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LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

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(Vol. 10)



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THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

Among them:

One must strengthen one's belief in, longing for and anticipation of the coming of Moshiach, to such an extent that as long as our righteous Moshiach has not yet come in reality and openly, one feels his life is lacking. As Yaakov said, even one hundred and thirty seven years were "few"⁶ because the Redemption had not yet actually come.

Further and fundamental:

One must increase in learning and spreading the inner teachings of the Torah (and Torah in general is Yaakov's function), oil (secrets of the secrets) of the Torah, in a way that they light "from the opening of the house on the outside,"⁷ "your wellsprings will spread outward,"⁸ "until the Tarmudites leave the market."⁹

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz, Shabbos (6th of) Chanukah, Evening Rosh Chodesh Teves 5752)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** ע"ה
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** ה"ד
Shagalov
Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766
Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** ע"ה
Ekman
Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765
Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** ע"ה
Marenburg
Passed away on the second day
of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766
Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)
ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** ע"ה
Ekman (Santiago, Chile)
Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769
ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.
AND IN HONOR OF
Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתחיל
Shagalov
DEDICATED BY
Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y. and Gittel Rochel** שיחי
Shagalov

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Executive Director

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6. *Vayigash* 47:9.

7. *Shabbos*, *ibid.*

8. *Mishlei* 5:16.

9. *Shabbos*, *ibid.* [This is a reference to the passage in the Talmud that discusses the latest time for kindling the Chanukah lights; the rabbis declare this to be when the Tarmudite merchants would leave the market and no one else would remain outside. Chassidus explains that the word "Tarmud" (the name of a nation) rearranged spells "Moreds," rebel. Metaphorically this means that we will bring light to the outside to the extent of removing all resistance to the Divine. Translator's note.]

The revelation of the teachings of Chabad Chassidus began with the Alter Rebbe on the 19th of Kislev and continued and increased with greater strength and greater vigor through all seven generations of its leaders. This includes in particular the founding of the Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim, the soldiers of the House of Dovid who go out to the wars of the House of Dovid to be victorious over those "who revile the footsteps of your Moshiach"¹ and to bring into reality the revelation of Dovid King Moshiach.² The revelation comes to its fulfillment in our generation, which has already completed all the requirements, and the only thing necessary is "to open the eyes" and to see that "Behold he (the King Moshiach) comes."³

* * *

From this we can derive a practical lesson:

In addition to this generation being the last generation of exile, the end of the exile, it is also the first generation of Redemption, the beginning of Redemption. We therefore find ourselves at an auspicious time connected to the Redemption. There should be a daily increase (connected to the lesson of Chanukah,⁴ that "from here on continuously increase"⁵) in matters that bring the Redemption into reality and into the open.

1. *Tehillim* 89:52.

2. See *Sichos Simchas Torah* 5661 - *Likkutei Dibburim* vol. 4, 787b and ff. *Sefer HaSichos* 5702, end of p. 141 ff.

3. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8 and *Shir HaShirim Rabba* on the verse.

4. And in a continuing manner also after Chanukah, since "increase in holiness and (certainly) don't decrease" (*Shabbos* 21b).

5. *Shabbos* 21b. *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim* Section 671, section 2. [*This is a reference to the increase in light during the days of Chanukah, lighting one candle the first night, two candles the second, etc. Translator's note.*]

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

•

Volume VI: *Bereishis*

•

In English rendition
by
Rabbi Eliyahu Touger

MIKEITZ

AT THE ROOT OF IT ALL

In the beginning of *Parshas Mikeitz*, the Torah elaborates on the story of Pharaoh's dreams, relating that he dreamt of cows and ears of grain. Afterwards, the Torah relates Yosef's interpretation of these dreams, that they refer to years of plenty and years of famine.

One might ask: Why does the Torah describe Pharaoh's dreams at such length? What is important for us is the outcome — that Yosef informed Pharaoh of the upcoming years of plenty and years of famine, and for this reason was appointed viceroy of Egypt. What difference does it make to us whether this happened as a result of a dream or through some other medium? Even if it is necessary for the Torah to teach us that it was as a result of Pharaoh's dreams that Yosef became viceroy, this message could have been conveyed in a far more condensed form. Seemingly, it would have been sufficient to say that no one else could interpret Pharaoh's dreams, and that Yosef told him there would be seven years of plenty and seven years of famine.

Why are the particulars of a gentile's dream important to us?

The answer is that the Torah tells us that Pharaoh was informed about the future through a dream, in continuation — and as a consequence — of Yosef receiving information concerning his own future through a dream.

To explain: Yosef the *tzaddik* was a comprehensive soul. His mission was to draw down the totality of Yaakov's spiri-

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE REDEMPTION

to enhance our anticipation for his coming every day, the building and dedication of the third *Beis Hamikdosh* and the lighting of the Menorah by Aaron the High Priest, which will occur with the true and complete Redemption by our righteous Moshiach.

...Similarly with respect to the Torah reading of the Shabbos of Chanukah. During the Torah reading, as soon as a Jew hears and comprehends the word "*Mikeitz* - the End," he exclaims, "Aha! This is an allusion to the end of exile, referred to as the "end of days - *Kaitz Hayamim*" [spelled with a final mem which connotes the end of exile], as well as "the end of days - *Kaitz Hayamin*" [spelled as it is in the end of the book of Daniel, with a final nun³ which connotes] the deadline for the Redemption!

And afterwards, when one reads or hears the Haftorah (the selection of the prophets read weekly after the Torah reading) which states, "I beheld the Menorah, entirely of gold,"⁴ one senses immediately a reference to the future Redemption!⁵

Likewise, upon reading about the *Nesi'im* [princes] and the *Nasi* [prince] of the tribe of Reuvein [Jacob's first born son] in particular, a Jew is reminded forthwith of the true and complete Redemption, at which time all the *Nesi'im* will be present, and the status of the Jewish People as the "first born child" of the whole world will be manifest.

Moreover, the fourth light of Chanukah, is an immediate reminder of the "fourth [and final] Redemption," when the most complete G-dly manifestations will extend to all four directions of the world.

(From the talk of Shabbos *Parshas Mikeitz*,
Shabbos Chanukah, 5751)

3. See *Or HaTorah*, beginning of our Parsha. See also above p. 20 for further references.

4. *Zecharya* 4:2.

