And that is why the רמב"ן says, that even though the חשמונאים were great people, and the רמב"ן says that if not for them, Torah would have been forgotten from among the Jewish People, nevertheless, since

they violated the command of their grandfather יעקב אבינו - they took the מלכות and became kings for 103 years - therefore their descendants were wiped out. The גמרא (בבא בתרא ג, ב) says, anybody who says they come from the השמונאים, is actually an עבד. This is the רמב"ן's opinion; the השמונאים were wrong - "לא יסור שֶׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה" - is a command.

The רמב"ן's opinion is well known. What is not well known is that other Rishonim disagree. Including the ר"ן in his (דרוש השביעי) דרשות, who makes a statement that Yaakov Avinu was giving a brachah; he was not commanding, and this is what the ר"ן says in the end of the דרוש ז, at the end of the דרוש after bringing the רמב"ן.

The Abarbanel has a lengthy אריכות against this רמב"ן. The Abarbanel, I recently learned in שמואל א', the beginning of פרק ט, and in פרשת ויחי, he makes the same statements there, although in a shorter version. And I would like to share with you some of the קשיות on this רמב"ן that are presented by the Abarbanel.

The Abarbanel asks: "וַיְהִי בִישְׁרוּן מֶלֶךְ", Moshe Rabbeinu was called king. He is not from יהודה. שבט יהודה as long as it is prior to a king from יהודה, says the Abarbanel, but we find עתניאל בן קנז. He was the brother of כלב from יהודה. שבט יהודה. And after יהושע's death, he took over. So that there was a שופט from יהודה, the רמב"ן says the שופטים had a מלך, דין מלך, asks the Abarbanel: After עתניאל, how were there kings from other שבטים?

The second question he asks: When the Torah commands us (דברים 14:15) שׁוֹם תִּשִׂים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ וגו' - that one is not allowed to put a foreigner, a Non-Jew, as king. If it has to be someone from יהודה, שבט יהודה, why does the Torah only say, לא תוכל לתת עליך איש, לא תוכל לתת עליך איש, asks the Abarbanel: After עתניאל, how were there kings from other שבטים?

A third question: When מלכות שלמה המלך was lost, why was it given to ירבעם - it was given על פי - Why not to another member of שבט יהודה? - ירבעם to נביא?

A fourth question: The simple meaning of the פסוקים in שמואל א' (13:13), is that had שאול not sinned, his מלכות would have continued עד עולם. שאול would have continued his reign. And those who explain according to the רמב"ן, שאול would have been an assistant king, or king on part of the שבטים as the רמב"ן indicates. That doesn't fit the פסוק - פי - שאול's kingdom would have been forever!

A fifth question: If you learn "לא יסור שֶׁבֶט מִיהוּדָה", is a command, לאו, isn't it strange that this ברכה of יעקב אבינו lasted for just two generations, just דוד and שלמה, and then it came to an end?

Because of all these difficulties, the Abarbanel endorses the שיטה of the ר"ן, and disagrees [with the רמב"ן], and says the השמונאים did nothing wrong.

Well, I'm not going to pasken whether the השמונאים did anything wrong or not. But since it is the holiday of the השמונאים, we might as well mention a שיטה that is in contrast to the well known רמב"ן - the רמב"ן that we've heard so many times! And this שיטה says that it is not so. The השמונאים did nothing wrong.

So why were they killed out? ר' צדוק הכהן - in (אות נו) says, ברור בעיני, that שאמרו דלא חשמונאים - אין רצה לומר דלא חשמונאים - אשתתיר מינייהו חלילה, מי שעשה התשועה הגדולה - it doesn't mean that the descendants were killed out - נשאר לגמרי מהם. הזאת בישראל יכלה זרעו מן העולם. That is not what the גמרא says! The גמרא says that "כל האומר" anybody who reveals that he comes from the חשמונאים, actually comes from הורדוס. Because, you see, הורדוס set out to kill all of the חשמונאים. The חשמונאים therefore went into hiding; they didn't reveal [that] they were חשמונאים. And because the kingdom of הורדוס, and his descendants, lasted a hundred years, "כל האומר מבית חשמונאי אנא", anybody who reveals he is a חשמונאי, is lying, because the lineage of the חשמונאים was forgotten, it was hidden and forgotten - but not that the descendants were killed out.

And in this way we have an opinion [from] the Abarbanel, the Ran, and ר' צדוק who rides on their שיטה, who say not like the רמב"ן. We have two opinions - we don't have to pasken - but this is the time to be מלמד זכות on the חשמונאים, the wonderful Yom Tov they gave us, the Yom Tov of the אור התורה.

And of course the Yom Tov of אור התורה is a time for people who may not be a part of a משמר on any other Thursday night, but the one Thursday night that falls on Chanukah, the Yom Tov of the אור of the menorah, is certainly a night where the Beis Midrash will be packed with people observing Chanukah by keeping the משמר tonight. Looking forward to seeing you all.

A gutten Shabbos and a freilichen, lichtigen Chanukah to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanukah) 5774

Let us begin with a thought on Parshas Mikeitz and then go to a thought on the Inyan of Chanukah. Of course the beginning of the Parsha deals with the dreams of Pharaoh and the interpretation of Yosef Hatzaddik. Rashi makes a point because in 41:25 at the beginning of the Parsha the language that Yosef says to Pharaoh is (את אשר האלרים עשה, הגיד לפרעה). What G-d plans to do he has told Pharaoh. Whereas only 3 Pesukim later in Posuk 28 the language used is (את אשר האלרים עשה, הראה את-). (פרעה). That which G-d is planning to do he showed Pharaoh. Previously the language was he told Pharaoh and now he showed Pharaoh. Rashi on 41:26 says (בשבע שנים הטובות) the seven good years which were immediate (הגיד) it says Hashem told Pharaoh (לפי שהיה סמוך) because it was close. (נאמר (פסוק כה) (ובשבע שני רעב). but the seven years of hunger which were distant (הראה) (פסוק כה) because it was distant and therefore, the language to show is used. Of course we have to understand this. Both messages were given over in a dream and why is one called showing and one called telling.

The Mamarei Pachad Yitzchok on Sukkos Maimar 98 explains that it is human nature that what a person sees makes a greater impression upon him than that which he hears. We know for example that if someone hears of Tzaros Lo Aleinu, it makes an impression. But if someone sees the Tzarah sees the difficulty then of course it makes a greater impression. There are many Mekoros for that. For example, Moshe Rabbeinu who broke the Luchos not when HKB"H told him the Jews made an Eigel but as it says in Shemos 32:19 (וישלך משה, ויחר-אף משה, ומחלת; וירא את-העגל, וירא את-העגל) that Moshe

Rabbeinu saw the Eigel and Mechos and then he threw them down. Rav Hutner brings this as an example that it is a greater impression on a person when he sees something as opposed to when he hears about it. So too, when HKB"H wanted to show Moshe Rabbeinu the Seder Teshuvah, how Jews should pray when they need to do Teshuva, the language of the Gemara in Masseches Rosh Hashono 17b (11 lines from the top) is (שנתעטף הקב"ה כשליה צבור והראה לו למשה סדר תפלה) HKB"H wrapped himself Kavayochel in a Tallis like a Chazzan and showed Moshe Rabbeinu the proper manner of Davening. Again, it could have been given over B'peh (it could have been told) but he showed. When an image is in front of you it makes a greater impression. So too here. Although Pharaoh saw everything in a dream, the idea is that what was going to happen immediately, (הגיד), it is enough that he was told. The fact that it was visualized has no bearing on the giving of the message, it happened to be a medium of something visual, visual in the mind's eye which is a dream. However, in the case of something that was more distant it had to be shown. The message of course is if somebody wants to be influenced, it is important that he have some type of visual image, some type of picture before him, an image in his mind that helps him do the good things he wants to do. Therefore, if a person is motivated to do something it is not adequate to have that motivation it will quickly disappear. What we would suggest a person does if someone is motivated to learn, is to find a Chaver, someone else in Shul who learns more than you, who is more devoted to his learning and use him as a role model. Picture this person in your mind when you want to behave in a better way, when you want to be more motivated. Picture that you want to be with him. There is another benefit. That is that a person finds it very difficult to measure progress. Spiritual progress is very very hard to measure. When you look at someone else and say I want to learn like he is learning or as much as he is learning, it gives you a yard stick. When you have progress it gives you the sense to feel the progress which is of course a great motivator. So the message here is, (הִרְאָה אֶת-פְּרָעָה). Try to use that means of motivation. In the case of Pharaoh something that will be later, down the road needed to be visualized in order to have the proper affect. In our case too, if we want to be influenced in a way that will have a lasting meaningful impact we should try to visualize it. This is a thought on Parshas Mikeitz.

