

תשפ"ד · Bnos 5784

Parshas

Mikeitz

אחינו כל בית ישראל הנתונים בצרה ובשביה העומדים בין בים ובין ביבשה המקום ירחם עליהם ויציאם מצרה לרוחה ומאפלה לאורה ומשעבוד לגאלה השתא בעגלא ובזמן קריב ונאמר אמן:



Story

THE POMEGRANATE MENORAH

The blizzard roared in like a lion on the loose and dumped eight inches of pure white snow on the streets of Cleveland. The children awoke, opened the curtains and squealed with delight.

“Definitely a snow day,” Adina announced.

“Hurray, no school,” Chana said, “and enough snow for a giant snowman.”

“Snowman?” Adina countered. “We don’t have time for that. Chanukah starts tonight. We have to get organized.”

The girls dressed, davened, and ran downstairs. Gershon had already returned from minyan, spread layers of newspaper on the dining room table, and was polishing the silver menorah he had received as a bar mitzvah gift from Zaidy and Bubby last year.

“My father had the same kind of menorah in Poland,” Zaidy had told Gershon. “I had it copied. Look how the oil containers are shaped like leaves, and the background is decorated with six silver pomegranates. My father had bought the menorah from a man who was collecting money for

poor people in Eretz Yisroel. The pomegranate design is there to remind us that just as the pomegranate is filled with 613 seeds, so a Jew is rich with 613 mitzvos. I had to leave my father’s menorah in Poland, but the light of Torah and mitzvos is always with us.”

Gershon loved his menorah and was now polishing it until it shone like a mirror. Meanwhile, Adina and Chana gathered the menorahs they had made over the years. Many were in need of repair. One clay menorah was broken in half, and three wooden ones needed new paint. Adina, who was already eleven, got out the paint and the glue. Chana, who was six, began arranging the wax candles in a pretty color pattern. The children were busily involved in their tasks when the doorbell rang. The girls scurried into the kitchen, and Gershon went to answer the buzzer.

An old man with a white beard and a briefcase asked to enter. “I’m collecting for a children’s home in Tel Aviv,” he said. “May I come in?”

“Please wait for just a minute,” said Gershon. “I’ll get my mother.” Ima came from the kitchen and invited the man in. Before he could say a word she had brought him a steaming cup of coffee and a plate of cookies. Two-year-old Devorah, who always stayed close to Ima, immediately grabbed several wax candles from the table and started chewing merrily.

“Thank you for the hot drink on such a cold day,” said the old man. “My name is Binyomin Rosenberg. I am collecting for the Brocho Children’s Home in Tel Aviv. There we never have snow.

Not like in your Midwest.”

Adina and Chana slowly inched their way in from the kitchen.

“We received a beautiful bentcher from your home last year,” Gershon said.

“The children designed the bentcher themselves,” said Reb Binyomin. He dug into his coat pocket, extracted two new bentchers and gave them to the girls.

Adina and Chana were delighted. Under the table, little Devorah clapped her chubby hands.

“Times are hard now all over the world,” said Reb Binyomin. “I collect much less tzedakah than I used to. Many people cannot afford to give a lot of money. But there are more people who need help.”

“Why don’t you retire and let someone else collect?” Gershon asked.

“My father started the Brocho Home in 1936,” Reb Binyomin said. “This home is very dear to me. Hashem has made people trust me so they donate. Maybe they feel sorry for me, an old man.

Maybe they feel that I am sincere. I like meeting Jews from all over. Every Jew is wonderful and every Jewish child is a brocho.”

Reb Binyomin glanced around the room. “See, on such a beautiful day, you are not having snow fights outside. You are cleaning your ...”

Reb Binyomin stopped in mid-sentence. His eyes fell on Gershon’s menorah. He sat back and stroked his white beard for many silent moments. The children exchanged puzzled glances. What was going on?

“Most interesting,” Reb Binyomin said. “My father had a pomegranate menorah in Eretz Yisroel. He inherited it from his father. We now keep it in the lobby of the Brocho Home. The children gather around as we light it each year.”

Reb Binyomin turned to look at little Devorah who was now “coloring” the floor with broken bits of crayon. Devorah had deep blue eyes and distinctive red hair that fell in ringlets around her face.

“Yes,” said Reb Binyomin, “that child reminds me of the other place where I saw a silver pomegranate menorah. It was more than a year ago in Detroit. By chance I knocked on the door of an apartment where a family of new Russian immigrants lived. There were grandparents, parents, and two small children. The family had tried to maintain their Yiddishkeit even in Russia, and gave their children Hebrew names.”

Reb Binyomin rose from his seat and walked to the door. “Both children had the same shade of blue eyes and red hair as your sister. Let me go to my car and get my reference book. I wrote down their names and phone number.”

Just then Zaidy walked in with a large bottle of 100% pure olive oil. “For you, Gershon, I wanted the very best,” Zaidy said. “Always use the best oil available when you do a mitzvah.”

Reb Binyomin returned with his little black book. “Zaidy,” Chana said, “Reb Binyomin’s father had this same menorah. And Reb Binyomin saw this same menorah somewhere in Detroit.” Zaidy winked. “But is his menorah as beautiful as ours? Or is it as well polished?”