5. *Midrash* cited in *Likkutei Torah*, *Be'ha'aloscha* 34, end side b.

The Announcement Of The Redemption

9

When one is totally immersed in a certain subject, it's human nature when encountering another topic to immediately search for and find the connection with that subject in which he is immersed, even though this other topic has its own issues and critical features.

As Jews -- particularly in the end of the period of exile (after the passing of all the deadlines¹ and after my sainted father-in-law testified that we have already done *Teshuvah* and that all the necessary efforts have been completed) -- "we are totally immersed" in "awaiting for him every day that he will come."² Throughout each and every day we wait and yearn for the true and complete Redemption.

And, inasmuch as Jews are passionately involved with the coming of Moshiach, it is reasonable that in all matters we should search primarily for their association with our awaiting every day that he will come.

Applying this to a timely theme:

As we stand in the days of Chanukah -- though a multifaceted Holiday -- we ought to emphasize primarily its connection with Redemption.

This festival was instituted because of the miracle with the cruse of oil involved with the kindling of the menorah in the *Beis HaMikdash* [Temple]. Afterwards, the Hasmoneans dedicated the Temple ("They cleared Your Sanctuary and purified Your Holy Temple"). Mention of the Temple is an immediate reminder of the Redemption, and serves

tual influence into this world.¹ Yosef was "the *tzaddik*, the foundation of the earth,"² and he thus served as the medium through which was conveyed all the Divine influence to be dispersed throughout the world. Since spiritual truths were revealed to him through a dream, this became the pattern for the world at large. And so when information had to be conveyed to Pharaoh, the ruler of the entire world,³ it was conveyed through a dream.

This provides us with a lesson in our Divine service. When a Jew is challenged by base attitudes and desires, he must realize that they stem only from himself. We do not have to follow the lead of the world at large, nor should we adopt the view that in order to observe the Torah and its *mitzvos*, we must adapt ourselves to our environment.

The opposite is true. The existence of the world depends on the Jewish people. It is because a Jew has adopted a particular attitude or has a particular desire that these attitudes and desires exist in the world at large. It is only that the world at large does not appreciate that these motivations have their source in the Jewish people. (This lack of awareness stems from the concealment which lies at the heart of worldly existence. Indeed, the Hebrew for world *עולם* shares the same root as the word *העלם*, meaning "concealment."⁴)

This concealment makes it appear to a Jew that these "lower" desires and attitudes exist independent of him, and draw him toward them. The truth is, however, that they have their source in the Jew himself. And when a Jew exchanges his undesirable attitudes and desires for good ones, similar changes will be effected in the world at large.

1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.
 2. The text of "Ani Ma'amin - I believe" (Printed in several editions of the prayer book) based on the language of *Chabakuk* 2:3. *Commentary on the Mishneh* by Rambam, *Sanhedrin*, Introduction to chapter "Chelek," 12th Principle.

1. See the *Biurei HaZohar*, *Parshas Vayechi* (30a ff); Or *HaTorah*, the *maamar* entitled *Ben Poras Yosef* (386a), et al. See also the *sichah* of *Parshas Vayechi* in this series.
 2. Cf. *Mishlei* 10:25.
 3. See *Targum Sheni* to *Megillas Esther* at the beginning; *Mechilta*, *Beshallah* 14:5; *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 10a.
 4. *Likkutei Torah*, *Shelach*, 37d.

Moreover, even when it is impossible to say that the challenges a Jew confronts stem from his own character — because he is not at all tainted by such attitudes or desires, not even in more refined sense — these influences exist because of him. For the entire creation was brought into being for the sake of the Jewish people.⁵

Why do these influences exist? To present a challenge for him to overcome. When a Jew summons up the inner strength to remain immune, it will be revealed that the challenge was fundamentally in his own mind. For the status of the world at large is dependent on a Jew establishing himself forthrightly, taking his own concerns in hand.

WHAT YOSEF SEES IN HIS DREAMS, AND WHAT PHARAOH SEES

Although Pharaoh's dreams thus have their source in Yosef's dreams, they are of a fundamentally different nature. Yosef's dreams reflect the realm of holiness, and Pharaoh's the realm of *kelipah*. This is indicated by certain fundamental differences between them.⁶

a) Yosef's dreams begin with work: "We were in the field binding together sheaves."⁷ Pharaoh's dreams, by contrast, do not involve any activity on his part.

To explain: G-d is the ultimate perfection; He is the purpose of His own existence. Similarly, a Jewish soul is "an actual part of G-d,"⁸ and therefore its existence has a self-contained purpose; it is not an intermediary for anything else. As such, the influence imparted in the realm of holiness is

5. See *Osios d'Rabbi Akiva, Os Beis; Seder Rabbah, Bereishis 4; Vayikra Rabbah 36:4; Midrash Tanchuma* (Buber edit.) 3 Rashi and Ramban, commenting on *Bereishis 1:1*.
6. See also the *sichah* from *Parshas Vayeishev* in this series which focuses on these distinctions.
7. *Bereishis 37:6*.
8. *Tanya*, ch. 2.

stated above, in an age when the gentiles try to prevent the Jews from observing the *mitzvah*, it is sufficient to kindle the Chanukah light[s] on one's dining room table.⁵³ No gentile will prevent a Jew from doing that.⁵⁴

This factor can be explained on the basis of the concepts stated above. The *mitzvah* of lighting Chanukah candles reflects the connection of the essence of the soul with G-d's essence — a spiritual rung which cannot be affected by sin. As such, exile which comes as a result of sin (as we say in our prayers,⁵⁵ "Because of our sins, we were exiled from our land") can have no effect upon this *mitzvah*; no one can negate its observance. A gentile can issue a decree preventing a Jew from kindling a Chanukah light that shines outside his home; he cannot, however, frustrate the essence of the *mitzvah*, for the candles can be kindled within the home. As the *Ramban* states:⁵⁶ "The candles of Chanukah will never be nullified."

The concealment of G-dliness which characterizes exile (and in a larger sense characterizes our material existence as a whole) cannot prevent the light of Chanukah from shining.