Let's move to a thought regarding Chanukah. It is the first day of Chanukah and it really sometimes takes me 8 days just to get into the feeling of the Hashkafa of the day. It is very difficult. Because there is no Issur Melacha, the day seems so routine and sometimes it is very difficult for a person to get into the mood and the spirit of Chanukah, sometimes until Chanukah is just about to end. Therefore, it is important to note that we need to find ways to make Chanukah different. I try on Chanukah to Daven Vasikin every day. Chanukah is a celebration of Avodah, of the Bais Hamikdash. Our Avodah is Tefillah. Vasikin today is about 7 AM. Here in New York City it should be easy for most people to be able to Daven Vasikin this time of the year.

A thought from last year on Chanukah. As Chanukah progressed, I noticed or perhaps was made to notice something very interesting about the lighting of Menorah. In the morning we say (אֲבִי (הִנֵּה מְסִדֵּר סֵדֵר הַמְעַרְכָּה). The Gemara in Masseches Yoma 14 has a certain Seder of what is done in the Bais Hamikdash and in that order of things that are done in the Bais Hamikdash we mention a Menorah. We mention (וְהִטְבַּת נְרוֹת) and (וְהִטְבַּת חֲמֵשׁ נְרוֹת) we don't even talk about the Hadlakah. We write that the Neiros were prepared. Very strange. What is even stranger is that the Mishnah in Yoma (which many of you are learning in Daf Yomi) it talks about the (פִּיּוּס הַשְּׁנִי), the lots they drew in order to decide who was able to do different jobs in the Bais Hamikdash. The job of the

Menorah is called Hapiyus Hasheini L'heitiv Haneiros, the Piyus is to prepare the Neiros of the Menorah. Again, it is clear, it doesn't mention the lighting of the Menorah, just the preparation.

As a matter of fact, if you look in the Chinuch on Mitzva 98 he says Mitzvas Arichos Neiros Mikdash, the Mitzvah is to set up the Neiros of the Bais Hamikdash unlike other Mitzvos L'haktir Ketores, to burn the Ketores etc.

In the Chumash itself we find in Parshas Tetzaveh 27:21 the Lashon of (יָעֲרֶךְ אֹתוֹ אֶהְרֶן וּבְנָיו), a language of setting it up. Even in Parshas Behaloscha there is no commandment to light as it says in 8:2 (בְּהֵעֲלֹתְךָ, אֶת-הַנֵּרוֹת, אֶל-מִוֶּלֶךְ פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, יֵאָרְרוּ שְׂבַעַת הַנֵּרוֹת). Very very different. Maybe this is why the lighting of the Menorah is Kosher B'zar. We know that a Yisrael is Kosher to light the Menorah if the Menorah is brought out to a place that he is allowed to be. Interesting, the language of the Rambam in Hilchos Bi'as Mikdash 9:7 is (וְכֵן הַדְּלִיקַת הַנֵּרוֹת כְּשִׁירָה בְּזָרִים) lighting of the Menorah is Kosher with a non-Kohen (לְפִיכֵךְ אִם הַטֵּיב הִכְהֵן אֶת הַנֵּרוֹת וְהוֹצִיאָן לְחוּץ מוֹתֵר לִזְרֹר לְהַדְּלִיקָן) therefore, if a Kohen prepared the Neiros a Zar could light it. Again, the Kohen must do the preparation. A very interesting idea. Rav Chaim in the GRACH Al Harambam makes this point. What is fascinating is that for some reason which is not so clear to us the Mitzvah of lighting the Menorah in the Bais Hamikdash is primarily a Mitzvah of preparation. The preparation is an Avodah while the Hadlaka is not really an Avodah. Fascinating idea. When you combine that with an analysis of the Mitzvah of Neiros Chanukah where this is a Machlokes in the Gemara in Maseches Shabbos 22b if (הַדְּלִיקָה עוֹשֶׂה מִצְוָה אוֹ הַנְּחָה עוֹשֶׂה מִצְוָה) Hadlaka Oseh Mitzvah or Hanacha Oseh Mitzvah but we Pasken that Hadlaka Oseh Mitzvah. We Pasken that when you light the Menorah that is the Mitzvah. That means that here it is the other way around. It is the lighting that is the Mitzvah. In contrast to the Mikdash where the Mitzvah doesn't seem to be the lighting. Halo Davar Hu! It is a very interesting contrast.

Let me move to another point and then perhaps we can come back to this. On Purim we have Megillas Esther. On Purim we have a written account which is part of Tanach of what took place. However, on Chanukah we have no such thing. They tried, the Megillas Chashmanayim was written. But we don't have a uncorrupted version of Megillas Chashmanayim. Over the generations Megillas Chashmanayim was corrupted by different types of historians who wanted to revise our history and we have no clear written account. An explanation of this is found in two Gedolim who lived at the end of the 19th century but in different worlds. Rav Tzaddok on one hand and the Netziv the Volozhin Rosh Yeshiva on the other hand. They both say a similar idea. In Resisai Layla page 77 Rav Tzaddok says that Chanukah is a celebration of Torah She'bal Peh and since it is Torah She'bal Peh we have no written account. The Netziv in two places, one is in the beginning of Tetzaveh writes that the Tachlis Hamishkan is the Ohr Hatorah, the Tachlis of the Mishkan is to symbolize Torah study and that the Aron which held Sifrei Torah or held a Sefer Torah and the Luchos represented Torah She'bichsav and the Menorah represents Torah She'bal Peh. In is interesting that the Netziv writes at the end of Parshas Naso in that which we Lain on Chanukah, he writes something which you wouldn't expect from a Litvishe Rosh Yeshiva. He writes that when Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to understand Divrei Torah, when he had a difficulty in a Havana of the depth of Torah, Moshe Rabbeinu would go into the Mishkan stand at the Menorah and look at the Neiros and this would give him a Havana in Torah. Perhaps this is part of the custom to learn near the Menorah on the nights of Chanukah. Be that as it may, they both say that Chanukah is a time of Ohr and the Ohr of Chanukah is a Ohr which represents Limud Hatorah.

