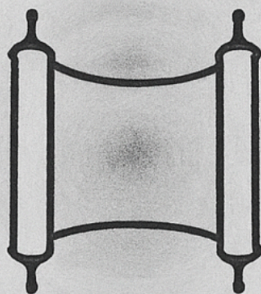


בס"ד

**Menachem Nachum
of Chernobyl
Me'or Einayim
Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah**



Dedicated In Honor Of:

הַנֶּזֶה

To find more Maamarim and to dedicate one visit:

ChassidusNow.com

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

מאמר א

Our Sages taught: What is Chanukah. Our Sages taught: on the twenty fifth of Kislev etc. When the Greeks entered the Sanctuary etc. Seemingly one is forced to say the intent of his question is why it is called Chanukah and what he answered regarding this.

תנו רבנן מאי חנוכה דתנו רבנן בכ"ה בכסלו וכו' כשנכנסו יוונים להיכל וכו' הנה לכהוה על פרחו פונת קשיתו הוא למה נקרא חנוכה ומה תירץ לו על זה.

But the truth is that the word Chanukah is Chan–vav kaf–hei, for there is a measure called koh which is the attribute of kingship, for the king commands “koh yihyeh” and “koh yihyeh.”

אבל האמת הוא שמלת חנוכה הוא חנ"ו כ"ה שיש מדה הנקרא כה והיא מדת מלכות שהמלך הוא מצוה כה יהיה וכה יהיה.

Likewise this attribute commands in all the worlds and through it all worlds are conducted. Because of this the righteous have power to rule in all worlds because within them is the attribute of kingship of the Creator.

כמו כן המדה זו מצוה בכל העולמות ועל ידי מתנהגים כל העולמות ומפני זה הצדיקים יש בכחם למשול בכל העולמות מפני שיש בתוכם המדה מלכות של הבורא יתברך.

As the Sages said on the verse “A righteous one rules in the fear of God” (II Samuel 23:3). “Who rules over Me, the righteous person,” that the Holy One decrees a decree and the righteous one nullifies it.

וכמאמר רז"ל על פסוק צדיק מושל יראת אלהים (שמואל ב' כ"ג, ג) ומי מושל בי צדיק שהקדוש ברוך הוא גוזר גזרה וצדיק מבטלה.

And they asked in the Zohar that the Holy One Himself nullifies them, and it is explained with us many times, for “in all their distress He is distressed” (Isaiah 63:9).

והקשו בזוהר שהקדוש ברוך הוא בעצמו מבטלן וכמבאר אצלנו כמה פעמים מזה כי בכל צרתם לו (צד) (ישעיה ס"ג, ט).

And this is the secret of the exile of the Shekhinah, for this attribute of kingship is called Shekhinah because it dwells everywhere and is also called Kneset Yisrael for it gathers within itself all Israel.

והוא בסוד גלות השכינה שמדת מלכות הנ"ל נקרא שכינה מפני ששוכנת בכל מקום והיא נקראת גם כן כנסת ישראל שהיא כנסת בתוכה כל ישראל.

And all the troubles that Israel have, may mercy protect us, are in the secret of the falling of the Shekhinah, for kingship falls, as written “The Rock Who bore you, you weakened” (Deuteronomy 32:18).

וכל הצרות שיש לישראל רחמנא ליצילן הוא בסוד נפילת השכינה כפיכול שהיא מדת מלכות הנ"ל כמו (שפתוב צור ילדך תשי) (דברים ל"ב, י"ח).

And the righteous through their good deeds raise, as it were, the Shekhinah, as written “Give strength to God,” for Israel add strength to the heavenly entourage.

והצדיקים על ידי מעשיהם הטובים מעלים כפיכול השכינה כמו שפתוב תנו עז לאלהים שישאל מוסיפין כח בפמליא של מעלה.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

For this attribute is called the heavenly entourage, for it gathers all the upper attributes which all bestow into it, and when kingship is elevated all decrees and judgments are annulled.

וְהַמַּדָּה הַזֶּה נִקְרָאת פְּמִלְיָא נָשָׁל מַעְלָה שְׁכֻנָּה
בְּתוֹכָהּ כָּל הַמַּדּוֹת הַעֲלִיּוֹנוֹת שֶׁכָּלֶם מִשְׁפִּיעִים
בְּתוֹכָהּ וְכִשְׁמַדַּת מַלְכוּת נִתְעַלֶּית אֵז נִתְבַּטֵּלוּ כָּל
הַגְּזֵרוֹת וְכָל הַדִּינִים

And it is known that the world was created for Torah and for Israel, and the purpose of creation was “that they should know Him,” to recognize the Blessed Name.

וְנוֹדָע שֶׁהָעוֹלָם נִבְרָא בְּשִׁבִּיל הַתּוֹרָה וּבְשִׁבִּיל
יִשְׂרָאֵל וְתַכְלִית כָּל הַבְּרִיאָה הִיטָה בְּגִין דִּישְׁתַּמּוּדְעִין
לֵיהּ שִׁיְהִיו מִכִּירִין אֶת הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ

But through what can they come to know Him. Only by cleaving to His attributes, as the Sages said “Just as He is merciful, so you be merciful.”

אֲבָל בְּאִיזָה אוֹפֵן יְכוּלִין לְהִגִּיעַ לְהַכִּיר אוֹתוֹ יִתְבָּרַךְ
אִי־אֶפְשָׁר כִּי אִם עַל יְדֵי הַדְּבָקוֹת בְּמַדּוֹתָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ
בְּמֵאֲמַר רַז"ל מִה הוּא רַחוּם אִף אַתָּה רַחוּם

Through this they can come to Him. At that time when the Greeks entered the Sanctuary it was in the secret of the fall of the Shekhinah and the forces of impurity gained power.

וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה יְכוּלִין לְבוֹא אֵלָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ וְהֵנָּה אֵז
כְּשֶׁנִּכְנְסוּ יְוֹנִים לְהִיכָל הָיוּ בְּסוּד נְפִילַת הַשְּׁכִינָה
כְּבִיכּוֹל וְנִתְגַּבְּרוּ הַקְּלִיפוֹת

And when Mattisyahu the High Priest who was a great tzaddik came, he taught the people to grasp His attributes, and kingship was elevated and all judgments nullified, and through this they defeated the Greeks.