(Adapted from the *sichos* of the 5th night of Chanukah, *Shabbos Parshas Mikeitz*, and *Zos Chanukah*, 5720)



53. *Shabbos 21b*.
54. Translator's note: Even at times when gentiles would attempt to stamp out the observance of the *mitzvah* of Chanukah lights, one could fulfill the *mitzvah* (on its most basic level) by lighting a single candle on the dining room table. Nobody could object to a person sitting down to a candlelit meal.
55. *Musaf* service for Festivals. *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 258.
56. At the beginning of his commentary to *Parshas Behaalos'cha*. See the previous references to these statements at the beginning of this *sicha*.

they are not sufficiently developed to be affected by the *mesirus nefesh*.⁵⁰

But this lack does not detract from a person's *mesirus nefesh*. The power of *mesirus nefesh* exists within all Jews as an inherent potential, as our Sages state:⁵¹ "A Jew, even though he sins, remains a Jew." In this instance, however, the *mesirus nefesh* has become an active force.

WHAT EXILE CANNOT OBSTRUCT

On the basis of the above, we can appreciate a factor which distinguishes the Chanukah candles from all other *mitzvos*. With regard to all the other *mitzvos*, there is a possibility that a gentile will prevent a Jew from observing them. Even with regard to the three *mitzvos* concerning which it is stated:⁵² "You should die rather than transgress," a gentile's oppression can have an effect.

Consider: Although a gentile cannot cause a Jew to nullify the observance of these *mitzvos*, he can prevent the Jew from fulfilling them. For if the Jew will remain firm in his observance and sacrifice his life, he will be killed, and the *mitzvos* will no longer be observed.

With regard to the *mitzvah* of Chanukah, by contrast, there is no way that a gentile can negate its observance. For as

50. To cite an example of how a person's essential powers may not affect his conscious self. Our Sages (*Berachos* 63a, see *Ein Yaakov*.) say that a thief calls upon G-d before breaking into a home. On one hand, his faith is aroused, as reflected in his calling upon G-d. Simultaneously, this arousal does not affect his revealed powers.

A similar concept can apply with regard to *mesirus nefesh*. It is possible that a Jew who gives up his life *al kiddush HaShem*, to sanctify G-d's Name, may be lax in the observance of a particular *mitzvah*, for his revealed powers have not been affected. {*Tanya* (ch. 18) states that even the most base and unrefined individuals are prepared to sacrifice their lives *al kiddush HaShem*. In spite of their self-sacrifice, they may remain base and unrefined from the standpoint of their revealed powers.} (See also *Kuntres HaAvodah*, ch. 5.)

51. *Sanhedrin* 44a.

52. *Sanhedrin* 74a; *Shulchan Aruch*, *Yoreh De'ah* 157a.

granted to the Jews by G-d in the most complete and rewarding manner.

And therefore work is necessary. Otherwise, the influence received would be "bread of shame,"⁹ and would not reflect the ultimate good.

In the realm of *kelipah*, things are different. *Kelipah* has no self-contained purpose; it exists only to serve another entity. As such, the Divine influence it receives need not be conveyed in a perfect manner. And therefore influence is granted unearned,¹⁰ for the recipient is not an entity of genuine worth.

b) Yosef's dreams follow the pattern of "Always ascend higher with regard to holy matters."¹¹ In the first dream, he begins with ears of grain — separate and distinct entities — which are then bound together into sheaves, i.e., division gives way to unity. And this pattern leads to the second dream, which proceeds to the celestial plane, speaking about the sun, the moon, and the stars.

Even in the most material sense, this reflects an upward progression. Sheaves are more valuable than individual stalks of grain, and gems — whose lustre is derived from the stars¹² — are far more valuable than sheaves.

The dreams of Pharaoh, by contrast, follow a downward trend. The first dream concerns cows, members of the animal kingdom, and the second concerns ears of grain, plants, which are on a lower level. Moreover, the order of the dreams should logically have been the reverse, first the ears of grain, and then the cows. For the condition of cows — whether they are "healthy" or "lean" — depends on whether the ears of grain (their food) are full or thin. Nevertheless, since the gen-

9. *Yerushalmi*, *Orlah* 1:3; *Likkutei Torah*, *Tzav* 7d.

10. See *Sifri* and *Rashi* to *Bamidbar* 11:5; see also *Yoma* 75a and *Zohar*, Vol. II, p. 128a.

11. Cf. *Shabbos* 21b.

12. *Likkutei Torah*, the *maamar* entitled *ViSamti Kadcad*.

eral pattern of the realm of *kelipah* is characterized by descent, the order was reversed.

Furthermore, even within each dream the pattern is one of decline. First Pharaoh saw healthy cows, and then lean ones. First he saw “full, good” ears of grain, and then “thin, scorched” ones. And the downward trend continued, as the healthy cows and grain were swallowed up by the lean ones.

This pattern was also reflected in the interpretation of the dreams. First came the years of plenty, and afterwards the years of famine — a famine so great that “because of that famine, there will be no way of telling that there was once plenty.”¹³

(The fact that the famine would in turn be followed by years of plenty was not revealed to Pharaoh because this plenty did not come because of him. The plenty which the land was granted later came as a result of Yaakov’s blessings.¹⁴)

GROWTH ORIENTATION

This reflects the difference between the realm of holiness and the realm of *kelipah*. The realm of holiness is characterized by eternality, and unchanging permanence. There are variations, but these reflect a tendency toward growth: “Always ascend higher with regard to holy matters,” and “They shall go from strength to strength.”¹⁵ Since these variations involve growth, they are not considered changes.

(We find from time to time that a Jew may actually undergo a descent. Moreover, this pattern is rooted in the Jew’s spiritual source. *Knesses Yisrael* — which is identified with the *Sefirah* of *Malchus*, also follows a pattern of fluctua-

TO REVEAL WHAT CANNOT BE REVEALED

The reason that the Chanukah candles should produce light which can be seen by everyone, and which attracts public notice, can be explained as follows. The highest levels of G-dliness, those which transcend the natural order — even the essence of G-d Himself, as it were — must be drawn down to this material realm.⁴⁸ These levels of light transcend the limits of our material world. Nevertheless, the ultimate intent is that they be drawn down in a manner that will enable them to permeate also our material frame of reference.

