



Tiferet

ת פ א ר ת



TIFERET UPDATES

This Week in Tiferet

Chanuka – Part One – We began our celebrations of Chanuka this week in Tiferet with Torah, ruach and achdut! On Wednesday morning, our fantastic faculty taught multiple shiurim about the beauty and significance of Chanuka. On Wednesday night, our students went to the various administrators' homes for fun and Torah-filled chagigot. Our students also joined Rav Mayer in delivering *sufganiyot* to Israeli soldiers, who are constantly on duty defending our country. Finally, last night we had our jam-packed school chagiga, featuring inspiring Torah, music and dancing, talented students, beautiful decorations and fun! Special thanks to **Rachel Wizman** who took the lead in helping to organize this great night!



תורת תפארת

Surviving the Pit

Rav Moshe Yeshurun (mryeshurun@yahoo.com)

Parashat Miketz – Shabbat Chanukah

Every year, Chanukah falls between the two parashot Vayeishev and Mi'ketz. These parashot tell the story of Yosef, from his being sold into slavery until his rise to power as viceroy of Egypt. A closer look at Yosef's journey sheds light on the true essence of Chanukah. The pasuk states the Yosef was thrown into a pit and emphasizes the fact that it did not have any water in it. Why does the pasuk reiterate the fact that it had no water in it, is it not obvious that if it was empty it did not have any water? Chazal (Masechet Shabbat 22a) offer the following explanation. Although the pit was dry it was not empty, it was filled with snakes and scorpions.

The simple explanation of this statement is that Yosef was placed in physical danger. However, one could find a deeper more spiritual explanation. When placed in the pit, Yosef was not only in physical danger, he was also jeopardized spiritually. The pit severed Yosef's ties to his father and mentor, thereby separating him from his connection to Avodat Hashem, preventing him from growing and elevating spiritually. Therefore, Chazal stress the fact that the pit was not altogether empty. The lack of water and spiritual life source created a vacuum filling it with destructive and harmful forces, snakes and scorpions. Although he was influenced by these harmful forces, Yosef eventually emerged triumphant, retaining his title as one of the Shivtey Yisrael.

The story of Chanukah parallels the saga of Yosef. The Greeks understood that in order to spiritually break the Jews they did **NOT** need to force them to serve Avodah Zara. All they really needed to do was disconnect them from their spiritual source creating an automatic vacuum filling them with evil. This is the essence of Chanukah. In order for a Jew to succeed in a "Greek world", he has to continuously work and advance in his Avodat Hashem, not leaving any opportunity for "snakes and scorpions" to penetrate.



May Hashem grant us the wisdom to survive the pit and fill it with Torat Mayim Chayim.

Shabbat Shalom and Chanukah Sameach!



MAZAL TOV!

Mazal Tov to Jessica Kfare (Tiferet 5767,8) on her engagement to Elie Niedober! May they be zochim to build a bayit ne'eman b'yisrael together!

Mazal Tov to Orah (Melnick - Tiferet 5768) and Avi Lasko on the birth of a baby daughter, Sophia Lilly! May they be zochim to raise her l'Torah, l'chupa u'l'maasim tovim!



Parshat Miketz- Shabbat Chanukah Molly Bernstein (Tiferet 5772)

Thousands of years ago, Alexander the Great and his people conquered the Middle East and introduced a whole new culture to them. The Greeks main focus was on mankind and the rejection of the worship of a higher being, Hashem. The יונים taught that looks, intellect and the body are all primary. In Judaism, however, this is not what we put first, or even second. Hashem is always first and then comes His Torah.

Since the יונים were aware of our main priorities, they did everything in their power to stop us from learning and performing any sort of Avodas Hashem. Eventually, the Greeks overpowered many Jews and caused them to abandon their Jewish traditions and beliefs.

Fortunately, the חשמונאים fought against the יונים, finally restoring the Second Beis Hamikdash and helping the lost Jews back to where they came from. They brought back Torah and everyday Avodas Hashem. The chag of Chanukah is celebrated for this achievement.

Although we would hope that this was Bnei Yisroel's last downfall, this event has truly proved "מעשה אבות סימן ולבנים". Throughout our history, many nations have tried to assimilate us and bring us into their culture and religion. Hundreds of years ago, many Jews fell into Communism, then Hellenism, and then Communism again! If only the Jews would realize that throughout all their history, Judaism and Torah were always constant.

Talmidim of the Kotzker Rebbe once asked him, "If Judaism is emes, and all other religions are "sheker", then how come all other religions and movements are so successful?" The Rebbe agreed with them and said, "The other religions serve themselves, as if they were emes, but we do it as if we are sheker".

