

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In honor of our parents, Tuvia and Lea Schottenstein and Rabbi Yisroel and Chana Sirota

Erev Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev 5781 – December 11, 2020

ערב שבת פרשת וישב, כ"ה כסלו, תשפ"א

כתר שם טוב

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

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The Secret Behind Cravings

When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she covered her face (Genesis 38:15).

The word for face, *panim*, indicates *penimiyus*, internal. Outwardly, she appeared to be seeking material gratification, but her inner intent was to be elevated to sanctity through her soul's attachment to Judah's soul.

This reflects the mystical purpose of our interactions with materiality—food, drink, and so on:

G-d created everything with words, as our Sages state, "The world was created via ten utterances" (Avot 5:1). G-d's words, *yehi raki'a* (*Let there be a firmament!* (Genesis 1:6)), created the heavens and constantly sustains them. The same goes for, *Let the earth produce creatures!* (ibid., v. 24), *Let the earth produce vegetation!* (ibid., v. 11), and so on. These Divine utterances are further stimulated by our own utterances: When we recite a blessing over a fruit with concentration, pronouncing G-d's holy name,

the Divine energy that sustains that fruit awakens, and it energizes our own souls.

It is stated: "*Hungry and thirsty, their soul wraps itself in them*" (Psalms 107:5). Why did G-d design us with cravings for food and drink? Because the Divine energy within materiality longs to be reattached to sanctity. Food appeals to our corporeal senses to arouse our appetite and thirst, but only so that we can reconnect its soul to sanctity. Physical appeal is a garb, disguising the quest of the sparks to reconnect with G-d. Do not be misled into focusing on the materiality; realize that it is soul calling unto soul.

Focus: Behind every craving lies a universe pleading for your spiritual attention.

פרשת השבוע

PARSHA INSIGHT

By: **Rabbi Moshe Wisnefsky**

From: **Daily Wisdom #3**

Ready to Forgive

The cupbearer related his dream to Joseph. He said to him, "In my dream there was a vine before me." (Genesis 40:9)

Joseph knew what Pharaoh's courtiers thought of him: they disdainfully viewed him as an immature child, a lowly slave, and a foreigner (See Genesis 41:12). Nevertheless, he did not hold this against them, and when they asked for it, he offered his help generously and sincerely.

Similarly, we sometimes meet people who disparage us, viewing us disdainfully, but who later recognize that we can be of assistance to them. When they ask for our help, we, like Joseph, should be ready to forgive them and help them.

Hitva'aduyot 5728, vol. 1, pp. 421-422

Chumash

Vayeishev, 7th reading: Shortly after his imprisonment, Par'oh's chief cupbearer and chief baker were also put in prison. The morning after they both had disturbing dreams, Yosef noticed their anxiety and offered to help. They told him their dreams, which he correctly interpreted as meaning that in three days the cupbearer would be restored to his position and the baker would be executed. Yosef asked the cupbearer to speak to Par'oh on his behalf after his release, but the cupbearer forgot about Yosef.

Tanya

Likutei Amarim Ch. 3: The mental soul-expressions of Chochmah and Bina (insight and contemplation) are 'parental', due to their birthing 'offspring' i.e. love and fear (etc.) of G-d. Meaning, deep meditation will result in emotions. The third mental soul-expression of Da'as (lit. knowledge) is the power to bond and identify with the thought-process, personalizing it. **Takeaway:** Chaba"d (CHochma, Bina, Da'as) is the code name for your intellectual faculties. Da'as is the intellectual faculty you use to connect and bond with an idea. Think about God and He will become your reality.

Rambam (1)

Zmanim, Hilchos Sh'visas Yom Tov Ch. 7 — Chol Hamo'ed: One is not allowed to do labor on the intermediate days of Yom Tov (Chol Hamo'ed), unless it will cause a significant monetary loss or is for the sake of the community. Not to push-off labors that are permitted on Chol Hamo'ed to do them on Chol Hamo'ed. Labor necessary for the Festival. Legal and Halachik labor, borrowing, writing, burying the dead and haircuts on Chol Hamo'ed. Commercial enterprise on Chol Hamo'ed.

