

Parsha Press

PARSHAT MIKETZ Chanukah Edition



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Student Dvar Torah 1

During most years, the Shabbat of Parshat Mikeitz coincides with the festival of Chanukah. Hence, tens and tens of commentaries have established links and hints between Miketz and Chanukah. But there seems to be a more simple connection as well -- Joseph's attitude toward his success.

We read happily of Yoseph's release from jail for a crime he did not commit (allegedly seducing Potifar's wife). Yoseph was called out of jail to interpret Pharaoh's dream after having a good track record in interpreting dreams for Pharaoh's butler and baker. The narrative continues:

Pharaoh says to Joseph, "I dreamt a dream, but there is no one who can interpret it. Now I heard it said of you that you hear a dream to interpret it." Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, "That is beyond me! God will respond to Pharaoh's welfare." (Genesis 41:15-16)

Truly amazing! Here, Yoseph has his shot at real power. He is standing before the King of Egypt, the world's superpower at the time. And this superpower King needs him! Yoseph would be able to request virtually anything he would want. Yet, Yoseph risks it all by failing to hide the truth of God's support and guidance. Pharaoh could have easily reacted to Yoseph by saying, 'Oh, if indeed it is not you, but God, that has the dream interpretation, then you shall return to jail.' True, Pharaoh did not react this way but Yoseph could not have known this in advance. Yoseph wanted to give God His credit, especially before the world's superpower, in order to publicize God's power and wisdom --

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

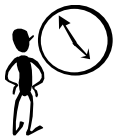
Student Dvar Torah 1	1
A Chanuka Conundrum	1-2
Student Dvar Torah 2	2
Shmirat Halashon	3
Student Dvar Torah 3	3
Parsha Quiz	4
Mazel Tov	4

A CHANUKAH CONUNDRUM Rabbi Rothman

Every year in early November, I am confronted with the same halachic dilemma. In the mail, I have received an invitation to the wedding of a friend or family member. The problem is that the wedding date is the Sunday of Chanukah and the wedding is called for 4:00 pm. You are probably wondering what could be the problem with a wedding during Chanukah. Moreover, why is the problem specific to Sunday?

Of course, there is nothing wrong with a Chanukah wedding, in fact what better day of joy is there to get married on. However, the problem that we are faced with is, when to light the Chanukah candles?

The normal time for lighting the candles is sometime at or after sunset (depending on your custom – see Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 572/1.) On the average year, that means you light at or after 4:30 pm. If it is impossible to wait un-



Shabbat Starts:
4:11

News From Israel

- The US demands that Israel evacuate and abandon all Jewish communities behind the anti-terror partition fence.
- Mortar Shell Lands in a Kindergarten in the Northern Gaza community of Nisanit
- Egyptian authorities released an Israeli-Arab in return for Israel's release of 6 Egyptian university students



til sunset to light, the question arises if one can light earlier. In fact, this is the subject of great debate, to which the Shulchan Aruch (572/2) rules that one may light from Plag Haminchah, which is 1 and ¼ halachic hours before the stars appear, in the average year approximately 3:30. The Mishnah Berurah (572/2) even permits you to make the brachot in such a case.

A second halacha to keep in mind is that not only do we begin lighting after sunset, but preferably the latest time to light is “until the people cease to walk about in the street.” (Shabbos 21b) Although the Shulchan Aruch (572/2) says that this is only thirty minutes after sunset, Rav Moshe Shternbuch (Teshuvos V’hanhagos Vol. 1. Siman 390) says that nowadays, since out door lighting allows people to walk in the streets until a much later time, one could light the candles until approximately 9:00 pm. This is of course only the latest time to light if you are depending on people out doors seeing the candles, thus fulfilling the aspect of Pirsumei Nisa. However, if there are people awake in the home, one may light even past 9:00 pm. (Mishnah Berurah 572/11)

With the wedding called for 4:00 pm, when are we to light candles? There are three possible alternatives and one must determine which of them apply to one’s individual situation. The first alternative would be to light just before leaving for the wedding (assuming that is after Plag Haminchah). However, this is obviously not a preferable option since the Shulchan Aruch permits it only in a case of great need and although the Mishnah Berurah permits one to recite a bracha on such a lighting, that is subject to great debate and therefore, should only be relied upon when absolutely necessary.

The second option would be to appoint a Shaliach (agent) to light for you in your home at the proper time. This is obviously not always logistically possible, but if it is, one may want to consider it in certain circumstances.

The third possibility would be to wait until one returns home from the wedding to light. However, since that will likely be after the time “people cease to walk about in the street,” this would only be permissible if there is at least one other family member up while the candles burn.

Which option is more halachically preferable? That question is easy. Wait until 4:30, light at the proper time and then go to the wedding late. Unfortunately, that will often not be a socially acceptable alternative. The use of an agent to light for you would not be the best alternative in this scenario because of the principle that “Mitzvah Bo Yoter Mi B’shluch,” which means that it is better to do a mitzvah personally than through the use of an agent. The use of an agent then would only be used in a case where you are leaving to go on a trip and will not have a chance to light later on, and then it is better to use an agent to light at the proper time for you in your house than for you to light at Plag Haminchah. (Sheivet Halavi Vol. 4, Siman 6)

Therefore, we are left to decide between lighting early at Plag Haminchah or later upon returning from the wedding. It would appear that since as mentioned previously many authorities do not permit you to make a bracha when lighting at Plag Haminchah, it would be preferable to light late upon returning from the wedding. Again, it is important to note that this is only permissible if there is another family member up when you are lighting. (Piskei Teshuvos 572/3)

I hope it is now clear why I am hesitant to open any wedding invitation that I receive in early November. And although I do not wish to complicate the planning of a wedding any more than necessary, it seems clear that it would be preferable to have the wedding begin sometime after sunset as to permit the proper fulfillment of the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles. However, if that is not an option for the caterer or if you are just a guest invited to a wedding, then we have outlined a course of action that can help you both enjoy the great simcha of a wedding as well as fulfill the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles.

even if this meant the personal risk of being sent back to jail without receiving any recognition or benefits from Pharaoh.