וּבָבוֹא מַתִּיתְיָהוּ כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל שֶׁהָיָה צַדִּיק גָּדוֹל לָמַד דַּעַת
אֶת הָעָם לְאַחֵז בְּמַדּוֹתָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ וְנִתְעַלֶּית כְּבִיכּוֹל
מַדַּת מַלְכוּת וְנִתְבַּטֵּלוּ כָּל הַדִּינִים וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה נִצְחָה
אֶת הַיְּוֹנִים

And this is “when they entered etc. they defiled all the oils” for wisdom is called oil, meaning they defiled all wisdom, even the wisdom of Torah, learned with ulterior motives.

וְזֶה כְּשֶׁנִּכְנְסוּ וְכו' טִמְאוּ כָּל הַשְּׁמָנִים חֻקָּה נִקְרָא
שֶׁמֶן רֵצוֹן לוֹמַר שֶׁטִּמְאוּ כָּל הַחֻקִּמוֹת אֲפִלּוּ חֻקֵּי
הַתּוֹרָה נִטְמָאוּ כְּבִיכּוֹל שְׁלוּמִידִים בְּפִנְיֹת וּגְדִלוֹת

And when the kingdom of the Hasmoneans grew stronger etc. they found one cruse etc. One has the numerical value thirteen, meaning to grasp the thirteen attributes.

וּכְשֶׁגִּבְּרוּ מַלְכוּת בֵּית חַשְׁמוֹנָאִי וְכו' מִצְאוּ פֶּה אֶחָד
וְכו' אֶחָד גִּימַטְרִיָּאָה י"ג הֵינוּ לְאַחֵז בִּי"ג מַדּוֹתָיו
יִתְבָּרַךְ

Therefore the Greeks breached thirteen breaches in the Sanctuary because they did not grasp the thirteen attributes at first. Through this kingship fell and the forces of impurity strengthened.

וְכֵן פָּרְצוּ הַיְּוֹנִים י"ג פְּרָצוֹת בְּהִיכָל הֵינוּ מִפְּנֵי שְׁלֵא
אֶחָד בִּי"ג מַדּוֹתָיו יִתְבָּרַךְ בְּתַחֲלָה וְעַל יְדֵי זֶה נִפְלָה
מַדַּת מַלְכוּת כְּנ"ל

And afterwards when they returned to grasp the attribute of the Name, all workers of iniquity scattered. Understand this.

וְנִתְגַּבְּרָה הַקְּלִיפָה וְאַחַר זֶה כְּשֶׁחָזְרוּ לְאַחֵז בְּמַדַּת
הַשֵּׁם יִתְבָּרַךְ נִתְפָּרְדּוּ כָּל פְּעֻלֵי אָנוּ וְהִבּוּ

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

[NOTE Summary:

The maamar opens by asking what Chanukah truly means. Although the Talmud asks "What is Chanukah," the deeper question is why the day bears this name and what spiritual root it reflects. The explanation given is that the word Chanukah hints to the measure called koh, which is the attribute of malchut. Malchut is the divine channel through which all worlds receive their direction, and because the righteous contain within themselves a spark of this attribute, they are capable of annulling decrees and uplifting the Shekhinah.

Malchut is also known as the Shekhinah and Knesset Yisrael because it dwells with Israel and gathers all their souls. When Israel encounters suffering, it reflects a fall of malchut, as expressed in the verses cited. When the righteous perform good deeds, they uplift malchut, empowering the heavenly entourage and nullifying judgments. The purpose of creation is that humanity should come to know the Creator, which is achieved only by cleaving to His attributes.

At the time the Greeks entered the Sanctuary, their influence represented a fall of the Shekhinah and the strengthening of the forces of impurity. Mattisyahu the High Priest, a great tzaddik, taught the people to emulate the divine attributes, and through this elevation of malchut the decrees and judgments were annulled and Israel prevailed. The Greeks defiled all the oils, symbolizing their corruption of wisdom, even Torah wisdom when learned for ulterior motives. The single undefiled cruse they found hints to the thirteen divine attributes, and the thirteen breaches made by the Greeks show how these attributes had not been grasped at first. When Israel returned to hold fast to the divine measure, impurity dispersed.

Practical Takeaway:

Spiritual victory emerges through emulating the divine attributes. When a person acts with sincerity, mercy, humility, and truth, they elevate the inner malchut within themselves and within the world. This lifts the Shekhinah and dissolves negative spiritual forces. Every act of kindness, patience, or selflessness is a personal Chanukah, lighting a pure flame that cannot be extinguished by surrounding darkness.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Menachem Nochum of Chernobyl once visited a small village where the people were suffering from constant strife and misfortune. The villagers begged him for a blessing to remove the harsh decrees they felt hovered over their community. Instead of giving an immediate blessing, he asked them to gather in the study house and to share, one by one, a recent act of kindness they had performed without seeking recognition. At first only a few spoke, but gradually more came forward with simple gestures they had overlooked as significant. When they finished, the Rebbe said that these deeds had already lifted the decree. He explained that when a community strengthens the attribute of malchut within itself by acting with genuine compassion, the Shekhinah rises, and harsh judgments fall away. Shortly after his departure, the disputes subsided and the village regained harmony, fulfilling his teaching that sincere good deeds bring divine illumination. **END NOTE]**

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

מאמר ב

And it was at the end of two years etc. Behold the Torah that was given to us teaches that a person is a part of God above, and through the Torah a person can draw himself close to God.

ויהי מקץ שנתים ימים וגו' הנה התורה שנתנה לנו הוא כי האדם הוא חלק אלקי ממעל ועל ידי אמצעות התורה יוכל האדם לקרב את עצמו אל השם.

Therefore it is written "For what reason was the land lost" (Jeremiah 9:12). Until the Holy One explained it Himself: "Because they abandoned My Torah."