Of course we come back and we say that the Mishkan which is the Torah She'bichsav, the Mishkan which is one of the Mitzvos is all about the preparation of the Menorah. It's Chanukah, the Yom Tov that was added by the Rabanan, that creates an image of Torah She'bal Peh. The message we have is that although Chanukah comes and goes quickly, Chanukah is beautiful as a time of family get together. It also should be a time that we strengthen ourselves for the coming difficult months of the winter which is always challenging in Limud Hatorah. Of course it is Min Hashamayim that Chanukah this year begins on a Thursday and there are two Thursdays this year, two times you can prepare for a Mishmar night. Of course there is no better way to celebrate Chanukah than by being Marbeh in your Limudim. No better time to start than a Leil Mishmar, a Thursday night, a time that we should be pushing more anyway. Wishing one and all a Freilichin Chanukah and a Gut Gebenedh Yar! Kol Tuv!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanukah) 5773

Let me begin with a thought regarding Parshas Mikeitz. We find in this week's Parsha that Yosef weeps on two occasions. He cries twice. Of course in next week's Parsha he cries again but for this week we will deal with this week's crying. The first time is found in 42:24 when the brothers first come to him and the Posuk says (וַיָּשָׁב מֵעֲלֵיהֶם, וַיִּבְכֶּה; וַיֵּשֶׁב אֵלֵהֶם, וַיְדַבֵּר אֵלֵהֶם, וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲתָם אֶת-שְׁמֵעוֹן, וַיֵּאָסֶר) (אתו לְעֵינֵיהֶם). Yosef turned around and wept and then he returned to them. That was a brief episode of weeping. Later we find right after Shivi in 43:30 when Binyamin arrives. This is a much greater episode of weeping. (וַיִּמְהַר יוֹסֵף, כִּי-נִכְמְרוּ רַחֲמָיו אֶל-אֶחָיו, וַיִּבְקֶשׁ, לְבָכוֹת; וַיָּבֵא הַסְּדֵרָה, וַיִּבְכֶּה שָׁמָּה). Yosef's mercy had been kindled regarding his brothers and he felt like crying, he went into an inner room to weep. (וַיִּרְחֹץ פָּנָיו, וַיֵּצֵא) he washed his face and then exited and came back out to them. Here it is a longer period of weeping.

I saw a beautiful Hesber and an explanation of these two periods of weeping in the Sefer Acharei Ro'i. He points out a Taz in Hilchos Shabbos Siman 288:2. There it is talking regarding a Halacha that a person is not supposed to cry on Shabbos. Shabbos is supposed to be a time of Simcha and a person is supposed to as best he can push off his Tzar and feelings of pain that he has until after Shabbos. There the Taz brings that we find a Medrash Agada that Rabbi Akiva's Talmidim found him crying and the Talmidim said to him that it is Shabbos. He replied Oneg Yesh Li, this makes me feel better on Shabbos and therefore, it is Muttar. That is the source for a Rama that there is an exception to the prohibition of crying on Shabbos. The Taz explains the Geder Hadavar, he explains what the Halacha is in regards to crying based on his Yesod that there are two types of weeping. There is one type of weeping which comes from pain and that is the weeping that Chazal forbid on Shabbos. There is another type of weeping. Sometimes a person cries for feelings of longing, feelings of Devaykus (closeness) to something that perhaps he feels is beyond his reach or strength. That type of crying is a type of crying which shows an attachment, which shows Devaykus, which shows a connection to something.

When Rav Akiva's Rebbi Rabbi Eliezer died, he wept not because it was a weeping of Tzar (because that would be Assur on Shabbos) he wept because of a longing of the Kedusha of Ruchniyos that his Rebbi represented to him. That type of weeping he said was Oneg Yesh Li, this is a different type of weeping.

This is sort of like an experience I had. I grew up going to boys camps in the summer. Then a couple of years after marriage we started to go to Camp Bnos, a girls camp. On the last night of camp many girls are crying. Why are they crying the last night of camp? In the boys camp they are busy playing practical jokes on each other on the last night of camp or having barbeques. Why are the girls weeping? It is not from sadness or from pain, it is for a longing. The girls have a greater sensitivity to relationships with other people and it is a crying of longing. When one thinks back and remembers that type of crying it is not with sadness it is with an emotional high that a person felt a connection to something. So too with Yosef. The first time Yosef cried he cried out of pain. (וַיִּסֹב מִעַל לֵיהֶם) all he did was turn around and that wasn't a weeping that a Baal Madreiga seeks to prolong. The second weeping however, was a weeping of longing regarding Binyamin, the brother he hadn't seen for so long and there it was a different type of weeping. The Posuk says (וַיִּבְקֶשׁ, לְבָכוֹת) he desired to cry, he wanted to cry. Since when does a person want to cry? Yes, if it is a crying for longing for something, something with spiritual meaning, or an emotional meaning that type of a longing is (וַיִּבְקֶשׁ, לְבָכוֹת). It is a desirable type of crying. Therefore, that Bechiya was a longer weeping. This is what it says in the Sefer Acharei Ro'i.

We can add to that. We find regarding Rosh Hashono in the Sefer Maaseh Rav (of the GRA) Os 207 Ain Livkos B'rosh Hashono. This is because of the Nevua of Ezra where it says Al Tivku, not to weep on Rosh Hashono. He brings from Nach (Kesuvim) that it says in Nechemiah 8:9 (וְאַל-תִּבְכּוּ) a command not to weep on Rosh Hashana. The Biur Hagra in the Shulchan Aruch Taf Kuf Tzadik Daled says the same idea.

However, we find in the name of the Arizal (and this is quoted in Poskim including the B'air Heiteiv in Siman Taf Kuf Pei Daled S'if Katan Gimmel) that the Arizal says the reverse. The Arizal did cry on Rosh Hashono and Yom Hakkipurim. The Arizal's custom was to cry. V'amar Mi She'aino Boche B'yamim Ailu (someone who does not weep on Rosh Hashono or Yom Kippur) Ain Nishmaso Tovah Ush'laima (it is a sign that his soul is not good or complete). What a Stira! The GRA is saying that it is prohibited to weep and he brings a Posuk (וְאַל-תִּבְכּוּ) and the Arizal says that if you don't weep there is something wrong with your Neshama. A Machlokes to such extremes?

The answer would seem to fit along the lines of that which we are saying and in the new Maaseh Rav there is a footnote which seems to say this idea. There are two types of crying, there is a crying from pain and from Tzar (וְאַל-תִּבְכּוּ), that is Assur on Rosh Hashono. However, Rosh Hashono is a time of longing for Malchus Shamayim of longing for a better spiritual life. That type of weeping is most appropriate on Rosh Hashono. The Arizal did not mean that if someone doesn't have pain his Neshama is not complete. What does pain have to do with a complete Neshama? He meant if one's soul does not long for Malchus Shamayim, for Gilui Kavod Shamayim then there is something missing. Therefore, this idea that there are two types of weeping is Yesodosdik. The Taz explains that about Yosef here and it would answer what would otherwise seem to be a dispute between the Arizal and the Vilna Gaon.

Let me move on to a second thought, a Mussar thought from Rav Schwab on this week's Parsha in his Sefer Mayan Beis Hashoeva (page # 104 - 105 on 42:20). We find that when the brothers came, at first Yosef said that they should all go into jail and one should go back and get Binyamin, as it

says in 42:16 (שִׁלְחוּ מִכֶּם אֶחָד, וַיִּקַּח אֶת-אֶחְיִיכֶם, וְאֶתֶם הָאֶסְרִי, וַיִּבְחַנוּ דְבָרֵיכֶם הַאֲמַת אֲתֶכֶם; וְאִם-לֹא--הִי פְרָעָה, כִּי) (מרגלים אתם ונאסף אתם אל-משמר, 42:17) (שלישית ימים). Subsequently, Yosef calls them in and he changes his plan. He says the words as can be found in 42:18 (אֶת-הָאֱלֹדִים, אֲנִי יָרָא) I fear Hashem. In 42:19 he continues (אִם-כִּנִּים אֲתֶם--אֶחְיִיכֶם) (אֶחָד, יֵאָסֵר בְּבֵית מִשְׁמַרְכֶם). Only one brother should stay in jail and the rest can go back. The Posuk says in 42:21 (וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל-אָחִיו, אָבָל אֲשָׁמִים אָנֹחֶנוּ עַל-אָחִינוּ, אֲשֶׁר רָאִינוּ צָרַת נַפְשׁוֹ בְּהִתְחַנְּנוֹ אֵלֵינוּ, וְלֹא שָׁמְעֵנוּ; (עַל-כֵּן בָּאָה אֵלֵינוּ, הַצָּרָה הַזֹּאת because we didn't have Rachmanus on Yosef. Why only then, why didn't they say that right away when they were suspected of being spies. Yosef threw them all in jail, wasn't that the time that they should have said to each other that this was because of the Aveira that we did with Yosef. Why only here?

