

CHANUKAH (2)

Hadlokas Haneiros

One Chanuka, a group of chassidim traveled to see the Chozeh of Lublin. One of them handed the Rebbe a *pan* on which his friend's name was written, and when the tzaddik looked at the note, he spat. Later the same evening, the chossid decided to try giving the note again. This time, as soon as the tzaddik saw it, he said, "This man illuminates all the worlds!" He then added, "When I first saw the *pan*, that man was playing cards; this time he is lighting his *menora*."

(ספורים חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 286)

Once, some chassidim of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev were chatting when suddenly the tzaddik approached them and asked what they were discussing. Having been involved in idle talk, they were embarrassed to divulge the subject. When the Rebbe asked again, they were compelled to reveal that they had been speaking of the wealth of a certain *poritz*, who would indulge in everything he wished. In fact, even when he decided to sled in the summer, he had his servants cover a field with mounds of sugar.

Hearing this, the tzaddik asked, "Does he light Chanukah *licht*?" Surprised, the chassidim replied that he did not, and he probably did not even know what Chanukah is.

Replied Reb Levi Yitzchak, "If he doesn't light Chanukah *licht*, then he does not have true enjoyment in this world!"

(בני בינה)

After kindling the Chanukah *licht*, the Rebbe Rashab would sit near them for half an hour and learn, though at a slight distance, in order not to benefit from its light. He would learn *Gemara*, wherever he was holding in his learning of Shas.

The Rebbe explained that this practice highlights the special connection of Torah to light, and is a lesson for everyone

- Chanukah is a time to increase one's learning. Furthermore, since the Yevanim wished to prevent us from studying Torah, we increase our study.

(רשימות היומן ע' שכג, תו"מ תשמ"ב ח"ב ע' 618)

The Power of the Lights

In *Haneiros Halalu* we say that we have no permission to use the lights, only to look at them ("elo li'oisson bilvad"). This can mean that gazing at the lights is actually a benefit, healing any damage the eyes have incurred from seeing improper images, and protects one for the future. In fact many tzaddikim would sit and gaze at the *licht* as they burned.

(שו"ת שב יעקב סי' כב, זרע קודש - ראפשיץ)

One man, in a severe state of depression sought out a cure by the Rov of Apta and was advised to gaze at the burning Chanukah *licht*. The man did as he was told, and the next morning he awoke a cheerful man.

(בינת ישראל)

Once at the kindling of the menorah the Rebbe Maharash said, "One should 'look' and 'hear' what the *lichtelach* are 'telling' us."

The Rebbe explains that we must each contemplate and draw a lesson from the *inner* meaning of the *licht* and internalize it. Aside from the general message of Chanukah, there is a unique 'message' on each day, which is alluded to in the *krias hatorah* of that day.

(סו"ה תש"ו ע' 22, תו"מ תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 47)

When Reb Yechezkel of Shiniva, the son of the *Divrei Chayim* of Sanz, was a young boy, he was seriously injured when a loaded wagon ran him over. His father Reb Chayim asked many tzaddikim to *daven* for his wellbeing. When the tzaddik, Reb Naftali of Ropshitz, heard of the boy's predicament, he sent some leftover Chanukah oil to smear on the boy. Reb Yechezkel later

recalled that when the oil was applied, he felt his body returning to its normal form, and he regained his health.

(ילקוט מקראי קודש)

Celebrating Chanukah

Since the primary *nes* of Chanukah was a *ruchniyusdike* one, annulling the decrees of the Yevanim against the observance of *Yiddishkeit* and the offering of *korbanos*, we commemorate it in a *ruchniyusdike* way, by saying *Hallel* and praising *HaShem*. However, it is also customary to make one's *seudos* finer during Chanukah in order to recall the *nes* of winning the war and to commemorate the completion of the *Mishkan* on *chaf-hei* Kislev. During such a *seuda*, one should sing praises to *HaShem* for His *nissim*, thus making it a *seudas mitzva*.

(שו"ע או"ח סי' תע"ד ובהשלמה לשוע"ר שג)

It was customary for the *Tzemach Tzedek*, as it had been for the Alter Rebbe and the Mittlerer Rebbe before him, to hold a gathering on one of the evenings of Chanukah with his family, including his daughters-in-law. This was called a "*latkes ovent*", a *latkes* evening. At this gathering the Rebbes would tell stories, some of which were repeated year after year. The Rebbe Rashab would also set aside time during Chanukah to speak to the children.

(היום יום כ"ח כסלו, רשימות היומן חנוכה תרצ"ג)

There is a *minhag* to give children Chanukah *gelt*, and the Rebbe Rashab would do this on the fourth or fifth night.

The Rebbe once noted that the main reason for this *minhag* is to enable the children to give *tzedaka*, for what else does a child need money for...?

(תו"מ תשמ"ט ח"ב ע' 63)

CONSIDER THIS!

What does it mean to "look at the *licht*": physically or figuratively?

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A WAY OF LIFE

RABBI CHAIM CHAZAN

Kavana for Shema

What intention is one supposed to have while reciting *Shema*?