ולכן כתוב על מה אבדה הארץ (ירמיה ט', י"ב) עד שפירשו הקדוש ברוך הוא בעצמו על עזבם את תורתו.

And seven courts of judgment worshiped idols for the entire time they had not abandoned Torah, and through the light within it they could return to good.

ושבעה בתי דיניו שעבדו עבודה זרה כל זמן שלא עזבו את התורה ועל ידי המאור שבה יוכלו לחזור למוטב.

They were not punished yet; but upon abandoning Torah they were punished for those transgressions, for there was nothing to bring them back toward God.

לא נענשו עדין ובעזבם את התורה נענשו על העברות הנ"ל שלא היה בהם דבר שיוכלו לחזור ולשוב אל השם.

And it is written "At all times let your garments be white and let not oil be lacking on your head" (Ecclesiastes 9:8).

וכתוב בכל עת יהיו בגדיה לבנים ושמן על ראשה אל (יקה' ט', ח').

For from a mitzvah is made a garment, which is the rabbinic robe, and from a transgression God forbid are made filthy garments.

כי מן המצוה נעשה לבוש והוא חלוקת דרבנן ומן העבירה חס ושלום נעשה בגדים צואים.

Therefore a transgression brings another transgression, for the verse wonders "If a soul shall sin" (Leviticus 5:1).

ולזה עבירה גוררת עבירה כי הכתוב מתמיה ונפח (פי תהטא ויקרא ה', א').

For it would be fitting for the holy soul to yearn for serving God and not to commit a sin God forbid. But a person does not sin until a spirit of folly enters him.

כי מה ראוי הוא לנפש הקדוש להשתוקק אל עבודת השם ולא לעשות עבירה חלילה רק שאין אדם חוטא עד שנכנס בו רוח שטות.

And from this garment, which is filthy garments, the evil inclination grasps him by his garment and leads him to commit another sin.

ומזה הלבוש שהוא בגדים צואים או חזו היצר הרע. ובלבושו ומוליכו לעשות עוד עבירה.

Therefore regarding Yosef the righteous it is written "She seized him by his garment" (Genesis 39:12).

לכן ביוסף הצדיק כתוב ותתפשטו בבגדו (בראשית (ל"ט, י"ב).

For he was curling his hair because he saw himself elevated to authority, and she grasped him by this garment. He reflected that through this it was possible for her to seize him.

כי היה מסלסל בשערו מחמת שראה עצמו שנעשה שררה והאחיותו בלבוש הזה והיה מתבונן בזה. שחממת זה היה ביכולתה לתפשו.

"And he left his garment in her hand and fled and went outside," attaching himself to God and removing that garment.

ויעזב בגדו בידה וינס ויצא החוצה ודבק עצמו בה' ופשט הלבוש הנ"ל.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

For a Torah scholar who sinned during the day, do not ponder etc., for “there is no righteous person on earth” (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

פי תלמיד חכם שעבר ביום אל תהרהר וכו' פי אדם
(אין צדיק בארץ) (קהלת ז', כ')

Rather he immediately reflects and regrets and removes the garment so that the evil inclination cannot spread through it and drag him to another sin.

רק שהוא מתבונן תיכף ומתחרט ופושט הלבוש בכדי
שלא יוכל להתפשט בבגדו ולגרר לו עבירה אחרת

And likewise a mitzvah brings a mitzvah, forming the rabbinic garment. Therefore regarding Yerovam “He seized him by his garment” etc. and through this God seized for him another mitzvah.

וכמו כן מצוה גוררת מצוה שנעשה חלוקה דרבנן
לכן בירבועם תפסו בבגדו וכו' וכן תופסו השם לו
מצוה אחרת

And this is “At all times let your garments be white,” meaning your garments should be clean garments of mitzvot and not stained God forbid.

ונהו בכל עת יהיו בגדיה הניגו הלבושים שלך לבנים
שתתלבש בלבושים נאים של מצוות ולא מלוכלכים
חלילה

“And oil upon your head let not be lacking,” for oil alludes to wisdom, for olive oil brings wisdom.

ושמן על ראשך אל יחסר פי שמן מורה אל חכמה פי
שמן זית מחכים

And through your garments being pleasant God will draw upon you wisdom and knowledge, as written “For God gives wisdom, from His mouth knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:6).

ועל ידי שלבושיך יהיו נאים השם ימשיך עליך
חכמה ודעת בדכתיב פי ה' יתן חכמה מפיו דעת
(ותבונה) (משלי ב', ו')

For even though a person performs mitzvot and “your empty ones are filled with mitzvot like a pomegranate,” they are without knowledge and understanding to draw upon the person wisdom and knowledge.

פי הגם שאדם עושה מצוות פי ריקנים שבה מלאים
מצוות כרמון רק שהם בלא דעת ותבונה להמשיך על
האדם חכמה ודעת

Therefore God gave us the mitzvah of lighting the Chanukah lamp, for every mitzvah that we were commanded, when its time arrives, the event that occurred at the time of that mitzvah is reawakened as in ancient days.

לזה נתן לנו השם מצות הדלקת נר חנוכה פי כל
המצוות שנצטוינו בבוא עת וזמן של כל מצוה ומצוה
נתעורר הדבר שהיה בעת זמן המצוה כמאז ומקדם

For on Pesach they left Egypt, where they were in forty nine gates of impurity, and also physically they left Egypt; and now when the time arrives each person leaves his own shell of impurity.

פי בחג הפסח יצאו ממצרים שהיו במ"ט שערי טמאה
וגם בגשמיות יצאו ממצרים וכעת בבוא הזמן יוצא
כל אדם מקליפות שלו

And therefore we remove chametz, which is the side of impurity. And on Shavuot it is the receiving of the Torah to go in it all year to serve God.

ולכן מבערין חמץ שהוא סטרא אחרא ובשבועות
הוא קבלת התורה ללכת בה כל השנה לעבוד את
השם

And on Sukkot it is the Clouds of Glory that surround the person with the kindness of God, for kindness surrounds him.