There is a parallel to this in our Divine service. The fundamental intent of the power of *mesirus nefesh*, which reflects the essential bond between a Jew and G-d, is not to arouse and illuminate our revealed powers of intellect and emotion. The fundamental purpose is the *mesirus nefesh* itself, and the bond with G-d which is established through it. Nevertheless, in the most complete sense, *mesirus nefesh* should also be openly apparent, and should affect our revealed powers, spurring them to deeper involvement in the Torah and its *mitzvos*. For as explained in *Tanya*,⁴⁹ observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* is dependent on *mesirus nefesh*. Nevertheless, even when, ח”ו, a person’s *mesirus nefesh* does not have a direct effect on his observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos* (as it is possible that a Chanukah lamp will not provide light for another person), there is nothing lacking in the *mesirus nefesh per se*. There is only a lack in the person’s revealed powers;

G-d’s kindness, is thematically related to the two, because the transcendent light which they convey cannot be grasped and appreciated; all that we can do is to thankfully acknowledge its influence.)

The transcendent light which the Chanukah candles and the Priestly Blessing draw down does have an effect within the world. Nevertheless, this effect is not bound by the limits of our world. On the contrary, it follows the pattern of “His word runs most swiftly” and is revealed in a transcendent manner (*Tehillim* 147:15). (See *Likkutei Torah*, the conclusion of *Parshas Korach*.)

48. This transforms our world into a dwelling for G-d. See *Tanya*, chs. 33 and 36.

49. The conclusion of ch. 25.

13. *Bereishis* 41:31.

14. See *Rashi’s* commentary, *Bereishis* 47:19.

15. *Tehillim* 84:8.

e.g., higher than 20 cubits,⁴⁴ or at time when they will not be seen,⁴⁵ he is not considered to have fulfilled the *mitzvah*.

To explain: The *mitzvah* of kindling Chanukah candles is to light a lamp which provides light for people.⁴⁶ This light must also be positioned in a place where it can publicize the Chanukah miracle. There is, however, no obligation that others actually see the Chanukah lights. All that is necessary is that the candles produce a light which *can* be seen by others.⁴⁷

44. *Shabbos* 22a; note Rashi's commentary. See also Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Chanukah* 3:3, 4:12.

45. See the conclusion of ch. 673 in the *Beis Yosef*, the *Maharshal*, the *Magen Avraham*, the *Chemed Moshe*, and others.

46. Similar to the *Menorah*, which the Torah (*Bamidbar* 8:2) states must "shine."

47. To cite a parallel: With regard to the mixture of oil and flour for the meal offerings, our Sages explain (*Menachos* 103b) that although the Torah says they should be mixed together, as long as they are *fit* to be mixed together, the offering is acceptable even though the flour and oil are not actually combined.

The concepts explained in the text above can be extended to serve as the basis for the interpretation of the difference of opinion between our Sages (*Shabbos* 21b) as to whether it is permissible to derive benefit from the Chanukah candles. The opinion which permits deriving benefit maintains that the light of the Chanukah candles, though transcendent in nature, also produces benefits that can be appreciated within the natural order.

The opinion which maintains — and which is accepted as *halachah* — that it is forbidden to benefit from the light of the Chanukah candles holds that the purpose of this light is not to effect change with regard to our immediate temporal concerns, for this light transcends the natural order. Even the changes which it *does* effect in the world are distinct from ordinary worldly matters. (Both of these concepts are reflected in the nature of oil: On one hand, oil permeates all objects. Simultaneously, it does not become mixed with any other liquid.) Since this transcendent light does not enclothe itself within the world and adapt itself to its limits, the process of transmission to lower levels does not cause it to undergo contraction.

This can be connected to the Ramban's statements (in his commentary to the beginning of *Parshas Behaalos'cha*) that the Chanukah candles and the priestly blessing will never be nullified. For the Chanukah candles and the priestly blessing share a common factor: They draw down a light which transcends the natural order.

(This points to another connection between the two. The commemoration of Chanukah in our prayers is through the recitation of *Hallel*, and the addition of the prayer *Al HaNissim* in the blessing *Modim*. The Priestly Blessing is also recited after the blessing *Modim*. Moreover, *hodo'ah*, acknowledgment of

tion, sometimes ascending, sometimes descending.¹⁶ Nevertheless, in an ultimate sense, these fluctuations cannot be seen as changes. In the personal sphere, even on the material plane, the true desire of a Jew remains always to fulfill the Torah and its *mitzvos*,¹⁷ and to advance in holiness. At all times, even at a time of sin, a Jew remains faithful to Him.¹⁸

Similarly, with regard to the *Sefirah* of *Malchus*, the intent of all the descents is for ascent, and more particularly, for the ultimate ascent — "the day which is all *Shabbos* and rest for life everlasting."¹⁹ Since "wherever a person's desire is, there he himself is to be found,"²⁰ all the stages of descent are, when taking an inward glance, not phases of change, but rather part of the pattern of rest — i.e., the absence of change — to which our desire and intent is directed.)

Kelipah, by contrast, is characterized by change and decline. The reason is because *kelipah* does not have a self-contained purpose for its existence. The entire reason for its being is to present a person with a challenge, and thus spur him to summon up deeper resources of holiness. The more steadfast a person remains, the less he needs external challenges to push him forward. Thus the existence of *kelipah* becomes weaker, following the pattern which our Sages outlined: "When one ascends, the other descends."²¹

This difference is reflected in the fact that the bulls offered during the festival of Sukkos, which parallel the 70

16. See *Torah Or*, *Hosafos*, p. 118a.

17. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Geirushin*, conclusion of ch. 2.

18. *Tanya*, concl. of ch. 24.

With regard to *kelipah*, we find the expression (*B. Basra* 16a): "The intent of the *Satan* and *Peninah* was for the sake of heaven." But as explained in *Likkutei Torah* (*Chukas* 62a), this applies only with regard to the spiritual source of *kelipah*, and not to its existence on the material plane.

19. Cf. the conclusion of tractate *Tamid*.

20. The *Baal Shem Tov* as quoted in the series of *maamarim* entitled *Mayim Rabim*, 5636, ch. 113; *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntresim*, p. 818, *Likkutei Dibburim*, p. 226, *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. I, p. 66.

21. Rashi, commentary to *Bereishis* 25:23; see *Tanya*, ch. 13.

nations of the world,²² are reduced in number each day,²³ while holiness follows a pattern of continual increase, as indicated by the number of Chanukah candles we light every night.