Rav Schwab says that Yosef Hatzaddik was teaching them a great Mussar. Here he was the king, the viceroy of Mitzrayim and he said one brother should return and the rest should sit in jail. Then 3 days later he said (אֶת-הָאֱלֹדִים, אֲנִי יָרָא) I fear Hashem. I am going to rethink what I have said. Why should you all suffer. Leave one brother here as a guarantor and the rest could go back home to your father. Yosef was teaching them (אֶת-הָאֱלֹדִים, אֲנִי יָרָא) when someone has fear he rethinks decisions that he made previously. The brothers who certainly were greater than any of the Baalei Mussar, they saw Mussar in this. They had made a decision that selling Yosef was right and here they learned from Yosef's lesson that you have to rethink what you did if you are a Yir'ai Elokim. It was here that they began to think about the selling of their brother. If you look at the Posuk there are two words that seem out of place. When Yosef finishes speaking he tells them let one brother stay and the others should go back and bring the youngest brother as it says in 42:20 (וְאֶת-אֶחְיִיכֶם) and they did so and they went back. No, the next Posuk says (וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל-אָחִיו) they are still standing in front of Yosef and speaking. As a matter of fact they are definitely still in front of Yosef because Yosef afterwards begins to weep as is seen in 42:24 (וַיִּסַּב מְעַלְיָהֶם, וַיִּבְכֶּה). So what is (וַיִּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן)? Says Rav Schwab, (וַיִּעֲשׂוּ-כֵן) they did like Yosef. Yosef had this sense of rethinking what he had done and that is what he taught them. They too rethought what they had done. What an incredible lesson and what a beautiful Pshat in the Pesukim. These are two thoughts on Parshas Mikeitz.

In honor of Chanukah I would like to tell you a story from the Gemara regarding olive oil. It is a Gemara story which for some reason somehow slipped between the cracks and is not well known. This is perhaps because it is in Maseches Menachos 85b (second wide line). There in Maseches Menachos the Mishna says (תְּקוּעַ אֵלֶּפָא לְשֶׁמֶן). It talks about where the oil was brought to the Bais Hamikdash, from where it was brought, what the best oils were to be brought to the Bais Hamikdash... There the Gemara brings a lesson regarding oil.

Sheivet Asher was an area of Eretz Yisrael that had a lot of oil. (וטובל בשמן רגלו זה חלקו של אשר) as it says in the Berachos that can be found in Devarim 33:24. The following is the Gemara. (תנו) רבנן וטובל בשמן רגלו זה חלקו של אשר שמושך שמן כמעין אמרו פעם א' ת] נצרכו להן אנשי לודקיא בשמן מינו להן פולמוסטוס אחד אמרו לו לך והבא לנו שמן במאה ריבוא הלך לירושלים אמרו לו לך לצור הלך לצור אמרו לו לך לגוש חלב הלך לגוש חלב אמרו לו לך אצל פלוני ט] לשדה הלז ומצאו שהיה עוזק תחת זיתיו אמר לו יש לך שמן במאה ריבוא שאני צריך אמר לו י] המתן לי עד שאסיים מלאכתי המתין עד שסיים מלאכתו לאחר שסיים מלאכתו הפשיל כליו לאחוריו והיה יא] מסקל ובא בדרך אמר לו יש לך שמן במאה ריבוא כמדומה אני יב] ששחוק שחוקו בי היהודים כיון שהגיע לעירו הוציאה לו שפחתו קומקמום של חמין ורחץ בו ידיו ורגליו הוציאה

לו ספל של יג] זהב מליאה שמן וטבל בו ידיו ורגליו לקיים מה שנאמר וטובל בשמן רגלו לאחר שאכלו ושתו מדד לו שמן במאה ריבוא אמר לו כלום אתה צריך ליותר אמר לו הן אלא שאין לי דמים אמר לו אם אתה רוצה ליקח קח ואני יד] אלך עמך ואטול דמיו מדד לו שמן בשמונה עשר ריבוא אמרו לא הניח אותו האיש לא סוס ולא פרד ולא גמל ולא חמור בארץ ישראל שלא שכרו כיון שהגיע לעירו יצאו אנשי עירו לקלסו אמר להם לא לי טו] קלסוני אלא לזה שבא עמי שמדד לי שמן במאה ריבוא והרי נושה בי בשמונה עשרה ריבוא לקיים מה שנאמר יש מתעשר The people in Ludkiya needed oil as there was an oil shortage. They hired a Goy to go get them oil in the amount of 1 Million of their currency (perhaps Zuz). They obviously desperately needed oil. First he went to Yerushalayim, they sent him to Tzur, and from there they sent him to Gush Chalav. Finally they told there is this individual who is a millionaire and he has plenty of olive oil and he will sell it to you. So this (פולמוסטוס) agent went and found a man who was using a shovel digging around the olive trees in his orchard so that the rain water would fit better under the olive trees. He asked do you have a million worth of olive oil to sell? He answered I have but you will have to wait I am middle of working. This non-Jew couldn't believe it, this is a millionaire who is just working with a shovel under a tree? I offer him a million dollar deal and he says wait let me finish shoveling. He started to think (כמדומה אני יב] ששחוק שחקו בי היהודים), that the Jews are playing a trick on me because it can't be that he is a millionaire. The man finished digging and started going home. On the way home he was still working, there were stones in the orchard that he was clearing from his orchard. He was cleaning his orchard. When he got home they brought him out a golden basin with oil in which he soaked his feet to be Mekayeim the Posuk (וְטָבַל בְּשֶׁמֶן רַגְלוֹ). He was from Sheivet Asher and he did as his forefathers had been promised to have this wealth to be able to afford to soak his feet in olive oil. Afterwards he gave him the million dollars' worth of olive oil. He asked him do you need more? He answered I really need another \$180,000 worth but I don't have the money. He said fine I will sell it to you on credit. He sold him 1,180,000 worth of oil and the Gemara says that they had to rent every horse, donkey, and camel that they could in Eretz Yisrael to ship all of this oil in order to get it back to this city.

The Gemara says the lesson is a Posuk in Mishlei that can be found in 13:7 (וְאִין כָּל;) יֵשׁ מִתְעַשֵּׂר, וְאִין כָּל;) (מְתָרוֹשֵׁשׁ, וְהוֹן רַב). Sadly, there are people who are not wealthy but they feel that because of people around them they feel a certain pressure to behave as if they are wealthy. It is sad that people who are not wealthy have to pretend that they are wealthy. What a miserable miserable existence. On the other hand there are people who act as they did when they were poor and they are really wealthy. The Gemara is praising this gentleman because oil as the Gemara says is a Siman of wisdom. This man despite having become wealthy was wise enough to continue living his life as he had lived before he became wealthy. That is the praise of the Chochmah, the wisdom of the Shemen Zayis that was the Beracha of Sheivet Asher.

With that I wish you all a Freilichin Chanukah. I hope all of you are Zoche to wealth together with the wisdom to still live your lives as if you weren't wealthy. Because wealth goes to people's heads, wealth makes people obnoxious, makes them dismiss Aniyim in an improper way. Be wealthy but live your lives as you did before you were wealthy. With that I wish you all a Freilichin Chanukah and a Gutten Shabbos!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanuka) 5772

This year I want to talk about Chanukah. Regarding Chanuka it is well known that there are 2 primary occurrences which we mark on Chanukah. One of them is winning the battle which is mentioned in Al Hanissim and the second is the miracle of the Pach Hashemen of the oil that burned for 8 days which we mark by lighting the Menorah and saying Haneiros Halalu. Everybody knows that these are the two ideas of Chanukah. Everyone that is except for the Rambam.