ובסכות הוא ענני כבוד שמקיפין אותו בהסד אל פי
חסד וסובבנו

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

And on Purim is awakened the downfall of Haman, which is the downfall of the wicked among the nations, so that we can endure in the bitter exile.

והנה בפורים הוא מתעורר מפלת המן הוא מפלת הרשעים שבאומות העולם בכדי שנוכל להיות קיימים בגלות המר.

And on Chanukah it is a time to draw a person close to God through the Torah, just as in ancient days in the time of Mattisyahu son of Yochanan the High Priest.

ובחנוכה הוא עת לקרב האדם אל השם על ידי התורה. כמו מאז מקדם בימי מתתיהו בן יוחנן כהן גדול.

For the Greeks defiled all the oils, which are all forms of wisdom, and only one cruse of oil remained, which is the Torah, and only a tiny amount remained.

שהיונים טמאו כל השמנים הם כל החכמות ולא נשאר כי אם פך אחד של שמן היא התורה ולא נשאר כי אם מעט מזער.

And a miracle was made that although there was only a little for one day, it burned for eight days, for the world is built through seven days.

ונעשה נס שלא היה כי אם מעט על יום אחד ודלקו שמונה ימים כי העולם הוא נבנה על ידי שבועה ימים.

And after the completion of the seven, another seven begin; and this is called the seven days of building.

ואחר כלות השבועה מתחילין עוד ז' ימים אחרים. וזהו הנקרא שבועת ימי הבנין.

And Mattisyahu son of Yochanan served God with great understanding; this is the meaning of High Priest.

ומתתיהו בן יוחנן היה עובד את השם בשכל גדול. וזהו כהן גדול.

And through his service he drew down light to illuminate eight days, that is from the world of understanding to illuminate the eight lamps.

והמשיך בעבודתו להאיר שמונה ימים הינו מעולם הבינה להאיר שמונה הנרות.

And therefore the Chanukah lamp is above three handbreadths so it not be considered resting on the ground, and below ten handbreadths.

ולכן נר חנוכה הוא למעלה מג' שלא תהא כארעא. סמיכתא ולמטה מעשרה.

For the Shekhinah never descended below ten, yet God calculates thoughts so that none be banished; through a miracle God descends below ten to draw close a person and return him.

כי מעולם לא ירדה שכינה למטה מעשרה רק שהשם חושב מחשבות לבלתי ידח ממנו נדח היה על ידי נס שהשם בביכול מוריד למטה מעשרה ומתקרב אל האדם להשיבו ולהחזירו אליו.

That is, the oil hints to wisdom, as above, and "God gives wisdom, from His mouth knowledge and understanding" (Proverbs 2:6).

הינו שהשמן קרמז על חכמה כנ"ל וה' יתן חכמה (מפיו דעת ותבונה) (משלי ב', ו').

And He teaches a person understanding how to serve God with intellect and understanding, and all this is through the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah lamps.

ומלמד את האדם שכל איך לעבוד את השם ותברך בשכל ותבונה וכל זה הוא על ידי מצות הדלקת נרות חנוכה.

And as then so now, in every generation, when the time of this mitzvah arrives.

ונכאז בן עתה בכל דור בבוא עת וזמן מצוה זו.

Therefore our Sages said: wicks and oils with which we do not light on Shabbat, we may light with them on Chanukah.

ולכן אמרו חכמים זכרונם לברכה פתילות ושמנים שאין מדליקין בהם בשבת מדליקין בהם בחנוכה.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

For behold, a good gift in the treasure house of God He gave us, Shabbat, to draw a person close to his Creator.

פי הנה מתנה טובה שבת גנזי השם נתן לנו את השבת לקרב האדם אל בוראו.

For one who guards Shabbat properly, even if he worships idols like the generation of Enosh, he is forgiven, as written "One who guards Shabbat from desecrating it" (Isaiah 56:2). Do not read "from desecrating it," but "it is forgiven to him."

פי שומר שבת כהלכתו אפלו עובד עבודה זרה כדור אנוש מוחלין לו בדכתיב שומר שבת מחללו (ישעיה ב"ו, ב') אל תקרי מחללו אלא מחל לו.

But it is difficult for a person to enter into the holiness of Shabbat, for it is exalted and uplifted, for Shabbat is the Name of the Holy One.

רק שקשה עליו על האדם ליכנס בתוך קדשת שבת כי רם ונשא הוא השבת כי הוא שמה דקביה.

And how can a person draw close to such a high and exalted place. But on Chanukah, as it were, God lowers Himself below ten handbreadths to the person to draw him close.

ואיך יכול לקרב אל מקום גבוה ורם כזה אבל בחגכה כביכול השם מוריד את עצמו למטה מעשרה אל האדם לקרבו.

And this is "wicks etc. that we do not light on Shabbat etc." For just as in a lamp one places a wick and fills it with oil and lights it, so too a person is a wick, and oil is the wisdom with which God fills him and lights him.

וזהו פתילות וכו' שאין מדליקין בשבת וגו' כי כמו בנר נותנין לתוכו פתילה וממלאין אותה בשמן ומדליקו כמו כן האדם הוא פתילה ושמן הוא ההקמה שהשם ממלא בו ומדליקו.

So that he should shine through his deeds and his service of God. And the wicks are people who cannot be lit on Shabbat, for the light cannot cling to them.

להיות מאיר במעשיו ובעבודתו את השם והנה הפתילים הם בני אדם שאינם גדלים בשבת שהאור אין נאחז בו.

Because their wicks are not good, and the light flickers in them and cannot rise as mentioned above.

מחמת שהפתילים לא טובים והאור מסכסכת בהם ואי אפשר לעלות כנ"ל.

But they can be lit with wicks that are not good, as above, on Chanukah, for God Himself grasps the person and brings the light to cling to him.

ושאחז בהם האור מדליקין בפתילים אשר לא טובים כנ"ל בחגכה כי השם כביכול בעצמו מוריד את האור ומאחז בהם האור.

To light them and return them to God, to serve Him with fiery enthusiasm and great understanding, as above.

