

A TORAH PUBLICATION BY STUDENTS AND FACULTY

MO-ED

OF THE WEINBAUM YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL

CHANUKAH EDITION 5774



Kayla Petrover ('15)

The Weinbaum
Yeshiva
High School
INSPIRE & CHALLENGE

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF: REBECCA BENSIMON ('14)

MATTHEW SILKIN ('14)

FINAL EDITOR: DANIELLA COHEN ('15)

BAILEY FROLEICH ('16)

FACULTY ADVISOR: MRS. SCHOCHET

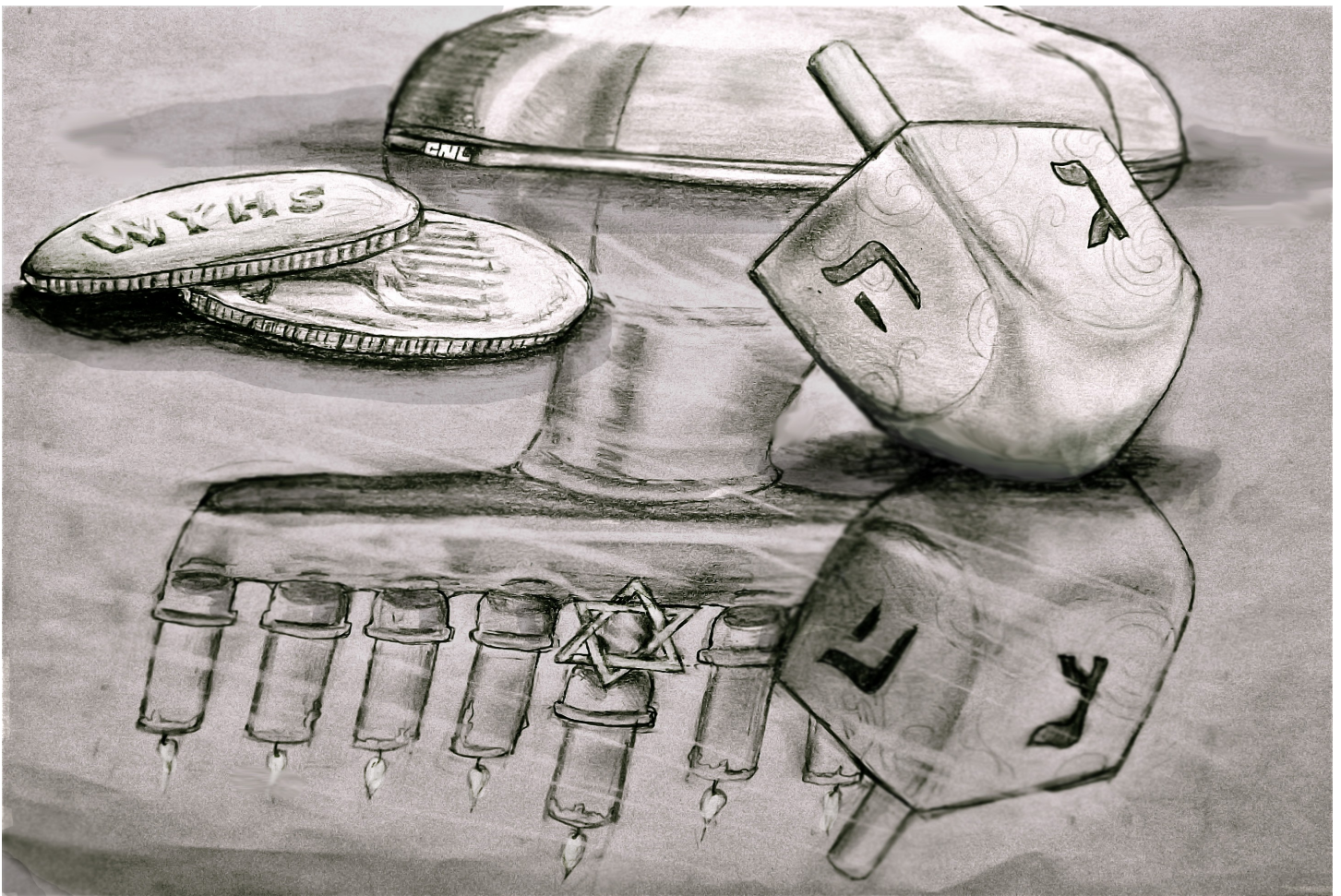
A TORAH PUBLICATION BY STUDENTS AND

MO-ED

FACULTY OF THE WEINBAUM YESHIVA HIGH SCHOOL

Inside This Issue...

Yaki Siev ('15)	page 4
Matthew Silkin ('14)	page 4
Rebecca Bensimon ('14)	page 5
Michali Mazor ('15)	page 5
Word Search	page 8
Fun Facts	page 9





LIGHT THROUGH THE DARKNESS

Yaki siev (15)

As Chanukah approaches, we pull out the menorah and return to the classic Chanukah songs, including the famous Maoz Tzur. What is interesting about Maoz Tzur is that of its six stanzas, only one actually deals with Chanukah—the rest are either dealing with previous salvations or asking for our redemption. Why is that so?

