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לשבת

Molad: Shab. 4:10PM 16 *chalakim*

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HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

It is proper to prepare and set up the Chanukah *menorah* before the time of lighting. There are many opinions as to what is the most proper *zman*. The Ramb"am holds that one should light at sunset, and that is also the opinion of the Vilna Gaon, and that was the *minhag* of the Brisker Rav. Rav Moshe Feinstein ZT"l held that one should light 10 min. after *sh'kia*, and the Chazon Ish, 20 min. after *sh'kia*. The Shulchan Aruch holds one should light at *tzais hakochavim*, and in practice, everyone should follow his *minhag*. If one doesn't know what to follow exactly, one should try to comply with all opinions, and that is fulfilled, according to the Mishna B'rura, as long as one lights within one half hour from both sunset and of *tzais*, which is between 15 and 30 min. after *sh'kia*. According to ALL opinions, one should put enough oil (or light large enough candles) to burn until 30 min. after *tzais hakochavim* (approx. one hour and 15 min. after sunset). If one has a *minhag* to light earlier and remain by the candles for a while, and for a specific reason he will not be able to do that on a particular day, it is preferable that he light later, and remain by the candles, rather than light at an earlier time and go away from the candles. One should preferably light at the beginning of the *zman hadlakah* and not postpone the *mitzvah*. It is also preferable to wait for all the family members to be present, rather than light at an earlier time. If a boy becomes *bar mitzvah* during Chanukah, on that day he should wait to light until after *tzais hakochavim*, regardless of what he does on any other night. Generally, if one goes away for Chanukah, for example, he went with his family to his parents or in laws, he must light at the home of his hosts, even if he lives in the same city and might even eat a meal at his own home; but if they just went away for a meal, they may not light there, and must return home for lighting (Biur Halacha 677 B'mkom). If one goes away just for Shabbos, on Friday, if he leaves his house after *plag hamincha*, which is an hour and a quarter (an hour in *halacha*, is one twelfth of the day) before *shki'a*, and he normally lights outside the door of his house, then he should light on Friday at home before he leaves, but if he normally lights inside, or if he leaves his house before *plag*, then he certainly lights in the place that he will spend Shabbos. If he will be sleeping in one house and eating all meals in a second house, the place where he eats is where he should light (MB ibid:12), and if he will be having his meals in different places, then the place where he sleeps is considered his main place. However, on *motz'ei* Shabbos, if he leaves right after Shabbos and he will neither sleep nor eat two meals away, it is preferable that he wait to light at home, provided that he gets home at a time that people are still out on the street, and one should try to make sure to leave as soon as possible, so that he does not miss the *zman*; however, if he must travel far and will return home at a time when people are no longer out on the streets, it is preferable to light at the place he spent Shabbos, rather than wait to light when he gets home. On *erev* Shabbos we light Chanukah candles before the Shabbos candles, but we should make sure to light not earlier than 30 minutes before sunset (Bi'ur haGra 679:1). If it is getting late, and the woman of the house is concerned that she will miss the time of her Shabbos candle lighting, she should light, and she can nevertheless be *yotzais* with the Chanukah candles lit afterwards. Mishna B'rurah writes (679:2) that one should *daven mincha* before lighting Chanukah candles on *erev* Shabbos, but many don't follow this *minhag* and *daven mincha* after lighting (Eliyahu Rabbah). Maase Rav writes in the name of the Vilna Gaon that on *motz'ei* Shabbos we rush to *daven maariv* as early as possible so that we should light Chanukah candles before it gets too late; however, the Bi'ur Halacha (§293) writes that many people who try to be meticulous with the lighting of Chanukah candles mistakenly do so while it is not dark enough for Shabbos to be over, and therefore the accepted practice is to wait for Shabbos to be over as on any other Shabbos of the year, and immediately after that one should light as soon as possible. The *minhag* is that while the Chanukah candles are burning, ladies refrain from doing *melacha*, and that is until a half an hour after *tzais*. This is referring to the *melachos* that are women's types of works, like spinning, weaving, sewing, ironing, doing laundry and the like. Some say that they should refrain from doing any *melacha* that is not done on *chol hamo'ed*, and although the custom in Yerushalayim is not even to cook during this time, the general *minhag* is not to prohibit cooking (e.g., frying latkes). Bach (670) writes that the days of Chanukah are charged with a special energy that helps a person improve and rectify his spiritual level, and Bnai Yisaschar says that the light of *teshuvah* from the days of Tishrai continues to shine through Chanukah, after which it is hidden and treasured. Sh"l *hakadosh* writes that one should apply himself to learn Torah with diligence during Chanukah, and he writes that although we see in general during these days an attitude of carelessness in this matter, we should know better and double our efforts in learning with *hasmadah*. MB brings that Chanukah is also a special time to distribute *tzedakah* to the poor and specifically to people who dedicate themselves to learning Torah. It is also an accepted *minhag* to give Chanukah *gelt* (not presents) to the children, and some bring that the specific *minhag* is to give it on the fifth night of Chanukah; one reason that is mentioned, aside for the deeper reasons, is that the fifth day of Chanukah never falls on Shabbos, so one will always be able to give it on that night. MB also writes (in Biur Halacha 670:2) that many people, instead of singing praises of Hashem during these days, instead play cards, but one who cares for his *neschama* should stay away from it; however, the *minhag* to play *draidel* has deep sources as explained in Bnai Yisaschar: the letters ה' ש' נ' ג' represent the four powers of a person which are גוף, שכל, נשמה, (body, intellect, and the soul) and הכל, which is a higher force that includes everything, As well as the four kingdoms of בבל (*neschama*), יין (intellect), מדי (body) and אדום (all) stand against these forces, and are going to become eliminated through משיח which in *gematria* is the equivalent of ה' ש' נ' ג', במהרה בימינו.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (Amos 2:6-3:8)

The Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim 2-32) states that a person who works on his *middos* and prepares himself will naturally reach the level of a Navi unless Hashem specifically withholds Nevuah from him (such as Baruch ben Neriah). Without proper preparation, though, a person will never become a Navi. The Abarbanel asks several questions on the Rambam, citing examples of Nevi'im who never prepared for Nevuah and had not reached the spiritual level described by the Rambam. One example he brings is Amos, who testifies about himself that he spent his life working as shepherd (and even became rich - see Nedarim 38a) and neither came from a family of Nevi'im nor ever worked toward that goal. The Malbim feels that Amos presents no contradiction to the Rambam since what he describes is the prerequisite for a person who strives to have the spirit of Nevuah rest upon him; for this to happen, he must work hard and realize the potential bestowed upon him by Hashem. But there are times when, in order that he may fulfill Hashem's mission, a person is chosen by Hashem to bring His words to them even if he is not at the level normally necessary to achieve Nevuah. Even though there were others who prophesized during the same time (see Pesachim 87a), it was Hashem's will that there be two Nevi'im who spoke directly to the Ten Tribes who were from those tribes: Hoshea (from Reuven) and Amos (from Asher). Given the sorry spiritual shape of the Ten Tribes, obviously there were few people from whom to choose, so the task fell to Amos to speak directly to the Ten Tribes and encourage them to abandon the decades of Avoda Zara and persecution of their fellow Jew. His prophesies to other nations, such as those that lead up to the beginning of our Haftara, were all meant solely for the benefit of the Ten Tribes, as seen in the first *pasuk* in the sefer, אשר חזה על ישראל. It was of course a mission that eventually failed, but not because of any fault of Amos'. He willingly accepted the task handed to him, and despite his lack of preparedness was the right person for the job, as evidenced by the words ending our Haftara: ה' אלוקים דבר מי לא ינבא!

ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

One of the items transported by the אורחת ישמעאלים was נכאת - "n'chos" (B'reishis 37:25). There are numerous explanations given for נכאת, including carob (R' Sa'adiah Gaon) and wax (RaDaK, Onkelos). Rashi learns it's a catch-all name for assorted spices, while Ibn Ezra explains that it is a generic name for anything pleasing. Interestingly, both Rashi and Ibn Ezra bring support from the same *pasuk* in Melachim (II, 20:13), ויראם את כל בית נכחה. Remaining consistent, Rashi learns there too learns that בית נכחה refers to a storehouse specifically of spices, while others learn that it is an אוצר נחמד, a storehouse of anything precious or dear.

SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת				ערב שבת		
מזריב	מנחה	סוּק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ן
5:21	4:01	9:36	7:00/8:50	4:30	4:15	4:12
THURSDAY Dec. 25 Legal holiday Shacharis 7:45; Mincha 4:20						
SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; MAARIV Mon-Th 8:00/9:30; MINCHA/MAARIV Sun 4:18, next Fri. 3:00/4:19 (candles 4:16)						

KNESSES KNEWS

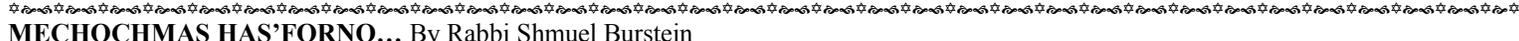
- MASMIDEI YISRAEL** Friday night learning, for boys grades 6-8, Fri. night 8PM in the Shul
- MAZEL TOV!** to Rabbi and Mrs. Doni and Shevy Frank on the birth of a daughter
- MAZEL TOV!** to Rabbi and Mrs. Joseph Schwab on the engagement of their daughter Batsheva
- MAZEL TOV!** to Mr. and Mrs. Phil Ernst on the birth of a granddaughter
- MAZEL TOV!** to Mr. and Mrs. Gavriel and Osnat Mizrachi-Nacca on the birth of their daughter Shira Bracha
- MAZEL TOV!** to Rabbi and Mrs. Avi and Beth Morell on the birth of twin girls

KOMMUNITY KORNER

- PIRCHEI** in the Shul, 2:30-3:30 for Pre-1a-8th grade boys. Special raffles and prizes! Avos Ubanim 6:30-7:30 at Kehillat New Hempstead MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
- FRIDAY NIGHT** Avos Ubanim at Zichron Yehuda (Rabbi Bronspigel) 7:45PM, & Chumash shiur for men, rotating speakers
- MINCHA** at Tefilla L'Moshe, M-Th 4PM; Sun. 1:30/15m<shki'a; **שבת** 1:30/3:00/נ"הדלק"ן; **MAARIV** Sun. 40m>shki'a; M-Th 7:00; 8:15/9:45
- DAILY SHACHARIS** at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30
- MINCHA** at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 12:30/1:30PM; **MAARIV** daily at 9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mon.-Fri. 24m<netz; Sun. 6:30/7:30
- TORAH TAPE LIBRARY** – popular English speakers. Call 426-3790x143 or e-mail to wieders@cch.com for catalog.
- TO BE INCLUDED** on our email distribution list and receive shul/community related news send an email to knesses_yisrael@yahoo.com
- FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS** and any other inclusions to this publication please contact Moshe Orlian at: 364-0572, or morlian@verizon.net

KONTINUING KLASSES (aka ONGOING SHIURIM)

- Daf Yomi:** 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael; 6:00AM at Zichron Yehuda (*chabura*)
- Maseches Sanhedrin** (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael
- Hilchos Shabbos chabura**, Shabbos, after the early minyan
- Navi Melachim** for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe
- Minchas Chinuch** Sun. 8:30PM by R' Bronspigel at Zichron Yehuda
- Maseches Brachos**, Shabbos morning, half hour before Shacharis, by R' Yehoshua Kohl at Kehillat New Hempstead
- Ladies Shiur: Friday 8:00PM, by Rabbi Avraham Ohian, at Ohian, 10 Brockton
- Mondays 8:40 PM, **Sefer Yehoshua**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler
- Wednesdays 10:45-11:45AM, **Pareshas Hashavua**, by Mrs. Sussi Brecher, at Lazar, 2 Tracey Ct. (corner of South Gate)