- Before one recites *Shema* one should have the intention that he is about to fulfill the *mitzvas asei* of *Krias Shema*¹.
- One should preferably concentrate while reciting all three passages of *Krias Shema*. However, the minimum requirement is to concentrate during the recital of the first *possuk* of *Shema* and "*Boruch Shem*," because they express one's acceptance of Hashem's Kingship. If a person recited *Shema* and did not concentrate for the first *possuk* or "*Boruch Shem*," he must go back and recite them again².
- The minimum intention required in order to fulfill the obligation is to understand the meaning of what he is saying, i.e. for "*Shema*" that he accepts that Hashem is our G-d and is One without any 'partners', and for "*Boruch Shem*" that His Sovereignty is forever³.
- As with the rest of *davening*, one should⁴ have in mind the specific *kavanas* for Hashem's names: For *Adnai* that He is master of the world that was, is and will be, and for *Elokeinu* that He is strong and mighty and that He is omnipotent in both the Heavenly and the terrestrial realms⁵.
- *Chazal* say⁶: Whoever prolongs his enunciation of the *Daled* in the word *echod* will have his days and years prolonged. The *Ches* should also be prolonged somewhat, so that one can mentally affirm the sovereignty of Hashem over the heaven and earth (the *gematria* of *Ches* alludes to the seven heavens and the earth). The *Daled* should be prolonged more, so that one can contemplate on how Hashem is alone in His world and rules over all four directions of the world.
- It should be noted that the actual enunciation of the *Daled* should not be drawn out, for whenever the final letter of a word is not vocalized by a vowel mark below it, its enunciation should be cut short. Rather, one should *think* at length about affirming Hashem's sovereignty in the four directions *while* enunciating the *Daled* and afterwards, before proceeding with "*Boruch Shem*."⁷
- Reb Elimelech of Lizensk writes⁸ that one should think of how he is prepared to sacrifice his life for Hashem's unity and he should imagine in his mind a scenario of a *goy* actually torturing him for his refusal to deny Hashem's unity.

1. שוע"ר סי' ס"ה.
2. שוע"ר סי' סג ס"ה
3. שם. וראה אג"מ בהע' הבא.
4. שוע"ר סי' ה ס"א וג'.
5. לכאן' כוונות אלו אינם לעיכובא אפי' בפסוק ראשון דק"ש, וכ"פ ובאג"מ או"ה ח"ה סי' ה. אבל בעל הא"א מבוטשאטש בסידור תפילה לדוד ניסח תנאי שיאמר לפני צעטל קטן אות ב.
6. ברכות יג ע"ב.
7. שוע"ר סי' ס"ו וז'.
8. צעטל קטן אות ב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד אליהו ש'י' עלוש
שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט
נדבת וקנין ר' משה ליב ורעייתו שיהיו נעש

לזכות הת' יואל משה חזן וב'ג מושקא פרלשטיין שיהיו
לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכין בשעטמו"צ

לזכות הבחור חבר מצוה שניאור זלמן ש'י
שיגדל להיות חסיד, יר"ש ולמדן
נדבת הוריו הרה"ת אהרן דוד ורעייתו שיהיו גאנץ

OUR HEROES

Reb Dovid Leikes

Reb Dovid Leikes, one of the great *talmidim* of the Baal Shem Tov, is mentioned in many of the stories which are told about the Baal Shem Tov. He was a grandfather to many *chasidische* Rebbes, such as Reb Yitzchak of Skver, and he was the father-in-law of Reb Motel Tchernobiler. He served as the rof in the town Bar in the Podolye region.



The Baal Shem Tov was once in the home of Reb Dovid during the time when a terrible decree had been enacted that the Talmud be burned. A day was set for the public burning of all volumes of Gemoro and the decree stated that anyone caught learning the Talmud after this event, would be burned together with the volume he was learning. On the scheduled day, Reb Dovid took a Gemoro, hid behind a large urn (used for heating water) and, as he usually did each day, engrossed himself in learning. The Baal Shem Tov, meanwhile, paced around the house, entirely immersed in his holy thoughts.

At twelve o'clock, the church bells began ringing wildly, notifying all that the time for the enactment of the decree had come. The Baal Shem Tov continued pacing despite the tumultuous ringing and gathering of spectators. Seeing this, Reb Dovid, could contain himself no longer and mustered up the courage to approach the Baal Shem Tov. "Rebbe! How could you be silent at a time like this?!" The Baal Shem Tov looked up at his *talmid* and said, "The fire you displayed for the learning of Torah has extinguished their fire." Sure enough, one thing led to another and the decree was abolished.

Towards the end of Reb Dovid's life, as he neared the age of one hundred, the other *dayanim* of the city began handling the easier *shaalos*, but he would still be consulted with regarding the difficult matters that arose. On what was to be Dovid's last day, a difficult question presented itself to the Beis Din and the *dayanim* wanted to consult with him. Reb Dovid's family, however, refused to let him be disturbed, being that he was very weak.

Hearing the argument taking place outside, the *tzaddik* gathered all the strength he had and got out of bed. He called for his family, and when they came in, he banged fiercely on the table, so strongly that one of its legs fell off, and cried, "It says that any *dayan* who judges a *din* truthfully becomes as a partner to Hashem in the works of creation, and you want to take this partnership away from me?! All the *dayanim* should come in at once!" The *dayanim* came in and he guided them, helping them reach the solution of the issue at hand. Soon after, Reb Dovid passed away.

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי ש'י בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Do you know what your job is?

Reb Leibel Groner relates:

"The editor of a very influential *Yiddische* newspaper once had a two hour *yechidus*. When he exited, he looked overwhelmed.

"When I asked him to share some of his conversation, he did so excitedly. 'I had expected the Rebbe to ask me to use my influence to support Chabad in the media, but the Rebbe did not mention it. The Rebbe inquired how wide the circulation of our paper is, and I answered. Then the Rebbe inquired regarding smaller cities, so I told the Rebbe that we reach very remote places. For example, there is a small town in Texas, where two copies are sent weekly.

"The Rebbe looked at me. "Do you know what your job is?" "Yes," I replied, "to edit a newspaper."

"No!" the Rebbe exclaimed. "The connection of two Texan *yiddische* families to *yiddishkeit*, is solely through your paper. Your job is to supply them with *real yiddishkeit*! If you write superfluous gossip, or *chas v'sholom* anything negating Torah – you will be responsible for these two families!"



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