The Rambam in the beginning of Hilchos Chanuka writes that 3 things happened. This can be found in Zemanim, Hilchos Megilla V'chanukah 3:1 (וחזרה מלכות לישראל יתר על מאתים שנים עד החורבן) (<http://www.hebrewbooks.org/rambam.aspx?sefer=3&hilchos=21&perek=3&hilite=>). Anot her wonderful thing happened. The Malchus came back to the Jews, the Chashmanayim were kings for over 200 years and that is also a celebration of Chanukah.

This flies in the face of the Ramban who says that the Chashmanayim taking over the Malchus was a disaster, it was wrong. The Rambam says I guess he might agree that the Chashmanayim shouldn't have taken over the Malchus but the end result of Malchus of Yisroel is good. How does he know this and from where did he get it. Why don't we mark it on Chanukah just like we mark that we won the war with Al Hanissim and the Neis of the Pach Hashemen with Hadlakos Haneiros.

I heard a Maimur from Rav Yitzchok Hutner Zatzal who says beautifully. The Gemara in Maseches Megillah 14a (25 lines from the top) (רבא אמר בשלמא התם הללו עבדי ר' ולא עבדי פרעה אלא הכא הללו) (עבדי ר' ולא עבדי אחשוורוש אכתי עבדי אחשוורוש אנן) says that on Purim we don't say Hallel because in the time of Purim we were still slaves to Achashveirosh and not slaves only to Hashem.

On Chanukah we do say Hallel. If we were still Avdei Antiochus then we would not say Hallel. Hallel is recited because (הללו עבדי ר) we were Avdei Hashem and not Avdei Antiochus. Therefore, Hallel is a fact that we were not under the Malchus of Ovdei Avoda Zorah, we were under the Malchus of the Chashmanayim.

To appreciate this I would like to ask a Kasha. In the first Perek of Avoda Zorah on 9a (3 lines from the top) it says that the Chashmanayim ruled for 103 years. (מלכות השמונאי בפני הבית מאה) (ושלש). After that Hurdas rebelled (מלכות בית הורדוס מאה ושלש) and the Malchus was taken away from the Chashmanayim. The Rambam says that (וחזרה מלכות לישראל יתר על מאתים שנים) that it was over 200 years. The Gemara seems to say that it was only 103 years. This is a Kasha.

To answer this, the Maharar Mipaneil says that we find that the Av Bais Din that is mentioned in the first Perek of Pirkei Avos, the head of the Bais Din was never a father and son until Hillel. From Hillel the next 10 generations we have 10 generations of father and son.

What changed, what happened all of a sudden that from the times of Hillel the post of Rosh Sanhedrin went B'yirusha from father to son? Hillel lived in the time that the Malchus Chashmonoyim came to an end in the time of Hurdas. The Malchus Yisrael then went over to the Keser Torah, it went over to the Av Bais Din and it passed father to son as we know Hillel was from Sheivet Yehuda of Malchus Bais Dovid. The Gemara in Maseches Sanhedrin 5a (17 lines from the top) on the Posuk in Beraishis 49:10 (לֹא-יָסוּר שְׁבֵט מִיְהוּדָה, וְיִחָזַק מִבֵּין רַגְלָיו) says regarding

Yehuda that (כדתניא לא יסור שבט מיהודה אלו ראשי גליות שבבבל שרודין את ישראל בשבט ומחוקק מבין) (רגליו אלו בני בניו של הלל שמלמדין תורה ברבים). So that is a reference to Hillel and his children who taught Klal Yisrael and the Malchus did continue. This then would answer the question, the Rambam had mentioned that (וחזרה מלכות לישראל יתר על מאתיים שנים). There were 103 years of Chashmanayim but over 100 years of Hillel and his descendents who led Klal Yisrael. Now of course this gives us a better appreciation of the importance of (וחזרה מלכות לישראל), because although the Chashmanoyim are faulted for taking over the kingdom this ultimately lead to Hillel and his descendents the Keser Torah taking over the Keser Malchus. So this is an insight into the Rambam, a celebration of (וחזרה מלכות לישראל).

I would add, we say in Maoz Tzur (קץ בקל זרְבָּקָל), the end of the 70 years of Galus Bavel came with Zerubavel. Zerubavel for those who learn Kesuvim was the oldest surviving descendent of Dovid Hamelech at the time of the Bayis Sheini. So we seem to say that Zerubavel became king after Galus Bavel. Well as you know that was not so. Zerubavel hoped to be king but never really took over a kingdom. He led as a Talmid Chochom in Klal Yisrael. So why do we say (קץ בקל) (זרְבָּקָל) as if he became Melech? But in light of what we are saying we can understand. When the Keser Torah, when the head of Torah leadership someone like Zerubavel is the leader that too is part of Malchus Bais Dovid.

As we will say in this week's Haftorah, the Navi Zechariah says to Zerubavel in 4:6 (זֶה דְּבַר-יְהוָה ,) (אֶל-זְרֻבָּבֶל לֵאמֹר: לֹא בְחַיִל, וְלֹא בְכֹחַ--כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחִי, אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת). According to our understanding we can explain that these are the words of Hashem to Zerubavel who hoped to be king. That not with an army, not with physical might will you be king, but rather you will be king with the Ruach Hatorah, the Ruchniyos of Klal Yisrael. That is an appreciation of (וחזרה מלכות לישראל) the celebration of the Malchus coming back.

There is a second ignored aspect of Chanukah. We have the winning of the battle and the Pach Hashemen which are often referred to. We have (וחזרה מלכות לישראל) which is rarely heard about and the Chanukas Hamizbaiach, the fact that there was a celebration of Chanukas Hamizbaiach a renewal of the Mizbaiach really the entire Bais Hamikdash through the Chashmanayim. This is something which we mark. The Marsha in the beginning of the Sugya of Chanuka says the word Chanuka is a reference to Chanukas Hamizbaiach renewal of the Mizbaiach and the Bais Hamikdash in the time of the Chashmanayim. As a matter of fact many wonder why or if there is a reason to have a Seudas Mitzvah on Chanukah.

The Rama in Siman Taf Reish Aleph writes the reason to have Seudos is for this reason, the Chanukas Hamizbaiach, for the renewal of the Mizbaiach. If as we said earlier Al Hanisim refers to the miracle of the winning of the battle, that Haneiros Hallalu refers to the Pach Hashemen, Hallel is a reference to (וחזרה מלכות לישראל), we then have Kriyas Hatorah the laining of every day of Chanukah that is a reference to Chanukas Hamizbaiach. At any rate this is the Inyan. The Meshech Chochmo in Parshas Naso 10:10 discusses this idea that the joy of Chanukah is the celebration of Chanukas Hamizbaiach.

I heard a really beautiful thought from my Yedid Rav Yaakov Hirschel that I would like to share with you. Why do we eat the Seuda? We are saying because of Chanukas Hamizbaiach. I don't think so. I don't think that when we sit and eat we are thinking about Chanukas Hamizbaiach.

Others say (the Rama) that if you add Shiros V'sishbachos it makes it a Seudas Mitzvah. That would seem to be true anytime. He suggested a beautiful Pshat based on an Ohr Gedalyahu.

The Ohr Gedalyahu writes regarding the Chanukas Hamizbaiach that the Posuk says in Yechezkel 7:22 (וּבְאוּ-בָהּ פְּרִיצִים, וְחָלְלוּהָ), the enemies came and violated the Bais Hamikdash. The Gemara in Masseches Avoda Zarah 52b (24 lines from the top) Darshuns that this is a reference to the Yevonim. Rav Schorr in the Ohr Gedalyahu says Chililuha is a language of Chalal a vacuum. The Yevonim allowed us to have the Bais Hamikdash, they didn't destroy it. They wanted that there should be a vacuum, that it should be all Chitzoniyos, it should be a beautiful place. A place that has beautiful architecture and nice things happened there, nice presentations, but no Ruchniyos, no spirituality. The Greek culture was to glorify the body and to ignore the soul. So that is the language of Chililuha of Chalal, that it should be something without Penimios, it should be something only with Chitzonios. A Bais Hamikdash with no meaning with nothing in it.