MECHOCHMAS HAS'FORNO... By Rabbi Shmuel Burstein

A very popular, and fairly well known, explanation of a central question in this difficult *paresha* has, as *one* of its sources, the commentary of S'forno. His comments are spread over the length of the *paresha*. He, too, faced the troubling question of how so august a group of *tzaddikim* as the *sh'vatim* could conspire to kill and, later to sell, their brother Yosef. S'forno sees the key to answering the question in a literal, and novel, reading of the words in the Torah. To begin, in verse 37:18, as Yosef approaches from a distance, we read the words ויתנכלו אותו להמיתו. S'forno learns that we ought to understand the text to say that the brothers "thought of Yosef as one who wanted to kill them(!)." He says that the brothers saw Yosef as a רודף, and they had the legal right, מצד הדין, to kill him (other *mefarshim*, beginning with Rashi, understand the meaning of the verse to be quite the opposite: that the brothers conspired to kill Yosef). To be sure, S'forno is standing on solid ground and has several references in Tanach to back up his method of *p'shat* (see examples there). This elegantly sets the stage for his learning the rest of this *paresha*, and Miketz, in such a way that has the Torah itself, telling us that the brothers saw Yosef as a רודף. He adds that the brothers did not believe for a second that Yosef was coming to inquire on their behalf, לדרוש שלומם; rather, they saw themselves being "set up", either (a) for Yosef to find something else bad to say about them, or (b) to cause them to commit an *aveirah*. This, they dreaded, would either cause Yaakov Avinu to curse them, causing them עונש in this world, or worse: by causing them to sin they might be cursed by Hashem in the next world. Or, S'forno adds, perhaps they would be punished in *both* worlds. This would leave Yosef as the **מבנים ברוך**, the only blessed one of Yaakov's sons (borrowing words from the *bracha* of *shevet* Asher). In other words, they saw themselves facing a "lose/lose" situation. To bolster his point S'forno points out that the brothers were so sure of their halachic decision that when they were in Mitzrayim, and the objects of Yosef's harsh discrimination, they assumed blame, *but not for selling him*. In *parashas* Miketz we find that the brothers blamed themselves *for not heeding the heartbreaking cries for mercy*, when they were sitting outside the pit in which they had thrown him. They did *not* blame themselves for the actual sale itself! They were still quite convinced that they were right. S'forno points out that this explains one of the most bizarre scenes in the entire episode: having cast Yosef into the pit, they sat down to have a meal! (He contrasts this with the sitting down of B'nai Yisrael to cry and shed bitter tears after the horrible civil war necessitated by the *פלגש בגבעה* incident. There, too, Jews voted to kill other Jews, and they did so. But rather than exult in their victory, with a meal, they wept over having to do such a thing.) The brothers sat down to eat, says S'forno, because they felt they had the *halacha* of being the **נרדפים**. Hence, they felt very much at home with their decision. The only part they later regretted is that they did not act **לפנים משורת הדין** in allowing the *rachmanus* of Yisrael to inform, and reform, their behavior. While they felt Yosef deserved punishment, they also felt, later, that they should have reacted with compassion to his suffering.

LESSONS FROM OUR GEDOLIM: R' Shlomo of Karlin would comment that wax candles were preferred to oil on Chanukah, since where the wax candles were attached to the wall there would remain an impression lasting the whole year, which was not the case with oil in a *menorah*. On one occasion when he lit with oil, part of the wall caught fire. The *tzaddik* was filled with joy, since now the wall carried a lasting impression from **הנוכה נר מצות**, even though oil would not normally provide this.

"A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

מדינים, ישמעאלים, סוחרים, פוטיפר - רמז to the people through whose hands Yosef passed: **פסים - כתונת פסים**

FROM THE PEN OF RAV S.R. HIRSCH... By Rabbi Naftoly Katzenstein

ההטאתי לאלוקים - When Yosef was solicited by Potifar's wife, his response was that the act would not only be treason against Potifar but a sin (הטאת) to ה'. הטאת is similar to the word הטהה - the removal of coals from a fire. Once removed, these coals become extinguished and lifeless. The word of ה' is called a fire "אש דת", "אש אורכלת". When we submit ourselves completely to ה' word, this Divine Fire burns brightly on us and through us. We glow brilliantly and become a **לחם אשה לה'** bringing ה' revelation to this world. If we remove ourselves from this Divine Fire, we become dark and evil. What was once קדש now becomes קדש - beastly. R' Hirsch reinforces this concept by pointing out the atonement for the הטאת is **מעשה קרבנות**. We let the הטאת remove our material wealth (חלב) and the urges of our senses (כליות) from the fire of Godliness. It is only fitting that we place the חלב and כליות of קרבן back into the **אש התמיד** of the מזבח, symbolic of the return of our נפש to the Divine Fire.