להדליקם ולשוב ולחזור אל השם ולעבדו בהתלהבות ובשכל גדול כנ"ל.

And this occurs every year when the time of the mitzvah of the Chanukah lamp arrives.

וזה נעשה בכל שנה בבוא הזמן של מצות נר חגכה.

And certainly before Mattisyahu there was no need for this mitzvah, except that in his time they defiled all the oils and only one cruse remained, which is the Torah.

ובודאי קדם מתתיהו לא היה צריך למצוה זה רק שבגמיו טמאו כל השמנים ולא נשאר כי אם פך אחד הוא התורה.

And only a few studied with small understanding, and he was a priest serving God with great understanding, and he drew down and lit the eight lamps.

והיו מעט שלמדו בשכל קטן והוא היה כהן עובד השם בשכל גדול והמשיך והדליק את שמונה הנרות.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

And a miracle occurred and the downfall of the Greeks happened, for God is hidden and revealed, and so too the Torah is revealed and hidden.

וְנִעְשָׂה גַם וְהִתְהַלַּח מִפְּלִתָם שֶׁל הַיּוֹנִים כִּי הַשֵּׁם הוּא סֵתוּם וְגִלְיָא וְכֵן הַתּוֹרָה נִגְלָה וְנִסְתָּר.

And “the hidden things are for the Lord our God and the revealed things are for us and our children” (Deuteronomy 29:28).

וְהִנֵּה הַנִּסְתָּרוֹת לַה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַנִּגְלֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ (דְּבָרִים כ"ט, כ"ח).

For there are many miracles God does in secret, as written “There is none besides Him,” and there are miracles revealed to us.

כִּי יֵשׁ הַרְבֵּה נִסִּים שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה הַשֵּׁם בְּנִסְתָּר אֵין עוֹד מִלְּבָדוֹ כְּתִיב וַיֵּשׁ נִסִּים נִגְלִים לָנוּ.

And this happens through our learning Torah in a hidden manner, a hidden miracle is done; and through revealed learning, a revealed miracle is done.

וְזֶה נִעְשָׂה עַל יְדֵי לְמוּדוֹ הַתּוֹרָה בְּדָרְךְ נִסְתָּר נִעְשָׂה גַם נִסְתָּר וְעַל יְדֵי נִגְלָה נִעְשָׂה גַם נִגְלָה.

And the one cruse of oil, meaning the Torah studied in the days of the Hasmoneans, was little because they learned with small understanding.

וְהִנֵּה כַּף אֶחָד שֶׁל שֶׁמֶן הָיוּ הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁלְּמָדוּ בִּימֵי חֲשֻמוֹנָאֵי הָיָה מְעַט כִּי לָמְדוּ בְּשִׁכְלָל קָטָן.

And he was the High Priest who served God with great understanding; therefore a great miracle was done through him.

וְהוּא הָיָה כֹהֵן גָּדוֹל שֶׁעָבַד הַשֵּׁם בְּשִׁכְלָל גָּדוֹל לָכֵן נִעְשָׂה גַם גָּדוֹל עַל יָדוֹ.

[NOTE Summary:

This maamar explains that every mitzvah reawakens the original spiritual illumination that occurred at the time of its first appearance in history. Pesach renews the power of leaving spiritual bondage, Shavuot renews the acceptance of Torah, Sukkot surrounds a person with divine kindness, and Purim renews the downfall of evil so that Israel can endure exile. Chanukah, however, is uniquely the time when God draws a person close to Him through the light of Torah, just as in the days of Mattisyahu the High Priest.

The Greeks contaminated all the “oils,” meaning all forms of wisdom. Only one pure cruse remained, representing Torah studied with purity, though in very small measure. Through the great spiritual understanding of Mattisyahu, the light of this tiny amount was drawn down to illuminate eight days. These eight days correspond to transcending the natural cycle of the seven days of creation and drawing from the upper world of understanding. The miracle of Chanukah is therefore the revelation of hidden divine light through human devotion.

From this arises the teaching of the Sages that wicks and oils unsuitable for Shabbat are permitted on Chanukah. Shabbat is lofty and requires a person to ascend into holiness; Chanukah, however, is the time when God descends, as it were, below ten handbreadths to draw close even those whose “wicks” cannot hold light on their own. Every human being is a wick, and wisdom is the oil God pours into the soul. On Shabbat some souls cannot hold the light because their wicks are not refined; but on Chanukah the divine light grasps them from above, igniting spiritual return and inner illumination.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

This process repeats each year when the mitzvah of the Chanukah lamps arrives. Before the days of Mattisyahu there was no need for this mitzvah, but after the Greeks defiled all wisdom and only a small portion remained, it was his profound understanding that drew down great miracles. Torah contains both revealed and hidden aspects, and God performs both revealed and hidden miracles. When Torah is learned in a hidden manner it awakens hidden miracles, and when learned in a revealed manner it awakens revealed miracles. The small cruse of Torah studied with limited understanding produced a vast miracle because it was uplifted by the great spiritual wisdom of the High Priest.

Practical Takeaway:

Chanukah is the time when God reaches down to ignite even those who feel unable to ignite themselves. If a person's "wick" feels too tangled, too distracted, or too unworthy to hold light, Chanukah assures him that God Himself draws close and causes the flame to catch. The work of the individual is only to make space for the oil of wisdom, to open the heart to learning and inner reflection. Even a small amount of sincere Torah, when held with purity, can release immense spiritual light. One should therefore approach Chanukah ready to be illuminated, trusting that the divine flame can take hold even in moments of personal dimness.

Chassidic Story:

It is related that Rabbi Menachem Nochum of Chernobyl once visited a town where many of the people felt spiritually discouraged. They told the Rebbe that they felt like "poor wicks," unable to hold inspiration even for a day. The Rebbe asked to see their Chanukah lamps. When they brought them out, he examined each wick carefully. Holding up one that was notably frayed, he said gently that this wick was like a weary soul: unable to draw light on Shabbat or in times of spiritual elevation, but perfectly capable of catching flame when a compassionate hand lights it. He then lit the wick himself, and the flame rose steady and bright.