REAPING WHAT ONE SOWS

The second point — that a Jew’s achievements come through work — is also of fundamental importance. There are times when a person thinks he will receive certain blessings without any labor on his part. He must know that this approach comes from his animal soul, which stems from *kelipah*, since only *kelipah* can receive influence without work. And he must understand that any blessings which he *does* receive in this manner will — like everything that has its source in *kelipah* — follow a pattern of decline, and ultimately disappear.²⁴

When, by contrast, a person dedicates himself to serious work, he will merit fulfillment of the promise²⁵ “You labored and you discovered.” He will achieve success far out of proportion to the amount of effort invested. And this will inspire continued growth, following the pattern: “Always ascend higher with regard to holy matters.”

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev*, 5720)



22. *Sukkah* 55b; cited by *Rashi* in his commentary to *Bamidbar* 29:18.

23. See *Sukkah* 47a, and *Rashi*’s commentary.

24. See *Kuntres U'Mayon*, end of ch. 7.

25. *Megillah* 6b.

observance, the Torah brings peace to the world.⁴⁰ This parallels the *Shabbos* candles, which are kindled for the sake of “peace in the home.”

Another purpose of Torah study is to connect the Jewish people with G-d.⁴¹ This parallels the lights of the *Menorah*, which served as testimony that the Divine Presence rests with the Jewish people.

The highest level of Torah study is *Torah lishmah*, the study of Torah for its own sake, without any other intent. It is this approach to Torah study which binds a Jew with G-d’s essence.⁴² And with regard to G-d’s essence (and similarly with regard to the Torah, which is one with G-d’s essence) it is impossible to say that He exists for a purpose outside of Himself. This dimension is paralleled by the Chanukah candles.⁴³

THE POTENTIAL IS SUFFICIENT

As stated above, publicizing the Chanukah miracle is merely an incidental factor, and is not the fundamental purpose of kindling the Chanukah candles. This concept is not refuted by the law which states that if a person lights Chanukah candles in a place where they will not be seen by others,

40. *Sifri*, quoted by the *Rambam* at the conclusion of *Hilchos Chanukah*. See also the *maamar* entitled *Heichaltzu* and its explanation in *Likkutei Torah*. Note the interpretation given for our Sages’ statement (*Sanhedrin* 99b): “Whoever occupies himself with the Torah for its own sake brings about peace....”

41. See *Zohar*, Vol. III, p. 73a. See also *Tanya*, chs. 5, 52, and 53.

42. See *Tanya*, ch. 23, and the notes of the *Tzemach Tzedek* to that chapter.

43. On this basis, it is possible to explain the statements of the *Ramban* in the name of the *Midrash* in his commentary at the beginning of *Parshas Be-haalos’cha*, which mention that the lamps of the *Menorah* always point to the center of the *Menorah*. The *Ramban* explains that this passage refers to the Chanukah candles, and as such, the question arises: What is the connection of the Chanukah candles to the center of the *Menorah*?

The Hebrew word translated as “center,” *pnei*, also means “inner dimensions.” The Chanukah candles, which refer to the Torah as it is united with G-d’s essence, reflect this inner light. See *Tanya*, *Kuntres Acharon*, the essay beginning *David Zemiros Keris lihu*.

Since the miracle of the Chanukah lamp reveals a connection between the Jews and G-d that transcends all limits, our Sages ordained that the fundamental celebration of Chanukah reflect this bond. Therefore they ordained that we light candles³⁶ commemorating the miracle which transpired with the cruse of oil, instead of the military victory (which is commemorated with prayers of praise and thanksgiving). This points to the transcendent bond which the Jews share with G-d.³⁷

Accordingly, we can appreciate why the light of the Chanukah candles has a self-contained purpose. They reflect the bond with G-d's essence. That itself is their purpose; there can be no other objective for them.

THREE PLANES OF LIGHT

As mentioned above, in general, the purpose of the *Shabbos* candles, the candles of the *Menorah*, and the Chanukah candles is to produce light. Our Sages say:³⁸ "There is no light other than the Torah, as it is written:³⁹ 'A *mitzvah* is a candle, and the Torah, light.'" Thus the light produced by all these three types of candles is Torah. The three types of candles allude to three different types of light, three different approaches to studying the Torah.

One of the purposes of Torah study is to become knowledgeable concerning the observance of the *mitzvos*, knowing what and how we are required to observe. Through this

36. See *Tosafos*, *Sukkah* 46a; *Magen Avraham* 676:1; the gloss of the *Tzaphnas Paneach* to the *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Chanukah* 3:3.

37. This concept is also reflected in the number of candles lit: eight. For as explained above, the number eight is associated with a transcendent dimension. Similarly, it is reflected in the fact that it is the universal custom to observe this *mitzvah mehadrin min hamehadrin*, in the most careful and beautiful manner. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. I, p. 92.

38. *Taanis* 7b.

39. *Mishlei* 6:23.

CHANUKAH

THE GREATNESS OF PEACE

At the conclusion of his discussion of the laws of Chanukah, the *Rambam* writes:¹

If [a person has the means to perform only one of two *mitzvos*,] lighting a lamp for one's home [i.e., the *Shabbos* candles] or a Chanukah lamp; or a lamp for one's home or the sanctification of the day (*Kiddush*), the lamp for one's home is granted priority, since it generates peace within the home....

Peace is great. Indeed, the entire Torah was granted solely to bring about peace in the world.

The question arises: Why does the *Rambam* explain the importance of peace in the portion of the *Mishneh Torah* dealing with the laws of Chanukah? It seems that it would have been more appropriate to state this law in *Hilchos Shabbos*. Indeed, the law applying to *Kiddush* which the *Rambam* quotes² has no connection with the laws of Chanukah. And stating the law in *Hilchos Shabbos* would not have prevented him from adding the conclusion concerning the importance of peace.

1. *Mishneh Torah*, *Hilchos Chanukah* 4:14.

2. Although the *Rambam's* words are quoted from the source for this law in the *Talmud* (*Shabbos* 23b), he elaborates on the connection between the two more than in the original text.

