

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

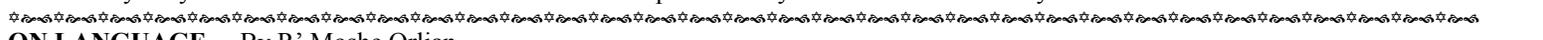
Rashi points out that Yosef was sold to spice merchants so that he should not have to suffer bad odors. The pain of one sold as a slave is inconceivable; why would a bad smell make any difference? R' Mordechai Pogremansky compares this to relatives who wait impatiently for one who underwent complicated surgery to open his eyes, and smile broadly when he does; though waking up does not mean that the surgery was successful, nevertheless, the fact that the road to recovery seems to have started is a reason for joy. Yosef too, when he saw that the merchants who usually carry petroleum or the like (which have bad odor) were carrying spices, saw it as a sign that Hashem is keeping an eye on him and comforting him with this small detail. That was enough to lighten his uncertain situation.

It is proper to prepare and set up the Chanukah *menorah* before the time of lighting. Last week we discussed about the proper time and place to light on *erev Shabbos* and *motz'ei Shabbos*; as far as lighting during the rest of the week 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 *shki'a*, and the Chazon Ish lit 20 min. after *shki'a*. 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 an hour from both sunset and *tzais*, which is between 15 and 30 min. after *shki'a*. 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 it one day at that earlier time, it is preferable that he light later, and remain by the candles, rather than lighting at the earlier time but go away from the candles. One should try to 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 lighting at an earlier time. If a boy becomes *bar mitzvah* during Chanukah, he should wait to light until after *tzais hakochavim*, regardless of what he does on any other night. 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"la *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 *neshama* should stay away from it; however, the *minhag* to play *draidel* has deep sources as explained in Bnai Yisaschar: the letters ג' ש' נ' ה' 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 הכל (neshama), 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 ג' ש' נ' ה'.



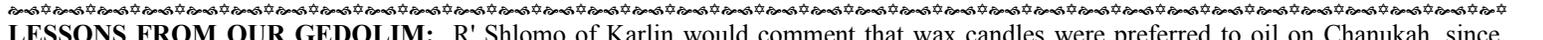
THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (Zecharya 2:14-4:7)

The Gemara (Megilah 31a) establishes a clear connection between our haftara and Chanukah, i.e., “נרות זכוריה”. At first glance it would seem that the *pesukim* regarding Yehoshua the Kohain Gadol that precede Zecharya’s vision of the *menorah*, are extraneous. Yehoshua was the Kohain Gadol at the very beginning of the Second Bais Hamikdash (see Chaggai 1:12). He himself was a great *tzaddik* (in fact the Zohar calls him “perfectly righteous”), but the Gemara tells us (Sanhedrin 93a) that his sons married women who were not fit to marry Kohanim. Most *mefarshim* explain that they married non-Jewish women, without protest from their father. The *galus* of Bavel was not particularly physically harsh on the Jewish people. They flourished there, and Bavel remained a center of Torah for nearly 1,500 years! Yet whenever the Jewish people find themselves physically safe from their enemies, almost invariably a more insidious threat arises – assimilation, a threat so powerful that it can eventually affect even families of people as great as Yehoshua! While assimilation in Bavel may have been limited to isolated cases, at the time of the Chashmonaim it was rampant. The Hellenists were not particularly interested in our physical destruction (as were others throughout our history, such as Pharaoh, Haman, etc.), but rather they wanted to absorb us into their society! It didn’t begin with a blatant demand that people give up Torah. No! They started by convincing people that Judaism could coexist with their philosophy! “Don’t you want to fit in? Sure, you can continue to go to the Bais Medrash in the morning but then come join us at the local gymnasium or theater later on. No problem!” Before long, the Bais Medrash was postponed until later and later in the day until finally it was forgotten completely! Ultimately, those same Jews became the most fanatic Hellenists of them all! The Rambam (Hilchos Megilah V’Chanukah 4:12) says מצות נר חנוכה מצוה חביבה היא עד מאד. The Maggid Mishna explains that the Rambam is referring to the statement of Chazal that a person who is careful about נרות חנוכה will merit sons who learn Torah. Why is it that נרות חנוכה is more connected to the reward of Torah than all other *mitzvos*? Because they represent the victory of Torah knowledge over all other philosophies and wisdoms, no matter how compatible they may seem with a true Torah lifestyle! It is therefore fitting that our haftara begins with the insidiousness of assimilation, so that we may fully understand the salvation of נרות חנוכה as represented by the menorah of Zecharya.