He turned to the townspeople and said that this is what Chanukah does for every Jew. Even when a person cannot lift himself into holiness, God bends down, as it were, and lights the wick for him. In the days that followed, many of the townspeople began learning Torah again, even if only a little each day, and they found that the small flame they thought could not be sustained began to grow. The story became a cherished memory, reminding them and their children that God's light seeks every soul, even those who doubt their own ability to shine. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ג

And it is stated in the writings that "Paroh" is an expression of revelation. "The birthday of Paroh" means that the revelation was born. And it is written (Proverbs 6:9): "How long, lazy one, will you lie down; when will you arise from your sleep." For sleep is because of the withdrawal of the intellect from a person, due to its being preoccupied.

וְאֵימָא בְּכַתְבֵּיהֶם כִּי פְרַעְיָה לְשׁוֹן הַתְּגִלוֹת. יוֹם הַלְדָּת
אֶת פְּרַעְיָה שְׂנוּלֵד הַהִתְגִּלוֹת. וְכָתוּב (מִשְׁלֵי ו', ט') עֵד
מִתִּי עֲצַל תִּשְׁכַּב מִתִּי תִקּוּם מִשְׁנֵתָהּ. כִּי שְׁנָה הִיא
מִחֲמַת הַסְתַּלְקוֹת הַמִּחִין מִן הָאָדָם מִחֲמַת טְרִדָתוֹ.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

And a person, even though he performs commandments and studies Torah without intellect, is considered like one who is asleep. And then his Torah has no power to produce an open miracle. Only after he studies with intellect and understanding can he cause a miracle to be revealed as mentioned above.

And this is the meaning of "And it was at the end of two years of days." "Two years" is an expression of sleep. And it was from the conclusion of the completion of the days of sleep, when the person awakens from the sleep of time and studies with intellect and understanding.

And "Paroh" is revelation. "Choleim" is an expression of health, implying strengthened revelation of miracles. And behold, he is standing over the Nile, which is the Torah.

And behold, from the Nile ascend seven healthy and good cows. For "a person and an animal You save, O Lord" are human beings who are naked of knowledge and make themselves like an animal, for a person has nothing from himself. And whatever good and quality he has is from the Lord, for "the Lord gives wisdom, from His mouth" etc.

And behold, the seven attributes are: love, to love God; awe, to fear before Him; beauty, to glorify God; victory, to conquer the evil inclination, as "a person should always incite the good inclination against the evil inclination";

And glory, to thank God; and foundation, to be connected to all the above attributes; and kingship, to give rule and authority to God, to crown Him over the entire world.

Therefore the attributes are called cows, for a person must make himself like an animal, "and they grazed in the meadow," and the Targum translates "in unity."

For when a person hates his fellow, it is because of pride, for he imagines that he deserves honor and greatness and is jealous of his fellow.

But if he makes himself like an animal, he loves the entire world and has no hatred toward his fellow.

ואדם הגם שעושה מצות ולומד תורה בלא מוח הוא כמו ישן דמי. ואז אין כח בתורתו לעשות נס נגלה, רק אחר שלומד במוח ושכל יכול לגרום שיתגלה נס כנזכר לעיל.

וזהו ויהי מקץ שנתיים ימים. שנתיים לשון שנה. ויהי מסוף כלות ימי השנה, שנתיים האדם משנת הזמן ולומד במוחו שכל.

ופרעה הוא התגלות. חולם הוא לשון בריאות הדר חלים, שנתיים התגלות הנסים. והנה עומד על הניר. היא התורה.

והנה מן הניר עלות שבע פרות בריאות וטובות. כי אדם ובהמה תושיע יי הם בני אדם שערומים בדעת ומשימין עצמם כבהמה. כי האדם מגרמיה לית ליה כלום, ומה שיש בו איזה דבר טוב ומעלה הוא מן השם. כי יי יתן חכמה מפיו וגו'

והנה שבעה מדות הם אהבה לאהב את השם ויראה לירא מלפניו ותפארת לפאר את השם נצח לנצח את הניצח הרע לעולם ירגיז אדם יצר טוב על יצר הרע.

והוד להודות את השם ויסוד שיהיה מקושר אל כל המדות הנ"ל ומלכות הוא לתת ממשלה ושררות לשם להמליכו על כל העולם.

לכן נקראו המדות בשם פרות שצריך האדם להשים עצמו כבהמה ותרגמה באחו ומתרגם באחוא.

כי מה שאדם שונא את חבירו הוא מחמת גדלות ודומה לו שלו ראוי הכבוד והגדולה ומקנא לחבירו.

אבל אם משים עצמו כבהמה אז הוא אוהב את כל העולם ואין לו שנאה על חבירו.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

And behold, there are seven other cows, for the evil inclination comes to cause him to sin through the seven attributes: to love money and other pleasures;

והנה שבע פרות אחרות כי היצר הרע בא להחטיאו בשבעה המדות לאהב חמדת ממון ושאר תענוגים.

And to fear punishment; and to glorify himself; and to conquer his enemy; and to thank himself; and to be attached to all the above; and to rule himself.

ולירא את העונש ולהתפאר בעצמו ולנצח את שונאיו ולהודות את עצמו ויהא מקושר בכל דבר הנ"ל ולהשתרר הוא בעצמו.

“And the cows swallowed etc.” For even all the mitzvot a person does may give strength to the kelipah, God spare us.

ותבלענה הפרות וגו' כי גם כל המצוות שאדם עושה הוא נותן כח בקליפה רחמנא ליצילן.

And this is “and they swallowed,” meaning the kelipah swallows the Torah and the mitzvot.

ונהו ותבלענה כי הקליפה בולע רצון לומר את התורה והמצוות.

“And it was not known that they came into their innards etc.” Therefore when a person repents, intentional sins become merits, meaning he retrieves the merits from under the hand of the kelipah.

ולא נודע כי באו אל קרבנה וגו' ולכן בעשות האדם תשובה וזונות נעשין זכיות הינו שהזכיות שעשה מוציא אותם מתחת יד הקליפה.