TWO FREQUENCIES OF LIGHT

This question can be resolved by explaining the difference between the lamps of the *Menorah* in the *Beis HaMikdash* and the Chanukah lamps. Among the differences between these two *mitzvos* are:

a) the lamps of the *Menorah* were kindled *within the Sanctuary*, while the Chanukah lamps are kindled “at the *outside* of the entrance to one’s house.”³

b) the lamps of the *Menorah* were kindled during the day, while the Chanukah lamps are kindled “after sunset,”³ with the intent that they burn into the night.

The lamps of the *Menorah* were kindled in a place where holiness was overtly revealed, in the *Beis HaMikdash*. There the concealment of G-dliness which characterizes our material world was not apparent. Therefore, when the Greeks brought impurity into the *Beis HaMikdash*, all the elements of sacrificial worship carried out there, and in particular the kindling of *Menorah*, were nullified.

The Chanukah candles serve a different purpose. Their intent is to illuminate our environment and brighten the darkness of night, i.e., the exile. Indeed, the Chanukah lights have the potential to negate the forces of evil. This is alluded to in our Sages’ statement⁴ that the candles should burn until “the feet of the Tarmudites depart from the marketplace.” The Hebrew name *Tarmud* (תרמוד) shares the same letters as the word *moredes* (מורדת), “rebellious one,” and refers to the forces of evil.⁵

3. *Shabbos* 21b.

4. *Ibid.*

5. See *Kehillas Yaakov* (written by the author of *Melo HaRo'im*), entry *Tarmud*. This concept, as are all the elements of *Pnimitiyus HaTorah*, is also reflected in the teachings of *Nigleh*, the revealed realm of Torah law. As evident from our Sages’ statements (*Yevamos* 16b), there were servants of King Shlomo who rebelled against him, fled, and intermingled with the Tarmudites. King Shlomo

What the Greeks objected to was the Jews’ commitment to observe the *chukim* because of *kabbalas ol*, without seeking any rationale. They opposed the desire to obey solely because the *mitzvos* are G-d’s will.³²

This explanation also enables us to understand why the Greeks made the oil in the *Beis HaMikdash* impure rather than destroying it or stealing it. The laws of ritual purity and impurity are also *chukim*, transcending the limits of mortal knowledge. As the *Midrash* states:³³ “The Holy One, blessed be He, declares: ‘This is a statute which I have instituted, a decree which I have ordained. You have no permission to violate it.’” There is no reason in mortal logic why a corpse should impart ritual impurity, or why a *mikveh* should impart ritual purity. These are decrees from G-d which the Jews must observe. Since ritual impurity is a concept which transcends mortal intellect, the Greeks strove against it, and “made all the oil in the Sanctuary impure.”³⁴

Similarly, the Jewish response to the challenge presented by the Greeks transcended the limits of mortal intellect. The Jews fought the Greeks with *mesirus nefesh*; although the battle pitted “the weak against the strong,”²⁹ they were willing to sacrifice their lives for G-d, His Torah, and His *mitzvos*. Such self-sacrifice by nature exceeds any commitment inspired by understanding.

Comparable ideas apply with regard to the Chanukah miracle. By definition, every miracle transcends the limits of knowledge. In addition, the Chanukah miracle is unique in that it was wrought “to show [G-d’s] love for the Jewish people,”³⁵ a love which is not bound by the limits of reason.

32. See *HaYom Yom*, entry Teves 2.

33. *Bamidbar Rabbah*, at the beginning of *Parshas Chukas*; *Rashi*, beginning *Parshas Chukas*. See also the *Rambam*, *Mishneh Torah*, the conclusion of *Hilchos Mikvaos*.

34. *Shabbos* 22b.

35. Commentary of *Pnei Yehoshua* and *Rosh Yosef* to *Shabbos* 21b; Responsa *Chacham Tzvi*, ch. 87.

decrees of the Greeks in that age, the self-sacrifice of the Jews which brought about the miracle, the miracle itself, and the commemoration of the miracle as instituted by our Sages — revolve around one concept: the Jews' commitment to G-d, which transcends the limits of rational thought.

To explain: The intent of the decrees issued by the Greeks was “to make them forget Your Torah.”³⁰ The emphasis is on “Your Torah” — the Torah as it is connected with G-d, i.e., the G-dliness in the Torah which transcends rational thought. The Greeks did not object to the Jews studying the wisdom and logic of the Torah. But they desired that the Torah be studied without the appreciation that it is G-d's Torah.

Similarly, with regard to the observance of *mitzvos*, the Greeks' intent was to have the Jews “violate the decrees of Your will.”²⁹ The word “decrees” refers to the *chukim*, the *mitzvos* whose rationale transcends the limits of knowledge and which are observed out of a commitment of *kabbalas ol*, a desire to fulfill G-d's will. These were the *mitzvos* which the Greeks endeavored to stamp out.

More particularly, the Greeks would have accepted the observance of the *chukim* if the motive for this observance had a basis in logic. They would not have objected had the Jews said: It is true we do not understand the rationale for the *chukim*. Nevertheless, we rely on the fact that He who commanded their observance represents ultimate knowledge. Thus we can assume that the *chukim* also possess a rationale, although that rationale transcends the limits of ordinary mortal knowledge.³¹

30. The *Al HaNissim* prayer, *Siddur Tehillat HaShem*, p. 59.

31. There is, moreover, a foundation for such an approach within the Torah itself. *Bamidbar Rabbah* (19:2) quotes King Shlomo as saying: “I was able to comprehend all the [other difficult passages in the Torah], but with regard to the passage of the Red Heifer, I asked and I sought; ‘I said, ‘I will become wise,’ but I [saw] that it was far from me.” And similarly, with regard to Moshe, the *Midrash* (*loc. cit.*:6) states: “The Holy One, blessed be He, told Moshe: ‘To you [alone] will I reveal the rationale for the Red Heifer.’”

This indicates that the Chanukah lights possess a dimension which surpasses the lights of the *Menorah*. This is also reflected in the *Ramban's* commentary,⁶ which explains that the lights of the *Menorah* were negated by the influence of the Greeks, who desecrated the holiness of the *Beis HaMikdash*. The lamps of Chanukah, by contrast, will never be nullified. They will continue to shine even in exile, in the times of the greatest darkness.

