



Ohr Yerushalayim News

20th December 2014 - Volume 7 - Issue 23 פרשת מקץ - כ"ה כסלו תשע"ד

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

Kiddush This Shabbos

There will be a Shabbos Mevorchin Kiddush after Davenning this Shabbos which is kindly sponsored by Mr & Mrs Avi Barr.

Ovos uBonim

Please note that Ovos uBonim starts a little later this Motzei Shabbos at 6.30pm

Children's Chanuka Party

The Shul children's Chanuka Event takes place on Sunday at 2.00pm in the Shiur Rooms. Further details on the back page

Rov's Gemoro Shiur

The Rov's Gemoro Shiur will **אי"ה** be starting Meseches Pesachim on Wednesday. New participants are welcome to join!

Holidays Late Shacharis Minyan

Between Thursday and Sunday 4th January there will be a third Minyan for Shacharis at 9.30am.

T NEWS ... LATEST NEWS ... LATEST

The Miracle of the Oil

Rabbi Pinchas Winston (Torah.org)

"Bring the men into the house and slaughter and prepare an animal . . ." (Bereishis 43:16)

Happy Hannukah. Or rather, Chanukah Samayach. Well, at least that is what Yosef told his brothers in this week's parshah, albeit in not so many words. Okay, he didn't actually use the word "Chanukah," or even "Samayach," but he implied it here:

"Bring the men into the house and slaughter and prepare an animal, for the men will eat with me at lunch." (Bereishis 43:16)

According to the Talmud, Yosef ordered Menashe his son to slaughter the animal and to remove its forbidden sciatic nerve before the brothers. He knew, as viceroy of Egypt, they would not trust his kashrus unless they could be mashgiach over all the food being prepared.

"That may be true," you might be thinking to yourselves right now, "but what does it have to do with Chanukah?"

From the English it is impossible to see. From the Hebrew, however, it is alluded to in the words, "utevuach tevach vehachayn," which mean "slaughter and prepare." The gematria of the first seven Hebrew letters is 44, the number of candles we light throughout the eight days of Chanukah (including the "shamash" each night), and the last five letters can be arranged to spell "Chanukah" (Shiltei Giborim).

Thus, when Yosef gave the command to make lunch he was in fact hinting to the brothers about the holiday of Chanukah. The only problem with this is, Chanukah was not yet a holiday. Secondly, how were the brothers supposed to know this if they didn't even yet know that it was their brother Yosef, and not an Egyptian, standing before them? And third, even if they could have figured it out, what would have been the point?

Chanukah is a rabbinical holiday. This means that it was not instituted by the Torah, like the holidays of Pesach, Shavuot, or Succos. Rather, the rabbis established it as a yearly holiday after the close of the Torah, something they did not often do.

The Talmud provides a brief summary of how the holiday came into

existence, and why:

What is [the reason for the holiday of] Chanukah? Our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth of Kislev [commence] the days of Chanukah, which are eight on which eulogies and fasting are forbidden. For when the Greeks entered the Temple they defiled all the oils there, and when the Chashmonaim prevailed against and defeated them, they searched for and found only one jar of oil with the [unbroken] seal of the Kohen Gadol, and which contained only enough oil [to rekindle the Menorah] for one day. A miracle occurred and they lit [the Menorah] for eight days. The following year these [days] were appointed as a holiday with [the recital of] Hallel and thanksgiving. (Shabbos 21b)

The battle against the Greeks occurred in the year 3622 from Creation, or 138 BCE. After their miraculous victory against all the odds, the Chashmonaim immediately returned to the Temple to rekindle the Menorah that was supposed to burn continuously. The Greeks and the Hellenists who had controlled the Temple until that time had extinguished and broken the Menorah.

Upon arriving at the Temple they searched for the special olive oil that had been prepared and set aside for this purpose. In better times it had been bottled and kept away from any kind of spiritual defilement, as was the ideal mitzvah, and its container was supposed to bear the seal of the Kohen Gadol to testify to its state of purity.

The Greeks, however, made a point of defiling everything holy in the Temple, including the oil intended for the Menorah. Fortunately they had overlooked one jar of oil whose seal had remained intact and which the Chashmonaim found. Immediately, they used the oil to rekindle the Menorah before setting out to replenish the supply for the future.

Unfortunately the amount of oil they found was only sufficient to kindle the Menorah for one day. It would take eight days to produce new pure oil, leaving a gap of seven days during which they would have had no choice but to use impure oil to fulfill the mitzvah of a constantly

The Week Ahead

פרשת מקץ	שבת מברכין, שבת חנוכה
Candle Lighting	3.35pm
Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	3.40pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	10.13am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
Rov's Hilchos Shabbos Shiur	3.00pm
2nd Mincha	3.30pm
Seuda Shlishis	following
Motzei Shabbos	4.50pm
Ovos uBonim	6.30pm
Sunday	7.15am / 8.10am
Monday / Tuesday ראש חודש	6.45am / 7.00am
Wednesday	6.45am / 7.10am
Thursday	7.15am / 8.10am / 9.30am
Friday	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

burning Menorah.

When they returned the next day to refill the jars of the Menorah for that day, they saw that the previous day's flames had yet to become extinguished. To their amazement the flames of the Menorah continued to burn the rest of that day, and the entire next day, and the entire day after that. In fact, the oil kept burning, eight days in total, allowing them to refill the Menorah with new pure oil.