This attitude of Joseph was exactly the attitude of Mattisyahu and the Chashmonaim, (Maccabees), during the time of the Chanukah victory. They could have easily looked at their stunning and unlikely military victory over the Greeks as a reflection of their brilliant strategy.

But the Maccabees understood the true source of their strength and military successes. They didn't react by establishing an annual victory parade. Rather, they reacted by establishing the holiday of Chanukah. They lit the Menorah which publicized God's control over the world (in making the miracle of the oil lasting 8 days) and that only He could allow them to defeat the Greeks in battle.

This is reflected throughout the 'Al Hanissim' prayer that we insert during Chanukah. The prayer describes the miracles of war against the Greeks. It does not discuss our strength and power but describes us as weak against a powerful army -- God delivered '*giborim beyad chalashim*' (the strong in the hands of the weak). We end this prayer stating that the entire purpose of Chanukah is that we express thanks and praise to the Almighty -- '*lehodos u'lehalel LiShimcha Hagadol*' -- "to express thanks and praise to Your great Name."

We not only defeated the Greeks in the physical battle of Chanukah but we defeated them spiritually as well. The Greek philosophy was to stress the power and wisdom of man. This is why they wanted so much to defeat the Jew. Everywhere else, when the Greek invaded, he was known as kind to his new citizens. He wanted to show his new advances and preach his ideas of the supreme man with science, sports, and statues. Yet, in the Jew, the Greek saw a people who were not interested in attributing their success to themselves, nor worshipping man, but they wished only to worship and thank God.

The Greeks could not tolerate this approach to life. It threatened their whole philosophy of existence. So, they were determined to wipe out the Jew and his belief system. Chanukah, therefore, celebrates, not the courage of those who resisted the Greeks, and not the power of the Jewish army. It celebrates God and His dedication to helping the Jewish People against her enemies. It celebrates the defeat of the Greek civilization that wished to wipe the word God out of all dictionaries in the world.

Let us not forget that during our current national crisis, against suicide bombers and terrorists, we must once again pray to and rely on the Almighty. We need a victory over our enemies speedily so that there will be no more cries of orphans and no more blood spilled.

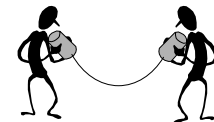
"Quote of the Week"

"Every man should have two pockets. In one should rest the maxim: The world was created for me, and in the other: I am just dust and ashes."

-Rav Simcha Bunim

SHMIRAT HALASHON

**Chofetz Chaim:
A Daily Companion**



Story of a Gadol

There is a story that is told about Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grozinski of Vilna. It is told that once he was told of a poor shoemaker who had recently lost one of his eight children. When Reb Grozinski heard of this he began crying uncontrollably. Those around him could not understand, he had not done this even when he had lost his only daughter not too long ago. When asked why he was crying this way he responded: "When my daughter passed away, I could console myself with the knowledge that she was going to a better world. That is clear to me. But I don't know that the World-to-Come is as real to the shoemaker. I'm crying for his pain, not my own."

-Late Citation: Last week's story was based on a story from "A Letter for the Ages" by Rabbi A.C. Feuer

FAST FACTS on TEFILLAT HADERECH Beth Stein



- We learn about this mitzvah in Parshat Mikeitz, in which Yaakov does not wish to send Binyomin to Mitzrayim because, “I would not want a tragedy to occur on the road, chas v’shalom.” The Talmud Yerushalmi explains that the Satan only prosecutes against us when we are in a z’man of sakana. In Masechet Brachot it says, “Anyone who travels should daven tefillat haderech.”
- The bracha asks that “Hashem should save *me* from all enemies,” not “us.” Since Rashi comments that a person should not recite a short tefilla in only his name, all nusachim say the tefilla b’lashon rabim.
- It is nice to try to say tefillat haderech immediately following another bracha, but is not mandatory.
- One should aim to say tefillat haderech upon leaving the city. Also, if one is traveling on an exceptionally long journey (like a road trip), he/she must say tefillat haderech once a day.

-Based on an article from *Torah Lada’at*: Rabbi Matis Blum

Mazel Tov



December 11
Zahava Fakas

December 12
Frayde Leifer
Rachel Mehlman
Mindi Werblowski

December 16
Rebecca Weinstein

December 17
Atara Feinberg

Stella K Abraham High School for Girls



Mrs. Helen Spirn
Principal

Dr. Tzipora Meier
Associate Principal

Rabbi Yosef Zakutinsky

Dir. Of Admissions and Student Programs

291 Meadowview Avenue
Hewlett Bay Park, New York 11557
(516) 374-7195
Fax (516) 374-2532
Email info@skahalb.org

Mrs. Sandi Pomerantz
Assistant Administrator

Rabbi Jeffrey Rothman
Assistant Administrator

Mrs. Elisheva Kaminetsky
Dir. Of Religious Guidance