This parallels the advantage which *baalei teshuvah*, those who repent, possesses over the righteous.⁷ The righteous have no connection to evil. A *baal teshuvah*, by contrast, has tasted evil, but through *teshuvah* has found the power to transform his past. Even intentional transgressions can be converted into merits;⁸ the evil itself becomes good.

These concepts are also reflected in the fact that we light a greater number of candles on Chanukah (eight) than in the *Beis HaMikdash* (seven). These numbers are also significant. Seven refers to perfection within the natural order, as reflected in the seven days of the week. This applies in our material world, and in the *Seder HaHishtalshelus*, the chain-like progression of spiritual realms. Therefore, in the *Beis HaMikdash*, where G-dliness was revealed, seven lamps were sufficient, for seven represents the light of the natural order.

“sat on the throne of G-d” (*I Divrei HaYomim* 29:23). Thus a rebellion against him constituted a rebellion against G-d, as it were.

This also reflects the advantage of the lights of Chanukah over the lights of the *Menorah* in the *Beis HaMikdash*. The revelation brought about by the *Menorah's* lights did not nullify the existence of the Tarmudites. On the contrary, they were partners in the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash* (*Jerusalem Talmud, Taanis* 4:5). The Chanukah lights, by contrast, cause the Tarmudites to depart, i.e., they nullify their existence, even their feet. The Chanukah candles eliminate all traces, even the lowest levels, “the feet,” of the denial of G-d's authority symbolized by the Tarmudites.

6. At the beginning of *Parshas Behaalos'cha*.

7. See *Berachos* 34b. See also *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5709, p. 183.

8. *Yoma* 86b.

When, however, the intent is to illuminate the darkness of exile, it is necessary to employ a light which *transcends* the natural order. Such a light is produced by the eight lamps kindled on Chanukah. For the number eight reflects a light that is not bound by any limits.⁹

FUSING TWO THRUSTS

Baalei teshuvah possess an advantage over the righteous; they draw down a higher level of light. Nevertheless, the righteous also possess an advantage over *baalei teshuvah*; they have nothing to do with evil. Their Divine service involves only good, and they are privileged to experience a far greater revelation of Divine light.

For this reason, the peak of Divine service involves the fusion of both approaches, that of the righteous and the *baalei teshuvah*. This will be accomplished with the coming of *Mashiach*, who will “motivate the righteous to turn to G-d in *teshuvah*.”¹⁰ The fusion of these two approaches is only made possible by a light which transcends both of them, and is therefore able to bring them both together.¹¹

The fusion of these two paths of service is also reflected in the Chanukah candles.¹² Their purpose is to illuminate the

9. See the Responsa of the *Rashba*, Vol. I, Responsum 9. See also the *maamar* entitled *Vayehi BaYom HaShemini*, 5704, where this concept is explained at length.

10. *Likkutei Torah, Shemini Atzeres*, 92b, *Shir HaShirim* 50b.

11. [Trans. note: Chassidic thought explains that there are two levels of transcendence: one which stands in opposition to limitation, and one which is a borrowed term, for it is neither limitation or its opposite, and instead represents a totally different plane. *Teshuvah* relates to the lower level of transcendence, while the level which unifies *teshuvah* with the service of the righteous refers to the higher rung.]

12. This concept also shares a connection to *Parshas Vayeishev* as reflected in the teachings of the Maggid of Mezeritch (*Or HaTorah*, at the beginning of *Parshas Vayeishev*). On the verse (*Bereishis* 37:1): “Yaakov settled in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan,” the Maggid focuses on the fact that the word *מורו*, translated as “sojourned,” also means “fear of.” Thus the verse can be interpreted to mean that even though Yaakov had settled in the

Chanukah candles even when kindling them does not publicize the Chanukah miracle.²⁵

This is not true with regard to the *Shabbos* candles. If they are lit in a manner that does not enable the purpose of generating peace in the home to be fulfilled, it is forbidden to recite a blessing upon them. For example, when several heads of families kindle *Shabbos* lights in a single candelabrum, the additional candles do not increase the functional dimension of the light. Therefore it is forbidden to recite a blessing on the additional candles.²⁶

With regard to Chanukah candles, the *Talmud* rules²⁷ that a candelabrum with two candleholders may be used by two individuals. Although the second candle does not cause the miracle to have been further publicized, the second person is also considered to be fulfilling the *mitzvah*, and should recite a blessing before doing so.

Similarly, the *Talmud* states²⁸ that in a time of danger,²⁹ when the Chanukah lights cannot be kindled in a manner that overtly publicizes the miracle, it is sufficient to light them on a table within one’s home, and a blessing should be recited. This indicates that publicizing the Chanukah miracle is an incidental reason for kindling Chanukah candles. Their fundamental purpose is the light which they produce.

A GLIMMER OF TRANSCENDENCE

The reason for the above distinction can be explained as follows: All the elements of the Chanukah miracle — the

25. E.g., a person living alone who kindles them within his home, as will be explained.

26. See *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 263:10, and the sources cited there.

27. *Shabbos*, *loc. cit.*

28. *Ibid.* 21b.

29. I.e., an era when the gentiles attempted to stamp out the observance of Chanukah. Before this time, Chanukah candles were kindled at the entrance to one’s home or courtyard. From this time onward, it became customary to kindle the lights indoors.

peace in the home. Similarly, with regard to the candles of the *Menorah*, it is written:²⁰ “The candles will shine,” i.e., they were kindled to produce light.

Similarly, the Chanukah candles were kindled to provide light. For this reason, it is necessary to explain²¹ that these lights should not be used for *Havdalah*, because it is forbidden to derive any benefit from them. Were we allowed to benefit from them, they could be used for the *Havdalah* ceremony, for their purpose is to provide light.

A distinction can, however, be made between the Chanukah candles on the one hand, and *Shabbos* candles and candles of the *Menorah* on the other. The *Shabbos* candles and the candles of the *Menorah* were kindled for a purpose: the *Shabbos* candles to establish peace in the home, and the candles of the *Menorah* to serve as “testimony to the world that the Divine Presence rests within Israel.”²² With regard to the Chanukah lights, by contrast, their purpose is in the light itself; they have no other purposes.