We come along and say that we are going to find a Refuah, an antidote, a reversal of what the Yevonim wanted to do. How do we do that? We do it by taking something that is inherently an empty thing a Chitzonios thing, something that has no inherent meaning and we try to infuse it with meaning. Eating and drinking are needed for physical reasons and it is not an inherently spiritual thing. It is something with a Chalal with a spiritual vacuum. Our Avodah is to do the opposite of the Yevonim. What they did was to try to take things that have a spiritual meaning and render them hollow, Chalal, devoid of inside. We take something that has no inherent inner meaning and we try to give it an inner meaning.

Therefore we take a Seuda a Seudas Chanuka something that is B'etzem a celebration and we Dafka then give it Shiros V'sishbachos, give it song and meaning and we talk about Chanukah and celebrate Chanukah, we give it meaning. This is why this is only on Chanukah. This also explains why this is as the Rama said because of Chanukas Hamizbaiach. The whole idea of Chanukas Hamizbaiach is an idea of renewal of giving inner meaning of spirituality to something which the Yevonim the Greeks wanted to render only physical. So here we have a wonderful appreciation of the 4th aspect of Chanuka the aspect of Chanukas Hamizbaiach.

I would like to end with a question but before I ask the question I would have to discuss a S'if in Shulchan Aruch. When we light the Menorah on let us say the third night of Chanuka our custom and I believe that it is the custom of all of Klal Yisrael or at least almost all of Klal Yisrael is to start lighting with the newest light (the 3rd candle) first which is on the leftmost side and move towards the right. (The setup is from right to left, however, the lighting is from left to right). There are 2 ancient Minhagim brought by the Maharil, the Minhag Raynus which is our Minhag and the Minhag Ostreich which is to go in the opposite way, meaning to start from the right and go towards the left. There are Poskim who hold of one custom and Poskim who hold of the other custom. The Mishna Brura in Taf Reish Ayin Vav S'if Koton Tes says Ain B'yadi L'hachriya, whatever custom you have is fine.

What is the reason for our custom? The reason is because there is a concept in Shas (כל פינות שאתה) (פונה לא יהו אלא דרך ימין) that we prefer to move towards the right. Therefore, starting from the leftmost candle we move towards the right. Minhag Ostreich says start from the right and even though you will be moving left after that it will still be treating the right as most Choshuv. My

question is, if you look in Chazal in practical applications of the concept of (כל פינות שאתה פונה) (לא יהו אלא דרך ימין) that we prefer to move towards the right, surprisingly most of what we do fits better with the other Minhag. The main source of this custom is found in Maseches Zevachim 62b (5th wide line) where it talks about the Kohen who walked up to the Mizbaiach. He walked up the ramp made a right turn. Now if he would be walking around the Mizbaiach, people only walked around the perimeter of the Mizbaiach because there was a fire in middle. He would walk up the ramp, make a right turn and then get to the corner and make a left, next corner make a left, next corner make a left, and to the 4th corner and make a left. In other words his first right would cause subsequently that there would be a number of left turns. So that it seems that it is worth starting with the right even though subsequently you will be going towards the left.

Similarly when we write Lashon Kodesh we start from the right unlike most other nations in the world because we give Chashivus, we give significance to the right. Although when you write Lashon Kodesh you start from the right but then you do everything towards the left. So we begin from the right and then move towards the left. The custom to open the Aron Kodesh in Shul is also to pull the Paroches starting from the right because the right is more Chashuv but the movement is towards the left. When we dance on Simchas Torah similarly the custom is to dance to the left because when you are standing at the Aron Kodesh holding the Sefer Torah and walking towards the crowd you make a right to start dancing and then you would be going to the left.

So that in all of these examples the idea of (כל פינות שאתה פונה לא יהו אלא דרך ימין) means we start with the right and subsequently go towards the left. That seems to fit well with Minhag Osterreich. That does not seem to fit well with our Minhag and while of course L'mayseh each family sticks with their own Minhag it would be nice to be M'yasheiv and get a good idea of when is it important to start from the right and when it is important to move towards the right.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanukah) 5771

43:12 (וְכִסָּף מִשְׁנָה, קָחוּ בְיָדְכֶם; וְאֶת-הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוֹשָׁב בְּפִי אֲמַתְחֹתֵיכֶם, תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיָדְכֶם--אוּלַי מִשְׁנָה, הוּא) Rav Pam made a very deep comment on a few words of this week's Parsha that have a lot do to with a person's life. We find in the Parsha that the brothers returned from Yosef, telling their father that they were accused of being spies, Shimon had been held up in Mitzrayim, and that the King of Mitzrayim was demanding that Binyamin go down with them. He accused them of being spies.

Initially, Yaakov doesn't let them return. After Yehuda begs him, Yaakov relents and allows them to go. He instructs them to take extra money (וְכִסָּף מִשְׁנָה, קָחוּ בְיָדְכֶם; וְאֶת-הַכֶּסֶף הַמּוֹשָׁב בְּפִי אֲמַתְחֹתֵיכֶם, תְּשִׁיבוּ בְיָדְכֶם--אוּלַי מִשְׁנָה, הוּא). Maybe this king is off the wall and is not in complete control of his faculties because look what he is doing to you.

Rav Pam mentioned what is the use of the words (אוּלַי מִשְׁנָה, הוּא)? This man seems to be totally insane? The brothers come down and do nothing wrong and suddenly they are accused of being spies? Shimon is held back! Their money is given in their bags **42:27** (בְּפִי אֲמַתְחֹתוֹ)! Obviously he is (מִשְׁנָה, הוּא) Meshuge (meaning what was the Safeik with the word of Ulai)?

Rav Pam commented that very often in life things happen to an individual that doesn't make any sense. We often question the Ribbono Shel Olam why are you doing these things to us, why are

these things happening. Things that happen to an individual and to Klal Yisrael as a whole seems to be totally senseless to us. (אילי משגה, הוא) we say about Yosef.

Yaakov was not quick to Pasken that this makes no sense. He knew that in life very often things that seem to be without rhyme and reason really do have a deep reason. Never dismiss something that it is totally uncalled for and unfounded. There is no question when the Borei Olam does something and even when someone else does something and we dismiss it as (משגה, הוא). We should say (אילי משגה, הוא) because in fact had Yaakov said (משגה, הוא) he would have been making a mistake. Yosef was not Meshuge, Yosef was doing something with a very clear plan. It seemed to be (משגה, הוא) and therefore, Yaakov's Zehirus and the words he said (אילי משגה, הוא) is something from which we should learn, not only in a way of which we should speak but in a way to think. (אילי משגה, הוא) don't dismiss things lightly.

The first question of the week is: At the end of almost every Parsha we have a number of how many Pesukim there are in the Parsha. Here in the end of Parshas Mikeitz we also have a listing of how many words are in the Parsha. There are 2,025 words in the Parsha which is something that we don't find in the other Parshios. Why in Parshas Mikeitz does it tell us how many words there are in the Parsha?

The Bnei Yisascher says that because Parshas Mikeitz typically falls out on Chanukah we look for a hint in the Parsha for Chanukah. $2,025$ is $8 * 250$ (Ner) = $2,000 + 25$ which is K'negged Chaf Hei Kisleiv the day on which Chanukah begins. That brings us to the 2,025 which is the Remez to Chanukah.

There are only 2,022 words in the Parsha which is 3 words short. This was figured out by printing out the Parsha and doing a word count and he arrived at 2,022. I am sure that the Mesorah of 2,025 is correct, however, what could have gone wrong in the word count to make it 2,022?

Rebbi thought that maybe the computer counted 41:50 (פּוּטֵי פָרֶע) as one word, however, the computer had it at 2 words which is correct. There has to be something which is logical which requires thinking to figure out what the problem is.