“And Pharaoh awoke, and behold it was a dream.” When a person awakens from the sleep of time, then “it was a dream,” an expression of vigor, as above.

ויקץ פרעה והנה חלום כשמיקץ אדם משנת הזמן ונהנה חלום לשון הדר חלים כנ"ל.

And for this reason we read this portion on Chanukah, for Torah is advice, as the verse says “Mine is counsel” (Proverbs 8:14), advising a person how to serve God and return to Him.

ומהאי טעמא קורין פרשה הנ"ל בחגכה כי התורה הוא עצמה כמו שאמר הכתוב לי עצמה (משלי ח', י"ד) שמיעצת לאדם איה לעבוד את השם ולשוב אליו.

Therefore it is forbidden to use its light, for a person should have no ulterior motive except toward God alone, not for this world nor for the next.

נשמט לכן אסור להשתמש לאורה כי לא יהיה לאדם שום פניה בלתי לה' לבדו לא בשביל עולם הזה גם לא בשביל עולם הבא.

[NOTE Summary:

This teaching explains that Pharaoh symbolizes revelation. Just as Pharaoh's “birthday” is interpreted as the birth of revelation, so too spiritual awakening begins when a person rises from “sleep,” which represents a withdrawal of intellectual awareness. Torah and mitzvot performed without conscious mind are compared to spiritual sleep, during which one cannot draw forth revealed miracles. When a person reawakens his mind and studies with clear intellect, revelation becomes possible.

The verse describing “the end of two years” is reinterpreted as the end of a period of spiritual slumber, after which revelation, symbolized by Pharaoh, begins to strengthen. His standing over the river symbolizes Torah, the source from which the seven healthy cows emerge. These seven cows correspond to the seven emotional attributes: love, awe, beauty, victory, glory, foundation, and kingship. A person must make himself simple like an animal, free of pride, in order for these attributes to express holiness. When humility replaces ego, one can love all people and hold no hatred.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

But there are also seven negative counterparts through which the evil inclination seeks to distort each attribute: loving money and pleasures, fearing punishment instead of God, glorifying oneself, defeating enemies through ego, praising oneself, attaching the self to worldly pursuits, and seeking domination. Through these distortions, even one's mitzvot can empower the forces of impurity, symbolized by the cows swallowing the others. When a person repents, however, he retrieves his deeds from the grasp of impurity, and his intentional sins are transformed into merits.

When Pharaoh "awakens," it signifies a person awakening from the sleep of time, strengthening revelation once again. This portion is read on Chanukah because Torah is counsel that guides a person toward serving God with purity. The Chanukah lights symbolize service without ulterior motives; one must not use their light for personal benefit. The illumination is solely for God, reflecting a service directed without calculations for worldly or spiritual reward.

Practical Takeaway:

Spiritual awakening requires mindful engagement. Performing mitzvot or studying Torah mechanically, without presence of mind, leaves a person in a state of "sleep," unable to access deeper transformation. Real change begins when one awakens mentally and emotionally, approaching Torah with awareness and intention. By cultivating humility, removing ego, and directing each inner quality toward holiness, a person protects their spiritual energy from being swallowed by negativity. Chanukah asks us to serve God with pure intention, turning our focus fully toward the divine light rather than toward personal gain. Even small acts done with clarity and sincerity can ignite powerful inner revelation. **END NOTE]**

מאמר ד

The time for the measure of lighting the Chanukah lamp is

"until the feet cease from the marketplace." For one who is accustomed to the lamp merits sons who are Torah scholars, and certainly Torah scholars do not go out to the marketplace but are occupied with Torah. This is the meaning of "until the feet cease from the marketplace."

"Until the feet of the Tarmodites cease," for it is known that all mitzvot are time-bound, and when the time of the mitzvah arrives, the event that happened at the first time the mitzvah was commanded is reawakened.

On Pesach we left Egypt, and the main thing is that we left the forty nine gates of impurity. Likewise, every year when this festival arrives, each of us leaves our own shells of impurity.

זמן שיעור הדלקת נר חנוכה עד שתכלה רגל מן השוק כי מאן דרגיל בגר זוכה לבנים זכרים תלמידי חכמים ובודאי תלמידי חכמים אינם יוצאים לשוק כי אם עוסקים בתורה וזהו עד שתכלה רגל מן השוק.

עד שתכלה רגלי דתמודאי כי ידוע כל המצוות זמניות בבוא הזמן של המצוה נתעורר הדבר שהיה בעת הראשון כשנצטווה המצוה.

בחד המצות יצאנו ממצרים והעיקר שיצאנו ממ"ט שערי טמאה וכן בכל עת בא חג הנ"ל יוצאים אנהנו בגני ישראל כל אחד מקליפיות.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

For were it not for the festival of Pesach each year, it would not be possible for a person to strengthen himself in God.

פי לולא הנה חג המצות בכל שנה לא הנה אפשרי לאדם להתחזק בה'.

And on Shavuot every person receives the Torah, meaning the intellectual path by which he will serve God in that year.

וכן בשבועות מקבל כל האדם את התורה דהיינו שבאיזה שכל ילך לעבוד את השם באותה שנה.

And on Sukkot we are surrounded by the kindness of God, for "kindness surrounds him," as in ancient days when we were surrounded by Clouds of Glory.

ובסוכות אנו מקיפין בחסד אל וחסד יסוכבנו כמאז ומקדם שהיינו מקיפין בענני כבוד.

And on Purim is the time of the downfall of Amalek; so too now, in every generation, is the downfall of the wicked of the nations of the world.

ובפורים הוא עת וזמן מפלתה של עמלק גם עתה בכל דור הוא מפלתם של רשעי אומות העולם.

And on Chanukah, since there were haters of the religion who wished to cause Israel to abandon Torah and remove them from the statutes, miracles were done for us, that we upheld our Torah and statutes.

ובחגכה בהיות שהיו משנאי הדת ורצו לבטל את ישראל מתורה ולהעבירם מן החקים ונעשו לנו נסים ושעמדנו בתורתינו ובחקינו.