In Parshat Vayeshev, Yosef was sold to Potiphar and quickly rose— not to the top, but close to it. He was second in command, under only Potiphar himself. In Parshat Mikeitz, Yosef rose again, and this time, like the first, not to the top. He was second in command, under only Pharaoh— he was not the complete ruler. This parallel teaches us something very important: While we, Bnei Yisrael, are in galut, we cannot reach the top. We can experience moments of great success and even power, but until Mashiach comes, we will not experience complete salvation.

This is the idea of Maoz Tzur. Chanukah was an incredible yeshuah, salvation, but certainly not a complete one. There was still assimilation— even the Chashmonaim themselves messed up by taking the throne, which is only reserved for the tribe of Yehuda. In fact, it is for this reason that the Ramban says that Chanukah does not have its own mesechta in mishnayot like any other holiday. Chanukah is the poster boy of the bittersweet yeshuah. The truth is, however, that despite this, it does not mean that other yeshuot are so perfect either, and that is the explanation of Maoz Tzur. Maoz Tzur groups together different yeshuot with the yeshuah of Chanukah, showing us that they all have the same flaw: incompleteness. We still have not had Mashiach come; therefore, we are never completely on top, and have not had a complete yeshuah.

However, if those yeshuot were not

WHAT'S YOUR FLAVOR ?

Matthew Silkin ('14)

The Torah portions that we read every day of Chanukah describes the offerings that the tribal leaders brought at the inauguration of the Mishkan. The Torah describes each one in detail – they brought this much silver, these many bulls, these many rams, and these many sheep.

However, what is strange is that the Torah feels the need to describe the same exact formula for each leader, repeating what is essentially the same paragraph twelve times! We know that the Torah does not waste words, so why does the Torah write the same paragraph twelve times?

Yes, each leader gave the same offering. Reuven's silver was not more than Shimon's, and Yehuda did not give any less bulls than Zevulun. But each tribe put into their offering something that no other tribe could – their personality. Yes, you and I could both write an essay for the same topic. But the way I write my essay will be radically different than the way you write yours; no two essays can possibly be exactly alike.

This is why the Torah must repeat the offerings, even though they seem to be the same – because they are not the same. Yes, Reuven gave an offering similar to Shimon's, but Reuven cannot put into his offering what Shimon can, and vice versa.

As a senior, I will not be here when the next class comes in. And the juniors will not be here in two years to watch the class after that. But I hope that just as the tribes imbued their offerings with their own special vibe, we can all leave our own special mark on WYHS – hopefully a good one – and be remembered among those who traversed the two hallways and a staircase.

Chag Sameach!



WHAT IS CHANUKAH?

Rebecca Bensimon ('14)

There are two different interpretations of the days of Chanukah. One interpretation is "eight days of Chanukah" and the other is "days of eight". This seems similar but really they mean polar opposite things. One talks about the quantity of days and the other talks about the quality of the days. What does this mean to us?

The Greeks were extremely involved with competitive sports and sophisticated theater. This was their specialty. At first these new and interesting things were alluring for the Jews. Inevitably many Jewish people became involved with these hobbies which at first started as inviting then became more persistent until the Greeks insisted on participation from every Jew. While the Greeks were incredibly intrigued by the world and how it works their perception of reality was defined and limited to their understanding of the world. Their understanding being that it was unable to surpass what they could see with their own eyes.

The world was a seven-day production, and that we operate within that framework creates a natural boundary for even the most perfect description of reality. Everything experienced is enveloped within the arena of our existence. The logical limits of Greek thought and life was by definition within the reach of "seven". The word for eight in Hebrew - "Shemonah" - when shuffled as an anagram spells out the word "Neshamah" - the Soul - and also "Mishnah" - the building block of the Oral Torah. Truncate delicately, and we are left with the "Shemen" - Oil, the stuff of the Chanukah miracle and the centerpiece of the celebration. The Hebrew word for nature is "Teva". "Teva" has two connotations that may help us gain an insight into the nature of nature. "Teva" implies drowning or sinking, because we are sunken

Continued on page 6

ALL IT TAKES IS A SMALL LIGHT

Michali Mazor ('15)

At the end of the Chanukah story, the Beit Hamikdash was in shambles—wrecked, shattered, and contaminated. The Greeks destroyed all that was holy to the Jews, placing their idols all over the temple, desecrating the altars, and spilling almost all of the jugs of oil. Much of the Jews' history and spirituality was in flames. Yet, the Jewish people were not discouraged. They continued to search the Beit Hamikdash for a jug of oil, just so they could light the menorah. They found one—a tiny jug of oil with enough to light the menorah for one day.

The Jewish people marveled and rejoiced at this spectacular find. The entire Beit Hamikdash was destroyed, and yet the Jews were delighted and celebrated over the little bit of light that they could now create. This small amount of oil has the ability to enable the Jews to perform the mitzvah, bringing light to the darkness and chasing away the gloom.