The second question of the week is: In Parshas Vayeishev there is a famous Vort said in the name of many different sources that has to do with Yehuda. Yehuda had 3 children in the previous Parsha.

A number of Meforshim take note of the fact that when the first time a child is born it says 38:3 (וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ, עֵר). That Yehuda called the child by his name. When the second child is born it says 38:4 (וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ, אוֹנָן). That the mother gave the name. When the third child is born it says 38:5 (וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ שִׁלָּה). That the mother gave the name again. The Posuk explains that (וְהָיָה בְּכִזְיב, בְּלִדְתָהּ אִתּוֹ) that Yehuda wasn't around when the Shaila was born. That is why the mother gave the name.

A number of Mefarshim and it might come from the Daas Zekainim Mibaalei Tosafos say that the custom was for the man to give the first name, the wife the second name and it goes back and forth.

So the Posuk explains that the first was (ויקרא) the second (ותקרא) and the third one she gave the name even though it was his turn because he was out of town.

This does not hold true in the rest of Sefer B'reishis. It is very strange that we notice this by Yehuda and it is a well known Vort. Here we come to Parshas Mikeitz and Yosef has two children. Here Yosef and not his wife gives the name to each. He even says the reason for the name. As the Posuk says regarding Menashe in **41:51** (ויקרא יוסף את-שם הבכור, מנשה: כי-נשני אֵל קים את-פל-עמלי). By Ephraim it says **41:52** (ואת שם השני, קרא אפרים: כי-הפרניאל קים, בארץ עניי). Clearly he gave both names.

Similarly, in Parshas Shemos, Moshe Rabbeinu has two children and he gives both names which are unique to him and their meanings. As we find in **2:22** or **18:3** (כי ויקרא את-שמוגרשם: כי) (ושם האחד, אלעזר--כי-אל קי אביבועזרי, ונצלני מחרב פרעה) and **18:4** (אמר--גר הייתי, בארץ נכריה). This doesn't seem to fit with the general rule that we seem to be learning out of Yehuda.

What is even more puzzling is that when the Shevatim are born the names are all given by the mother without any regard for the father. By Reuvein in **29:32** (כי ויקרא שמוראובן: כי) (אמרה, כי-ראה ירור בעניי--כי עתה, יאהבני אישי ותהר עוד, ותלד בן, ותאמר כי-שמע ירור) (כי-שנואה אנכי, ויתן-לי גם-את-זה; ויקרא שמו, שמעון ותהר עוד, ותלד בן, ותאמר עתה) (כי-ילדתי לו שלשה בנים; על-בן-קרא-שמו, לוי ותהר עוד ותלד בן, (בתאמר הפעם ילנה אישי אלי, כי-ילדתי לו שלשה בנים; על-בן קרא שמו, יהודה). Clearly the mother gave the name. It seems to me that the Torah is teaching us that the name should be given by the parent to whom it is more important to choose the name. The parent for whom it counts more. This is a well known Vort on last week's Parsha that seems to be inconsistent with the rest of the Torah and it is Tzaroch Iyoun Gadol.

A Vort on the Yom Tov of Chanukah. In Mishnayos Machshirin **6:4** (ד, ו, הטל, והמים, והיין, והשמן, והדם, והחלב, ודבש דבורים. דבש צרעין--טהור, ומותר באכילה שבעה משקין הן--הטל, ו, ד) there are seven liquids that are given the Chashivus of a drink for purposes of Halachah to be able to be Mekabeil Tumah. They are remembered by the acronym "Yad Shochat Dam." This stands for the following seven liquids: (י) for (ד), (יין) for (ש), (דבש) for (ח), (שמן) for (ט), (חלב) for (ד), (טל) for (דם), and (מ) for (מים). Wine, honey, oil, milk, dew, blood, water. These are the seven liquids that are counted as the major liquids by Chazal.

The seven Yomim Tovim correspond to the seven liquids. In a sense that liquids are the source for all life in this world so too are the Yomim Tovim. Each Yom Tov corresponds easily, you don't have to force it into one of the liquids. Yayin is Purim, Devash is Rosh Hashanah, Shemen is Chanukah, Chalav is Shavuot, Tal is Pesach, Dam is Yom Kippurim (a fast day is known as a day that we have less blood as a Kaparah, and Mayim is Sukkos (because Sukkos we are judged for rain). So the seven Mashkin (liquids) correspond to the three Sholosh Regalim, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Chanukah, and Purim.

What is an insight into this is that 5 of the 7 liquids come to us as ready made in its natural form. Wine and oil are unique in that Hashem gives us grapes and olives and man extracts wine and oil and the Gemara refers to this as an improvement. Meaning, we take the grape or olive and change it into something that is more useful which is wine and oil.

These two that are the Yomim Tovim D'rabbanan which correspond to Chanukah and Purim are different in that their Penimios (their hidden part) is more than its Chitzonios (their outside part). The outside shows a grape or olive which is a fruit. There are many fruits. The Penimios that is extracted is very unique. So too with Chanukah and Purim, the Penimios is more than the Chitzonios.

Meaning to say, the Chitzonios of Chanukah is very minor. A person can go through Chanukah pretty much as any ordinary weekday, going to work as he normally does. Of course he takes the moment to light the Menorah and hopefully he remembers to say Al Hanisim and Hallel. However 23.9 hours of the day can be the regular ordinary behavior.

With Purim it is a similar situation and even though we know that we do things quite differently, we know that there are people who don't have any Penimios and for them Purim becomes a day of S'chok V'holilus (a day devoid of meaning). The meaning has to come from the Penimios of the person. It is very easy to have Chanukah speed by, 8 days of Chanukah speed by rather rapidly without a person feeling the meaning of the day. The way to bring out the Penimios is by doing Mitzvos with an extra Hiddur Mitzvah, Ahavah, and devotion. Chanukah is a Yom Tov of doing things Mehadrin Min Hamahadrin of doing things in a more Hiddur and extraordinary way. That is the Yom Tov of Chanukah. That has to come out in our Avodah. The Davening on Chanukah should be different. Try to find a Minyan that is special and Davens more slowly. Or Daven at a Vasikin Minyan, as sunrise is in the early 7's. Many of us can Daven Vasikin by changing our schedule in a minor way. Of course it is not worth losing time from Learning for this, however, to do Mitzvos in a more special and Hiddur way. To bring out a Penimios of the day.

I always felt about Chanukah that it is a day of Chanukas Bais Hamikdash which is Avodah. It is a time to really focus on improving our Davening. I hope over the 8 days to work on it.

One sensitivity might be a sensitivity to Eretz Yisrael. In Eretz Yisrael there is a drought. The rains that usually come in the winter have not yet begun. There is a terrible forest fire in the north of Eretz Yisrael. In Eretz Yisrael some have fasted, but all the Bnei Torah who are not fasting are Davening for rain. We too in Chutz L'aretz should feel with Acheinu Bnei Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael. That is the Hiddur in our Davening to.

I would suggest adding in Shema Koleinu, V'sein Tal Umatar Liv'racha Al Pnei Hoadoma B'erezt Hakidosha B'erezt Yisrael. Adding words of prayer for the rains in Eretz Yisrael. Don't add V'sein Tal Umatar in Bareich Aleinu until we in Chutz Yisrael start to say it next week.

Add the request for rain in Eretz Yisrael besides that we should be doing this anyway as a Bein Adam L'chaveiro. Work on putting meaning and focus in your Davening. That is very much the focus of the Yemai Chanukah. The Penimios of the day.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Mikeitz (Shabbos Chanuka II) 5770

41:1 At the beginning of the Parsha it says, (וַיְהִי, מִקְצֵי שְׁנַתִּים יָמִים). Rashi tells us at the end of the previous Parsha **40:23**, (וַיִּשְׁכַּחְהוּ) שְׁנַיִם, שְׁנָאֵם (תְּהִלִּים מֵה) אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגִּבֵּר אֲשֶׁר שָׁם ר' מִבְּטָחוֹ וְלֹא פָנָה אֶל רֵהֲבִים, וְלֹא בָטַח עַל מִצְרַיִם הַקְּרוּיִם (יִשְׁעִיהָ לִּי) that Yosef stayed imprisoned for an extra 2 years because he placed his trust in the Sar Hamashkim instead of as it says in Tehillim 40:5 (אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגִּבֵּר -- אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם יְרוּר, מִבְּטָחוֹ). A number of Mefarshim give explanations as to what the Chisaron was in Yosef doing his Hishtadlus in trying to get himself out of prison.