Understand Your Pain

A person who trusts in G-d is protected from disease and sickness, except for disease and sickness that he is subject to as a means of atonement,* or to increase his reward in the next world.* As it is written (Isaiah 40:30): *Now youths shall become tired and weary, and young men shall stumble.* In the following verse (ibid. 31), it says: *But those who put their hope in the L-rd shall renew their vigor.* And as it says in the verse (Psalms 37:17): *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, but the L-rd supports the righteous.*

Atonement. The calamity has befallen him to atone for a sin that he transgressed, and the suffering is cleansing his body so that when he passes away his soul will leave this world in the same pure state as when it entered. By being punished physically in this world, he will not need to be punished for the sin in the World to Come, because mild suffering in this world saves a person from severe punishment in the World to Come (*Tanya, Iggeret Hakodesh*, Epistle 12; Lubavitcher Rebbe's commentary to *Lessons in Tanya*).

Increase his reward in the next world. Another reason for suffering, the author explains, is that physical pain in this world is exchanged for spiritual reward.

The Talmud (*Menachot* 29b) teaches that when Moses was shown the death of Rabbi Akiva—whose

skin was scraped with metal forks by the Romans—Moses asked G-d, "Is this the reward of Torah study?" G-d replied, "*Shtok. Kach alah birtzoni.*" This generally translates as, "Silence. This is my will." However, it can also be understood on a mystical level through a more literal translation of the words: "Silence, (because) through (this physical pain), he will be elevated to (be connected and cleave with) My (supernal) will (*Mano'ach Halevavot*).

According to *Marpei Lanefesh*, the increased reward the author speaks of refers to pain that is inflicted upon a person so as to increase his good fortune later on in life.

Bottom line: A person who trusts in G-d is protected from disease and sickness.

Lights, Learning and Lockdown

Driving Questions:

1. What is the connection between Parshas Vayeishev and Chanukah?
2. In what way did Ya'akov express his love for Yosef besides for giving him a colorful coat?
3. Why is there no book or chapter on Chanukah in the entire Mishna?

Parshas Vayeishev is occasionally read during Chanukah. There is certainly a connection¹ between them. Indeed there is a fascinating allusion to the Yom Tov of Chanukah in Vayeishev.

Before we can explain the connection, let us preface with a general question regarding the Halachos of Chanukah and the candles of the Menorah.

Why is there no book of Mishna (or even one chapter!) dedicated to the laws of Chanukah as there are for other Yomim Tovim?² The story and vast majority of the laws can only be found in the Talmud!³

Another question: The total number of candles (excluding the shamash) a person lights throughout Chanukah is 36. What is the deeper significance of the number 36 and its connection to Chanukah?

To understand all of this, let us analyze one Passuk in the Parsha.⁴

וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָבָה אֶת יוֹסֵף מִכָּל בְּנָיו כִּי בֶן זָקִינִים הוּא לוֹ וְעָשָׂה לוֹ כְּתֹנֶת פָּסִים Yisrael loved Yosef more than all his (other) sons, for he was the child of his old age (*Zekunim*) and he made for him a fine wool robe.”

The Midrash,⁵ commenting on this verse explains: “Rabbi Nechemyah said: all the Torah laws which Shem and Ever had passed on to Ya'akov,⁶

Ya'akov passed on to Yosef.”⁷ The word the Midrash uses is *Halachos*. This refers to the Oral Torah (*Torah Sheb'al Peh*) specifically and not the written Torah.

The vast majority of the *Halachos* in Torah can only be found in the Oral Torah. It is within the oral tradition where the details of how to fulfill and keep the Torah are explained in both a clear and practical way.

Furthermore, the covenant between Hashem and the Jewish People hinges primarily on the acceptance and practice of the Oral Torah.

As the Talmud states:⁸ “Rabbi Yochanan says: The Holy One, Blessed be He, made a covenant with the Jewish people only for the sake of the matters that (were transmitted) orally [*be'al peh*], as it is stated:⁹ “For on the basis of [*al pi*] these matters I have made a covenant with you and with Yisrael.”

This connection between the covenant and the Oral Torah (which is what Ya'akov studied at the Yeshiva of Shem v'Ever and transmitted to Yosef) can also be seen by way of Gematriya:

שם = 340 (⁴⁰ שם ³⁰⁰)	ברית = 612 (⁴⁰⁰ ב ¹⁰ ר ²⁰⁰ י ² ת)
עבר = 272 (²⁰⁰ ע ² ב ⁷⁰ ר)	
שם + עבר = 612	

The name **Shem** (340) plus the name **Ever** (272) together equal 612. This is the same (numerical)

Torah learning even prior to Matan Torah.