Without question the military victory had been miraculous. Without question the miracle of the oil was even more supernatural and clearly indicated the direct involvement of God in all that had occurred. The significance of the historical moment was not lost on the leaders of that generation and it prompted them to establish a new holiday, which they called "Chanukah," because of the rededication of the Temple and the Menorah that resulted.

Though they may not have realized it until after the miracle, apparently the event had already been alluded to much earlier in history in the Torah. In the eighth chapter of Sefer Bamidbar, that also happens to be the 36th chapter in the entire Torah, two important Chanukah numbers, it says the following:

God spoke to Moshe, saying: Speak to Aharon and say to him: "When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the Menorah." (Bamidbar 8:1-2)

Why is the section of the Menorah juxtaposed with the dedication offerings of the princes [at the end of the previous parshah]? . . . It is to elucidate a hint to the dedication of the lights that was [destined to be] in the time of the second Temple through Aharon and his sons, that is, the Chashmonai Kohen Gadol and his sons. (Ramban)

The Torah itself is talking about the mitzvah of lighting the Menorah in the Mishkan, and later, in the Temple, by the kohanim. The Ramban, however, based upon the Midrash, sees in these verses a hint to an event that wouldn't happen for another 1200 years. That is when the future descendants of Aharon HaKohen would miraculously defeat the Greek army and rededicate the Menorah in their time that Aharon was being told to light in his time.

Thus, though the first time Chanukah was officially celebrated as a holiday was the following year, in 3623 from the Creation, or 137 BCE, long after the close of Tanach, its underlying basis was already in the Torah. Then again, it does say:

Ben Bag Bag said: Turn the Torah over and over for everything is in it. (Pirkei Avos 5:26)

It's like a person whose hair begins to turn gray. It is not as if something occurred to the person later in life to change his genes and therefore his hair color. Since he first received his personal genes his hair was destined to turn gray. However, it was also encoded in his genes that the transformation should not occur before a certain age.

Likewise Chanukah was destined to become a Jewish holiday from the beginning. It was built into Creation. It was just that it was also built into Creation that the events that would lead up to the establishment of the holiday would not occur before the close of Tanach. It would be up to the rabbis of the time to recognize the need for the holiday and to establish it.

Thus, the holiday of Chanukah was built upon an undercurrent of history that goes back to the beginning of Creation. This is why:

They established the 36 candles corresponding to the first light that served Adam HaRishon for 36 hours. (Bnei Yissachar, Kislev-Teves)

Technically speaking it is sufficient to commemorate the miracle of oil by lighting one candle each night for eight days (Shabbos 21b). However, to publicize the connection between the holiday and the primordial light of Creation, they established the ideal mitzvah to be the lighting of an additional candle each night. As a matter of Hashgachah Pratis, it works out that, $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8$ equals 36 candles in total.

This alone proves that Chanukah is a global concept. In these two numbers alone, 25 and 36, is an expression of the very purpose of life. We are here to seek out the hidden light, which is represented by the number 25, and to reveal it at which time it becomes represented by the number 36. Hence, the national creed of the Jewish people whose mission it is to be a "light unto nations" (Yeshayahu 49:6) is the "Shema," which just "happens" to have 25 letters.

This helps to explain an anomaly in the Torah: After Adam HaRishon sinned and ate from the Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra—the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—he hid from God. Though God knew exactly where he was hiding, and why, He still asked the question, "Where are you?" (Bereishis 3:9).

The only thing is that rather than use the normal words that mean this, God used what is essentially a non-word: Ayekah. It is translated as, "where are you," but it does not appear in any everyday Hebrew dictionary, nor is this form of the word used anywhere else in Tanach. It is used once and once only, as a question to the first man who violated the commandment of God and ate from the forbidden fruit.

Its gematria, though, is very meaningful. The letters of the word are, Aleph-Yud-Chof-Heh, and have the gematria of 36. Furthermore, the word can be divided into two parts, Aleph-Yud and Chof-Heh, which can be read, "Where is 25?" as in, the 25 of the original light of Creation.

It was as if God said to Adam HaRishon after his sin, "I created you to reveal the light of 25 and transform it into the light of 36. Instead, through your sin, you have further hidden the light." Thus, long before there was a Pesach, Shavuos, or Succos, there was supposed to have been a Chanukah, and would have been, had Adam HaRishon obeyed the commandment of God to not eat from the Aitz HaDa'as Tov v'Ra, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Even though Chanukah would not be a holiday until long after Yosef and his brothers were gone from the world, the basis of the holiday was driving their lives already. In fact, the small jar that Ya'akov Avinu had to return to collect that fateful night he fought with the Angel of Eisav was valuable more because of what it contained. According to the Midrash, it contained miraculous olive oil that could not be depleted (Yalkut Reuveini, Parashas Vayishlach).

Apparently, according to the Midrash, every subsequent miracle that happened in Tanach with olive oil was the product of this very oil that Ya'akov had fetched and passed on to his descendants. Miraculous oil that cannot be used up? Sounds a lot like the small jar of oil the Chashmonaim found in their time from they lit the Menorah for eight days.

Ohr Yerushalayim's Children's Chanuka Party

activities for all ages

on Sunday 21st December at 2.00pm in the Shiur rooms, followed by Mincha, Menorah lighting and Guest Speaker

menorah painting

oil treasure hunt

donut decorating

dreidel making

Suggested Donation: £5/child, £20 per family of 4+