True, the *Talmud*²³ states that the purpose of the Chanukah candles is to “publicize the [Chanukah] miracle.” This does not, however, represent their fundamental purpose. Their fundamental purpose is to shine forth; incidentally, this light also publicizes the Chanukah miracle.²⁴ This explanation is borne out by the fact that we recite a blessing over the

20. *Bamidbar* 8:2.

21. *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chayim* 681:1). See the explanation of this concept in *Moadim B'Halachah*, by R. S. Zevin.

22. *Shabbos* 22b. See also the *Sifra* quoted by *Tosafos*.

23. *Ibid.* 23b.

24. The concept that the Chanukah candles were not intended for a purpose other than their light cannot be disputed because of the explanation given above that the Chanukah candles generate peace (indeed a higher dimension of peace than that generated by the *Shabbos* candles). Nor can a question be raised from the fact that kindling the Chanukah candles elevates the G-dly sparks en clothed in the oil. These concepts, like the concept of publicizing the Chanukah miracle, are incidental factors. The essential purpose of the Chanukah candles is solely their light; kindling them achieves a self-contained purpose.

night of exile. They are, however, rooted in the lamps of the *Beis HaMikdash*. For the Chanukah lamps were instituted to commemorate the miracle that took place concerning the lights of the *Menorah*, and they perpetuate that light.

This concept is also alluded to by the eight Chanukah lamps, for the number eight is associated with the Era of the Redemption. Thus our Sages relate¹³ that the harp used in the *Beis HaMikdash* had seven strings, but the harp in the Era of the Redemption will have eight. This refers to the revelation which transcends the natural order. This revelation is, however, itself encompassed by the influence of G-d's essence, which reflects the *ultimate* level of transcendence. And this level can fuse the Divine light which *permeates* the natural order (paralleled in the context of Divine service by the devotion of the righteous) with the Divine light which *transcends* the natural order (paralleled by the commitment of *baalei teshuvah*).

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN CHANUKAH AND PEACE

On this basis, we can understand why the *Rambam* underscores the greatness of peace in *Hilchos Chanukah*. Peace refers to the establishment of unity between opposing thrusts.¹⁴ With regard to opposites, there are several levels. With regard to the matter at hand — peace in the home — we are speaking about establishing unity between the elements of

land — in our material world — he was still absorbed in the fear of his Father in Heaven. Although he lived in the land of Canaan, among wicked people (as *Hoshea* 12:8 states: “Canaan, in his hands are crooked scales”), he did not learn from their actions.

(There is a similar explanation in *Torah Or*, *loc. cit.*, focusing on the fact that the above verse mentions the word “land” twice. The explanation in *Torah Or*, however, speaks of a higher level, the sublime unity, and the lower unity.) The repetition of the word “land” refers to the approaches of the righteous and the *baalei teshuvah*. Both are mentioned in the same verse, indicating a connection between them.

13. *Erchin* 13b. See also *Likkutei Torah*, *Tazria* 21d.

14. See *Tanya*, *Iggeres HaKodesh*, the conclusion of Epistle 30.

the house and their ultimate purpose, the indwelling of the Divine Presence. For every Jewish home is “a sanctuary in microcosm”¹⁵ where the Divine Presence rests.

In particular, this refers to the establishment of peace between a husband and wife. (For the term “his home” is also employed to mean “his wife.”¹⁶) Although men and women have opposite tendencies, they can complement and assist each other.¹⁷

The kindling of *Shabbos* candles was instituted to bring about peace in the home.¹⁸ Similarly, the Chanukah candles are also intended to bring about peace. Indeed, they are intended to bring about an even higher level of peace: peace between darkness (the time when the Chanukah candles are lit) and light, between the natural order and the light that transcends the natural order.

To explain this in terms of our Divine service: There are two dimensions of the Chanukah lights:

15. Cf. *Megillah* 29a.

16. *Yoma* 2a. See also *Shabbos* 118b.

17. See *Yevamos* 63a, commenting on *Bereishis* 2:20.

18. See *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 263:1 which explains that the reason for kindling *Shabbos* candles is to establish peace, so that one of the members of the family will not trip over an article left on the floor, and for this reason enter into strife with another family member. Similarly, lighting *Shabbos* candles is associated with *Oneg Shabbos*, *Shabbos* pleasure. In particular, this refers to the time when a person eats, for all of a person's physical needs can be referred to by the term “eating.”

The explanation of the fusion of the opposite tendencies of a man and his wife relates to the *Rambam's* statements in *Hilchos Chanukah*, where as a reflection of the greatness of peace, he cites the fact that “G-d's Name is blotted out to establish peace between a husband and wife.” Similarly, the above explanations enable us to understand why the *Rambam* refers to the *Shabbos* candles with the term “a lamp for one's home,” rather than by name. (Indeed, in the passage from *Shabbos* 23b, it is necessary for *Rashi* to explain that the intent is *Shabbos* candles.) For the importance of the *Shabbos* candles in this context is the peace they establish within the home.

a) The dimension of *teshuvah*, i.e., that darkness will be illuminated, establishing peace between entities that appreciate their selfhood and G-d.

b) The fusion of the service of *teshuvah* with the service of the righteous, so that the light which transcends the natural order will shine within the natural order.

This is the ultimate intent. When, however, a person lacks resources, his first priority must be the establishment of peace in the home, and not the illumination of his environment. Thus kindling *Shabbos* candles, establishing peace in the home, is given precedence.

(Adapted from *Sichos Shabbos Parshas Vayeishev*, 5722)

THE PURPOSE OF LIGHT

There is a difference between the Chanukah lights and other candles kindled to observe *mitzvos*. Indeed, this distinction applies even with regard to the lights of the *Menorah*, which are the source for the *mitzvah* of lighting Chanukah candles. Other lights associated with *mitzvos* are merely intermediaries through which one can reach a desired goal. The Chanukah candles, by contrast, are not intermediaries; the light they produce represents their purpose.

To explain: In general, the other lights associated with *mitzvos* can be divided into two categories:

a) lights kindled for the sake of honor, such as those kindled in a *shul* to enhance the honor of the building. They are not lit for the sake of their light, and therefore the blessing *borei meorei ho'eish*, recited during the *Havdalah* ceremony, may not be recited on these candles.¹⁹

b) candles kindled for the sake of their light. For example, the *Shabbos* candles are kindled so that their light will bring

19. *Berachos* 53a; *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 298:17.