Every religion sells themselves. They advertise to everyone beauty and intellect, a fantasy and illusion that cannot last long. But we Jews foolishly believed them, for over a century! If we would have realized how happy, real, and true Torah is, we would have never fallen into the יונים trap or the Communist movement.

In Parshas Miketz, in ב"א: it says:
"והנה מן היאר עלת שבע פרות יפות ומראה בשר ותרעינה באחו"
Rashi asks "what does it mean מראה בשר?" He then answers that it was a sign of the years of plenty. In those days people looked good to one another and people were also not jealous of one another. This is the way we should live our lives as Jewish people. We will continue to fall into the trap of non-Jews if we let them rob us of our own happiness and truth of religion and Torah. We have to believe to the fullest that Torah is emes and only then can we overcome and even live among other religions.

The more we focus on the emes and good of Torah, the happier and more satisfied we will be! Let us not let another religion rise up and try to convince us that our Torah is sheker. Let us be happy with the joy and truthfulness of Torah to the point where no other movement can even try to convince us. It is our time to be the modern day חשמונאים and spread our religion as true emes.



Alumnae Events

On Shabbat, December 10, over forty Tiferet students gathered for our annual alumnae Shabbaton in Stern College. It was a Shabbat filled with Torah, ruach and warmth!

Thank you to **Mr. and Mrs. Shimmy and Barbara Schwartz**, parents of **Daniella Schwartz (Tiferet 5770,1)** for hosting an alumnae shiur by Rav Azriel Rosner on Wednesday night, December 14th. It was a special night for all involved!

Thank you to **Tzipporah and Michael Kaffash** for hosting a reunion of Tiferet's first class this week. We got tremendous nachat from seeing so many of our alumnae moving ahead successfully in their lives in so many ways!

COMING SOON - Our winter vacation Tiferet alumnae program from Thursday, January 12th – Sunday, January 15th. All of our alumnae who are in Israel during that time are strongly encouraged to attend!



A Burning Desire To Do Better Zahava Zimmermann (Tiferet 5770, 5771)

There is a well-known machloket between Beit Hillel and Beit Shamai- In which direction do we light the candles? As we know, we follow Beit Hillel and count one to eight, adding one candle on each night. The Chidushei Harim in the Sefer Halekach Vihalibuv says that the difference between Hillel and Shamai's interpretations, may reflect the difference between two different paths, in avodat Hashem.

Fire, as we know, has two different powers. Fire burns as well as lights. It has the ability to be scary, consuming everything in its path, or the ability to be beautiful, lighting up our lives. The koach of fire represents two opposing views. It is two different avodot- "Sur merah, va'asei tov". Are we trying to burn out the negative and stay away, or are we adding on more and more good to our lives?

Beit Shamai was known for middat hadin. Judgment is something thought out logically, to exact precision and detail. It is about doing what is exactly right. Before we can add and make better, we must erase and get rid of the negative. If one wants to make their room neat, they first have to get rid of the mess. Thus Beit Shamai holds that we should light 8 to 1. Each day we should remove a little bit. We start off with a lot of bad but slowly we remove some of the *rah*. We focus on the koach of the aish hasoref, and then we get the tov.

Beit Hillel says differently. He was symbolized by chessed and asei tov. Yes, there is a lot of darkness out there? How do we get rid of that darkness and rah? We ADD light. The more light you add, the more the darkness vanishes. It's about adding more and then adding some more. He says we should focus on the koach of adding good to our lives. We light the candles adding one more each day until the end. We are left with immense good!

We follow Beit Hillel when lighting the menorah. We want to add more goodness to our lives. We want to stay away from bad, but what's even greater than that is constantly doing good; Doing the best we can and adding more and more mitzvot into our lives. In the Chanukah story itself we learn this lesson. When Bnei Yisrael entered the Beit Hamikdash, there was a lot of oil, yet it was impure. A gemara in psachim says "tumah hutrah bitzibur", impurity is permitted from the community. When Bnei Yisrael were together as a klal, the oil was permissible to be used. According to din this would have been acceptable and halachically allowed. However, they searched until they found the pure oil. They didn't want to just do what was okay: They wanted to give Hashem the best and do the mitzvah the best way possible. It was about adding and bettering the mitzvah.

May we be zoche to never settle for only taking the bad away in our lives. We should constantly keep growing and adding beauty, Torah and mitzvot every day. With all this mounting goodness, may we be zoche to light the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash bikarov biyameinu!

This dvar Torah is based on a shiur by Rav Shalom Rosner.