Reb Binyomin turned to Zaidy. “As a matter of fact, the family in Detroit told me their menorah was still from before the war, from Poland.” Reb Binyomin leafed through his little black book.

“I wrote down the family’s name ... Kaufman. The grandmother told me some amazing stories about how she escaped from Poland during the war. Wherever she went, she took the menorah with her.”

Zaidy’s face turned white. Ima ran for a cup of water. Zaidy clutched the arms of the chair. “Could she be alive?” he whispered. “My sister Henya? I was in yeshiva when the Nazis invaded. Henya was a young girl. After the war I returned to look for her, but no one could tell me

what had happened to her. I gave up hope of ever finding her again.”

Reb Binyomin cleared his throat and continued. “Mrs. Kaufman told me that the menorah was originally from Yerushalayim. Her father had liked the pomegranate design because it reminded him of the 613 mitzvos. Mrs. Kaufman told me that all through the long Russian years, the menorah reminded her that the light of Torah and mitzvos can never be extinguished, and the Torah will

outlast all the evil empires that try to destroy the Jewish people.”

Zaidy’s voice was barely audible as he asked, “What was Mrs. Kaufman’s first name?”

Reb Binyomin studied his little book. He shook his head. “I’m sorry. I only wrote down the names of the grandchildren. I guess I have a soft spot in my heart for children.”

“What are their names?” Adina asked.

Reb Binyomin read: “The older boy is named Gershon and the younger girl is called Adina.”

The children started jumping for joy. Baby Devorah crushed six candles into the carpet and nobody cared. “I’m going to call Abba at work and tell him everything that happened,” shouted Gershon. Zaidy cried and laughed and ran to call Bubby.

Then everyone gathered to call the Kaufmans.

The family could not thank Reb Binyomin enough. And hasty plans were made for a car ride to Detroit.

On the second night of Chanukah, two families, united at last, stood around two identical pomegranate menorahs. Big Gershon helped little Gershon light the menorah. Big Adina showed little Adina how to say the brochos. Chana held Devorah so that she wouldn’t chew any more candles. Both families sang Maoz Tzur with deep emotion and happiness. Not only had Hashem saved the Maccabees long ago, but also in 1992, Hashem had arranged for a man from Tel Aviv to unite a brother and sister from Poland who had been separated for over fifty years - a brother and sister who had long ago lost hope of ever finding one another.

(Reprinted from Olomeinu)

Parsha Quiz

**See how much
you know!**

1. How many years after Yosef interpreted the other dreams did Pharaoh have a dream?
2. How many fat cows were there in the dream?
3. What happened to the fat cows?
4. What was the second dream about?
5. Who was appointed second to the king? Why?
6. What did Pharaoh call Yosef?
7. Whom did Yosef marry?
8. What was her adopted father's name?
9. What was the name of Yosef's oldest son?
10. What was the name of Yosef's younger son?
11. Who sent whom to buy food in Mitzrayim?
12. How many of Yosef's brothers came to Mitzrayim?
13. Which of Yosef's brothers did not come down to Mitzrayim?
14. Where was Binyomin?
15. Why didn't Yaakov send Binyomin along with his brothers?
16. Did the Shevatim recognize Yosef?
17. What did Yosef call his brothers?
18. What did Yosef request of his brothers?
19. Which of his brothers did Yosef have imprisoned after the others were freed?
20. Who took responsibility for Binyomin?
21. What was placed in Binyomin's sack?
22. Whom did Yosef demand as a servant?

Recipe

Silan-Onion Grilled Cheese

2 sheets Gefen Puff Pastry

2 tablespoons olive oil

6–7 white onions, cut into half moons

1/4 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning

1/2 cup vegetable stock, such as Manischewitz

1/4 cup silan, such as Heaven & Earth Date Syrup

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1/2 teaspoon coarse black pepper

16 thin slices mozzarella cheese or 3–4 cups shredded mozzarella

1 egg, for egg wash

granulated garlic, for sprinkling

salt, for sprinkling

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit (190 degrees Celsius).
2. Cover the bottom of a 9×13-inch (23×33-centimeter) baking pan with puff pastry, using your hands to spread it out a little. Bake for 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a large frying pan. Add onion slices and season with some salt. Sauté over medium-low heat for around 20 minutes, making sure to mix every now and then to prevent burning. The onions should be golden. Add the vegetable stock, silan, soy sauce, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and pepper. Allow to simmer for another three to five minutes, or until reduced and glazing the onions.
4. Cover the par-baked puff pastry with a layer of mozzarella slices. Arrange the glazed onions on top. Cover the onion mixture with another layer of mozzarella. Place a thin layer of puff pastry on top of that. Smear with beaten egg, then sprinkle with salt and granulated garlic.
5. Bake for 25–30 minutes or until the puff pastry is golden. Once slightly cooled, cut into squares or triangles and enjoy!

Tips: Roll out puff pastry dough at room temperature for the most flexible dough, but chill before you bake to keep the layers in the dough separate and crispy.

Middah of the Week

Chanukah

We want to hear from you!!

Questions, comments, or suggestions?
Email us at bnos@agudah.org.