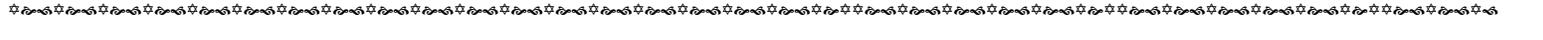


ON LANGUAGE... By R’ Moshe Orlan

One of the items transported by the אורחת ישמעאלים was נכאת - ”nchos” (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 נכתה, and Rashi learns there too learns that בית נכתה refers to a storehouse specifically of spices, while others learn that it is an אוצר נחמד, a storehouse of anything precious or dear.



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 נרות חנוכה, even though oil would not normally provide this.



SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת				ערב שבת		
מעריב	מנחה	סוּזְק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ן
5:18	3:58	9:31	6:50/8:30	4:28	4:13	4:10

ROSH CHODESH Thursday and Friday, Shacharis 6:50
SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; **MAARIV** Mon-Th 9:30; **MINCHA/MAARIV** Sun 4:15, next Fri. 3:00/4:15 (candles 4:12)

KNESSES NEWS

HAMAKOM YENACHEM Mr. Erik Shapiro on the *petirah* of his father
MAZEL TOV! to Mr. and Mrs. David and Suzie Auslander on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Yitzi
MAZEL TOV! to Rabbi and Mrs. Ari and Esti Fireman on the recent Bar Mitzvah of their son Yerucham

COMMUNITY CORNER

PIRCHEI will not be held this week **AVOS UBANIM** on Motz'ei Shabbos, 6:45-7:45
MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, Sun. 1:30; S-Th 15m<shki'a; **שבת** 1:30/הדלק"ן; **MAARIV** M-Th 40m>shki'a/8:15/9:45
DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30; M-Fri 6:25/7:00/7:30
MINCHA at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 12:30/1:40; **MAARIV** daily 9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mo-Fr. 25 min<netz; Sun. 6:30/7:30
NEW MA'ARIV at **KNH**, Mon-Thurs 8:30PM; at **Zichron Yehuda** Sun-Thur 7:30PM
FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS and any other inclusions to this publication please contact Moshe Orlian at: 364-0572, or morlian@verizon.net
TO BE INCLUDED on our email distribution list and receive shul/community related news send an email to knesses_yisrael@yahoo.com

ONGOING SHIURIM

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael
Maseches Chullin (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; **ארחות שבת** (by Rabbi Schabes) after the 2nd 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
Gemara Shiur, Shabbos, 7:50 AM, at KNH; **Mishna Berura**, Rabbi Kerner, Mon. 7:50PM; **Inyanei Tefilla**, Rabbi Staum, Wed. 8:50PM
Maseches Pesachim, Sun. 9:15AM; **Basar B'Chalav**, Wed. 8:45PM, by Rabbi Saperstein, at Cong. Ohaiv Shalom, 18 Bridle
Ladies Shiurim: Shabbos 3PM, Rabbi Yosef Schwab, at Schwab, 1 Brockton
 Mondays 8:40 PM, **Sefer Shoftim (new series)**, 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 *רוּדֵף*, 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 *רוּדֵף*. 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 *גורפים*. 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.

"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

לאלוקים והטאתי - When Yosef was solicited by Potifar's wife, his response was that the act would not only be treason against Potifar but a sin (הטא) to ה'. **הטא** is similar to the word **התה** - the removal of coals from a fire. Once removed, these coals become extinguished and lifeless. The word of ה' is called a **אש אוכלת** "אש דת", "אש דת". When we submit ourselves completely to ה's word, this Divine Fire burns brightly on us and through us. We glow brilliantly and become a **לחם אשה לה'** bringing ה's 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 **הטא** is the **קרבנות**. We let the **הטא** remove our material wealth (**הלב**) and the urges of our senses (**כליות**) from the fire of Godliness. It is only fitting that we place the **הלב** and **כליות** of a **קרבן** back into the **אש התמיד** of the **זבחה**, symbolic of the return of our **נפש** to the Divine Fire.

CALENDAR QUIZ... R' Jerry Stoller

Which day is it, on which in some years we say *tachanun*, while in other years we say Hallel?

Answer: the third day of Teves. In most years, Chanuka ends on the second day of Teves, so we say *tachanun* on the 3rd. However, when Cheshvan is *chaser*, Chanuka ends on the third day of Teves, and we say Hallel.