The Chazoin Ish in the Sefer Emunah U'bitachoin says, of course we have to do Hishtadlus, however, a Boiteach in Hashem goes to different lengths in order to reach his desired end. A person who does normal Hishtadlus and has Bitachoin that things will work out, does things that make sense would work. He relies on Hashem. However, someone who thinks everything relies on him does desperate measures to make things work even though they don't make much sense.

For a Nar Ivri to tell a Sar of Mitzrayim to remember him, which B'derech Hahishtadlus doesn't make sense, Yosef had no excuse to do it. This was not something that logically would bring a Yeshua. Therefore, there was a Tevi'a on him to do a normal Hishtadlus and not a farfetched Hishtadlus.

The Chazoin Ish who writes this in his Sefer Emunah U'bitachoin is writing this as a lesson to us. Do your normal Hishtadlus and then rely on Hashem. Don't do outlandish types of Hishtadlus.

You would think that this Vort would contradict a well known piece in the Sichois Mussar (R' Chaim Shmulevitz) on Parshas Shemos. In Parshas Shemos we find that Bas Paroh sees the basket in the river that contains Moshe Rabbeinu in it. She sticks out her arm and as Rashi says, her hand lengthened many Amos to reach the basket. We understand that Hashem made a Neis, however, what was going through her mind when she stuck out her hand, something like this never happened to her that her arm should become many Amois long?

You see from here that a person has to try even if chances are slim that the Hishtadlus will help. So these 2 Vertlach seem to be contradictory? However, if you think about it, it is not a contradiction at all. It all depends what you are being Mishtadeil for. Chassidim have an expression, Mir Shtupt Nisht, meaning you do a normal Hishtadlus and you don't overly push. That applies to Gashmiyus like for example Yosef trying to get out of prison. On the other hand, by Ruchniyos, you have to do a Hishtadlus B'chol Kocho, like for example a Dvar Mitzvah like saving a baby from the river. In that scenario, you do Shtup.

It is an important Yesod because in practice we usually find the opposite. By learning, if there is a snow storm, Mir Shtupted Nisht, we don't try too hard to go. However, by Gashmiyus we always push. The opposite should be the case, by Ruchniyos we must do a not normal amount of Hishtadlus while by Gashmiyos a normal Hishtadlus is all that should be done.

This Vort answered a Kashya that Rebbi had for many years. Rav Pam would tell Bachurim who were dating and wanted to continue with a certain girl, that if the girl didn't seem interested than it

shouldn't be pushed. The problem with this is, that Rav Pam himself while dating the Rebbitzin and it wasn't going smooth, pushed for the Shidduch? Why didn't he advise people to push for their Shidduchim? The Teretz is, if you are pushing for Inyanim of Ruchniyos than push B'kol Koichoi, however, if it is for Inyanim of Gashmiyos, than you shouldn't push.

42:24 The Sefer Dvar Davar Toiv says a Pshat in why Shimon is the one who tried to get Yosef into trouble. Rashi says, (לעיל לז יט) הנה בעל החלומות הלזה: **את שמעון**, הוא שאמר ללוי, הוא שליכו לבור, הוא שאלו (לעיל לז יט) הנה בעל החלומות הלזה: **את שמעון**) Hu Hishlichoi Laboir, that Shimon was the one who threw Yosef into the pit. Shimon also said, Hinei Ba'al Hachalomos Halazeh Ba, that here comes the dreamer Yosef. Shimon was the one who was the most against Yosef. Why is this the case? Why did Shimon have the most feelings about this than any other Shevet?

If the Shevatim wanted to be Melameid Zchus on Yosef they would have understood that Yosef is the Bechor from Rachel. Rachel was Yaakov's first choice for a wife. So maybe Yosef did have a right to be treated with special consideration, maybe they shouldn't have been jealous. Shimon could not accept this.

Shimon married Dinah. What about the fact that Dinah was his sister both from Father and from Mother? Even though a Ben Noach can marry a half sister, he can't marry a full sister. The Maharsha in Maseches Niddah 31a brings a Mehalach in the name of the Paneach Raza which is a Pirush on the Zohar. We know that originally Leah was going to have another Shevet, however, she was Mispallel that Rochel should have a Shevet. So the Ubor in Leah became Dinah and the Ubor in Rochel became Yosef. The babies actually switched places according to the Paneach Raza. So when Leah was pregnant she was carrying Yosef and Rochel was carrying Dinah. Shimon held that the mother is determined by the one who got pregnant with the child and giving birth to a baby doesn't make one a mother L'halacha. Only a biological mother is the mother and not the host mother. So Shimon Paskened that Dinah was his half sister and therefore, he was allowed to marry her.

Yosef had visions of grandeur that he was going to be the king and the brothers say that it is not so bad, he is the Bechor to Rochel who was the desired wife and maybe we should be Melameid Zechus. Shimon couldn't take that because L'shitaso he held that Yosef in the eyes of Halachah was a child of Leah because at the time she became pregnant, Leah was carrying Yosef. So Yosef was the 7th child of Leah and Shimon couldn't accept the argument that Yosef is the Bechor. Shimon held that Yosef was a Mored B'malchus against Yehuda. This is why Shimon threw Yosef into the Boir. It is a beautiful Vort why Shimon was the biggest Misnageid to the Shittah that Yosef had rights. However, L'mayseh it could be that Yaakov didn't hold like Shimon and held that Yosef was the Bechor.

42:16 Yosef told the brothers (שְׁלְחוּ מִכֶּם אֶחָד), send one home and let us bring back Binyamin and then I will let you go free. At the end he let all the brothers go home besides for Shimon. However, he tells them they must bring back Hachichem Hakatoin. R' Chaim Kanievsky was asked, the brothers could have brought anybody, they didn't have to bring Binyamin? Why didn't they go and bring someone else and say this is our younger brother? The brothers had no idea that this was Yosef, they thought it was the king of Mitzrayim?

R' Chaim answered, you think the brothers would lie? So the person asked back, wouldn't it be Muttar to lie in this circumstance? Here Shimon is in jail and Yaakov considers it a Sakana to have Binyamin go down to Mitzrayim so they should have been permitted to lie?

R' Chaim answered that the reason they wouldn't lie would not be because they were not permitted to, because under these circumstances they would have been allowed to lie. The reason they wouldn't lie is because they understood that Sheker Ein Loi Raglayim, a person who lies ultimately gets caught because Sheker is not a Mehaleich Hachayim.

It is a Mussar to us as sometimes a person is tempted to lie and frumkeit is not enough of a reason not to stay away from Sheker, however, Seichel should tell you to stay away from Sheker.

42:37 & 46:9 We know that Yaakov refused to let Binyamin go down to Mitzrayim and Reuvain came and said my 2 children should die if I don't bring Binyamin back. The problem is, when the families are listed, we see that Reuvain has 4 children (וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן--חַנּוּךְ וּפְלוּא, וְחֶצְרֹן וְכַרְמִי) and not 2 children (וַיֹּאמֶר רְאוּבֵן, אֶל-אָבִיו לֵאמֹר, אֶת-שְׁנֵי בְנֵי תַמִּית, אִם-לֹא אָבִיאָנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ; תָּנֶה אֹתוֹ עַל-יָדַי, וְנֹאנִי אֲשִׁיבָנּוּ אֵלֶיךָ)?