Nowadays, we live in exile, a world where there is constant, ubiquitous darkness from which we all wish to escape- and the miracle of the oils shows that we can. As Jewish people, we each have the power to create little bits of light by embracing and fulfilling mitzvot sh'bein adam l'chavero. We may spread lights by making someone smile, by helping someone in need, or by visiting the sick. Indeed each and every one of us can and must create light and each and every one of us has the ability to chase away the darkness of galut. Therefore, we must remember that all it takes is one candle to light a room, and all it takes is one good deed to light a life.

CHAG SAMAECH!

Yaki Siev continued

complete, why are we celebrating? A very simple answer to this question is that even though these yeshuot were not perfect, it does not mean that they were not incredible for Klal Yisrael.

Still, there is a deeper explanation. Chanukah comes at the darkest time of the year- the time where there is the least sunlight - and serves as a light in the darkness. In a time when the Jews were confused and assimilating into a foreign culture, a small group, the Maccabees, stood up and were a light that broke through the darkness. This is the message of Chanukah as well as all the other yeshuot that we celebrate.

Our celebration does not just help us appreciate the miracle that occurred then, but it helps us carry on now. Remembering the yeshuot and understanding that Hashem has our backs helps us get through the difficult times of the present. With Syria and Iran looming on the horizon, things seem very dark now. When we look at the Chanukah candles, the lights in the darkness, and when we sing Maoz Tzur, we must remember that Hashem was with us in the past, is here with us now in the present, and will always be there in the future. B'Ezrat Hashem we should experience the complete yeshuah, Bimheira B'Yameinu.

Chanukah Sameach!

Rebecca Bensimon continued

into and swallowed up by this physical world. "Teva" also is related to the word "matbeah" - coin - referring to a coin that has an image impressed upon it.

Similarly the natural world impresses; so much so that our senses are so stimulated that any inkling of anything beyond is naturally overwhelmed. The Hebrew word for "The Natural World", HaTeva, has the same numerical value for the Holy Name - Elokim. Meaning that our definition of nature is actually "repeating miracles." If something happens predictably we call it natural. When it happens once, we call it a miracle.

We are alerted, jolted (I used this word because of the incredible experience I had on NCSY JOLT this past summer) to a super state of awareness, a higher consciousness of reality. Now the idea of the oil, of eight, of soul, of the Oral Torah, rises and rides high above and beyond the confines of mere nature. Eight encompasses the sphere of seven enriching and extending it. When penetrated it anoints even natural life with a tinge of the miraculous.

Now we come to the crunch, really. The Talmud tells us, "If we are not prophets ourselves, we are at least the children of prophets." Seeming simple activities and customs done by so many holy Jews over so many thousands of years must be packed with profundity, even if we don't perceive it at first. I'm talking about "latkes". I think we can now understand "latkes" - potato pancakes. No joke!

When that potato mix is cooked in oil to be joyfully ingested, we are not engaged in a mere Epicurean exercise. It is rather an expression of how the concept of eight, manifest on Chanukah, can be made to saturate and enrich the ordinary and natural dimensions of our lives. It's the Oral Torah's authentic recipe of how to mix the oil, to engage the eternal soul, breathing ultimate meaning into every molecule of life.

Rebecca Bensimon continued

If that lowly potato can be so educated and so educated then there is hope for us also to gain much more than just mass quantities of calories, enjoying quality time during these days of eight.

CHAG SAMEACH!



GAME SECTION:

N	I	H	A	C	R	A	T	N	S	I	C
S	O	B	S	O	A	A	M	S	L	Z	L
M	U	F	G	A	H	N	E	A	N	C	S
I	R	F	N	A	M	E	D	C	S	U	S
M	A	L	G	R	B	A	H	L	H	H	H
A	E	S	E	A	U	A	H	C	E	L	N
S	N	N	C	D	N	Z	O	S	C	S	A
D	E	C	O	U	I	I	T	N	E	L	R
M	A	K	K	R	T	E	Y	Z	I	C	N
M	H	A	T	N	A	L	R	O	O	C	T
O	H	C	A	A	K	H	E	D	T	A	L
A	C	S	I	A	L	T	H	G	G	O	M

Chanukah
Maccabees
Dreidel
Oil
Shamash

Maoz Tzur
Latkes
Menorah
Antiochus
Candles
Sufganiyot



Chanukah Fun Facts!

Did you know...

- That the war on Chanukah was not just between the Greeks and the Jews—it was also between Jews who supported the Greeks (Hellenized Jews) and Jews who were against the Greeks (the Maccabees)?
- That Chanukah in Hebrew can either stand for חנו כ"ה, meaning “They rested on the 25th,” or ח נרות והלכה כבית הלל, meaning “Eight candles and the law follows like the house of Hillel”?
- That this year will be the second time Chanukah will coincide with Thanksgiving since it was declared a national holiday, and the next time this will happen will be in 79,043?*
- That the Book of Maccabees, which recounts the events of the Maccabean Revolt, was almost included into Tanach?

*Note: This differs based on the source you look at. Some people say it will never happen again, other say that it will happen in 2041. My source is <http://jonathanmizrahi.blogspot.com/2013/01/hanukkah-and-thanksgiving-once-in.html>