7. This is alluded to in the words זקנינים בן זקנינים. In this context the word זקן (*zoken*) can also be understood as a mnemonic for the words — זה שקנה — הַכְּמָה (*Ze Shekona Chochma*), referring to one who has acquired wisdom i.e. the wisdom of Torah. Thus, the primary favoritism that Ya'akov showed Yosef was choosing him as the primary recipient of his Torah knowledge.

8. Gittin 60b.

9. Ki-Sisa 34:27

1. The Shaloh HaKadosh (Rabbi Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz) in his Shnei Luchos HaBris (commentary on Parshas Vayeishev — this week's Parsha!) writes that every Yom Tov (even the ones instituted by the Sages) is hinted to in the corresponding weekly Parsha.

2. With the exception of an obscure, indirect mention in 7 or 8 Mishnayos on other topics.

3. This burning question is raised by many commentaries who struggle to explain it in various ways. Rabbi Levi Yitzchak's approach is novel.

4. Vayeishev, 37:3.

5. Bereishis Rabba 84:8

6. See Rashi on this verse and also Vayetzai 28:11 regarding the many years Yaa'kov learned Torah from (Shem &) Ever. Although the Torah as we have it today was transmitted to Moshe at Sinai, there was a form of

value as the word **Bris** (covenant). We can now draw a connection to Chanukah.

The main decree of the Greeks was to cause the Jews to forget and stop practicing the Torah. More specifically, the decree was against the Oral Torah, which provides the comprehensive and clear understanding of the Halacha and how to keep each Mitzvah.

(Practically, it would be near impossible for the Greeks to eradicate the complete practice of Judaism as there would always be the Written Torah scroll. They were, however, able to suppress the learning and furtherance of Jewish knowledge and transmission of the Oral Torah by closing down Yeshivos, banning gatherings and the like. Which means in essence they were targeting the study of the Oral Torah).

While the Oral Torah (*Torah she’Bal Peh*) was first written in the form of Mishna, ultimately it is the Talmud which elaborates extensively on every Halacha, and through much in-depth discussion addresses the intricate details of each Mitzvah.

Thus, we are not allowed to rule a Halacha based on a Mishna alone.¹⁰

We can now understand why the Halachos of Chanukah can only be found in the Talmud. For it is the Talmud which captures the totality of the Oral Torah, and in whose pages lies the defeat of the Greeks who attempted to eradicate it.

Fascinatingly, the Talmud is divided into 36 tractates.¹¹ This is identical to the cumulative amount of candles kindled in the Chanukah Menorah,¹² symbolizing that the true victory over the Greeks was the continuation and commitment to upholding the Oral Torah.

*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — Igros Kodesh¹³ pg. 418
(Yalkut Levi Yitzchak al Hatorah, Vol. 3, ch. 12, 72)*

10. See Bava Basra 145b, and Rashbam’s comment.

11. Although we seem to have 37 tractates (Masechtos), it is possible that Rabbi Levi Yitzchak is not counting Tamid which is not a complete book of Talmud, only several pages and much missing.

12. Not including the Shamash. (1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8=36)

13. This letter, dated 11 Nissan 5698, was addressed to his son, the Rebbe, on the occasion of his 36th birthday. (The letter spans 5 pages on the Kabala of the number 36).

גאולה GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah
Translated by Yaakov Paley

Gone, But Not Forgotten

Pharaoh’s butler forgot his promise to Yosef, but G-d did not forget. G-d eagerly awaited the moment of Yosef’s salvation. Until that time, there was no way to escape the suffering that would precede Yosef’s rise to great power. The same is true of Avraham and Sarah’s long wait for children, Yaakov’s ordeals with Esav and Lavan before becoming wealthy and powerful, Moshe

being cast into the Nile, the ordeal of Rus, the suffering of King David, and so on. Similarly, we appear forgotten in exile, but G-d does not forget us. He eagerly awaits the moment of our Redemption, when the suffering of the exiles will give way to our ultimate glory, when all peoples will unite in the inspired service of G-d.

Midrash Rabbah with commentary of Maharzu

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& SHOSHANA BAS NECHAMA DINA**

upon their marriage 19th Av 5780
May they see revealed blessings daily

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