And so in every generation, at this time, it is an auspicious time for us to strengthen ourselves in our Torah and statutes.

וכן בכל דור ודור בבוא הזמן הוא מסגל לזה שנתחזק בתורתנו ובחקינו.

And all this, that we are able to strengthen ourselves in Torah and statutes, is because the early ones prayed for this.

ועל כל זה מה שאנחנו יכולים להתחזק בדברי תורה ובחקים הוא מחמת שהראשונים התפללו על זה.

For it is known that the Patriarchs prayed in their days on behalf of the future until the coming of the Messiah.

פי ידוע כי האבות התפללו בימיהם על העתיד להיות עד ביאת המשיח.

Therefore it is written concerning Avraham "and he pursued until Dan," where his strength weakened and he prayed about the matter.

לכן כתוב באברהם וירדף עד דן (בראשית י"ד, י"ד) שם תשש כחו והתפלל על הדבר.

Thus Avraham hinted to Chanukah, saying "Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go until koh" (Genesis 22:5), meaning the twenty fifth of Kislev.

כן רמז אברהם אבינו עליו השלום על חגכה באומרו שבו לכם פה עם החמור ואני והנער נלכה עד כה (בראשית כ"ב, ה') הוא כ"ה בכסלו.

That he prayed they would defeat the Greeks in the days of Mattisyahu. And likewise Yosef the righteous trembled about the matter and hinted in his words to Binyamin "May God be gracious to you, my son" (Genesis 43:29).

שהתפלל שינצחו את היוונים בימי מתתיהו וכן יוסף הצדיק חרד על הדבר ורמז בדברו עם בנימין אלהים (יחנך בני (בראשית מ"ג, כ"ט).

"Yechanecha" is an expression of Chanukah, meaning that God will perform miracles and wonders on Chanukah.

יחנך לשון חגכה שיעשה השם נסים ונפלאות בחגכה.

And every year there is a downfall of the wicked of the nations who hate the religion, until they fall and are annulled completely.

ובכל שנה ושנה יש מפלתם של רשעי אומות העולם שונאי הדת עד שיפלו ויתבטלו לגמרי.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

And the Messiah will come speedily in our days. And this is “I have arranged a lamp for My anointed one” (Psalms 132:17), meaning from the Chanukah lamp is arranged the coming of the Messiah.

וַיְבֹא מָשִׁיחַ צְדִיקֵנוּ בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וְזֶהוּ עֲרַכְתִּי נֵר לְמָשִׁיחִי (תהלים קל"ב, י"ז) מִן הַנֵּר הַזֶּה הוּא הָעֲרָכָה שֶׁיְבֹא מָשִׁיחַ צְדִיקֵנוּ.

And all the kelipot will be annulled. And this is “until the feet of the Tarmodites cease,” meaning the kelipah, as written “Tarmod in the mountains.”

וְיִתְבַּטְּלוּ כָּל הַקְּלִיפּוֹת וְזֶהוּ עַד שֶׁתִּכָּלֶה רַגְלֵי דְתַרְמוּדֵי הַהָרִים הוּא הַקְּלִיפָה בְּדִכְתִּיב תַּרְמוּד בְּהָרִים.

[NOTE Summary:

This maamar teaches that the time for lighting the Chanukah lamp, “until the feet cease from the marketplace,” hints to a deeper spiritual process. One who regularly lights the Chanukah lamp merits children who are Torah scholars; symbolically this means that spiritual illumination cultivates inner wisdom. Torah scholars do not wander the “marketplace” of distraction because their minds are attached to Torah, and thus “the feet cease from the marketplace.” This signifies a withdrawal from worldly commotion into spiritual clarity.

He explains that every mitzvah contains a seasonal reawakening of its original power. When Pesach arrives each year, we once again leave our personal Egypt and the forty nine gates of impurity. On Shavuot, each person receives anew the intellectual path by which he will serve God. On Sukkot, divine kindness surrounds us like the ancient Clouds of Glory. On Purim, the downfall of Amalek repeats itself in every generation as wickedness among the nations weakens. Chanukah rekindles the strength to remain loyal to Torah and divine statutes, just as miracles enabled Israel to stand firm during the Greek persecution. Each year this time is auspicious for renewed commitment to Torah.

All of this is possible because the early patriarchs prayed on behalf of future generations. Avraham hinted to Chanukah when he said, “I and the lad will go until koh,” interpreted as a reference to the twenty fifth of Kislev. His pursuit “until Dan,” where his strength weakened and he prayed, is likewise understood as spiritual preparation for later deliverances. Yosef too hinted to Chanukah through the blessing “May God be gracious to you, my son,” suggesting divine miracles in the future festival of dedication. Each year contains a renewal of the downfall of the enemies of faith, until ultimately all wickedness will fall and the Messiah will arrive.

The verse “I have arranged a lamp for My anointed one” is interpreted to mean that the Chanukah lamp prepares the world for the coming of the Messiah, for the light of Chanukah weakens and nullifies every kelipah. This is the meaning of “until the feet of the Tarmodites cease,” referring to the ultimate disappearance of the forces of impurity. As the Chanukah lights burn, they prepare the world for a time when all obstruction will dissolve and redemption will come.

Practical Takeaway:

The spiritual work of Chanukah is to let the light outlast the noise. The “marketplace” represents the external pressures, demands, and distractions that fill a person’s life. Lighting the menorah is a reminder that spiritual clarity comes when we give the flame space to shine beyond the marketplace’s movement. Each night of

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

Chanukah is a yearly invitation to recommit to Torah, to reconnect with our higher purpose, and to trust that ancient prayers still support our journey. Even when we struggle, a single spark held with sincerity can weaken the forces that oppose growth. Every Chanukah light is a step toward personal redemption and a preparation for the ultimate redemption.

Chassidic Story:

It is told that Rabbi Menachem Nochum of Chernobyl once visited a community during Chanukah and noticed that many Jews arrived at the study hall immediately after lighting their menorahs. He asked one of the householders why he hurried. The man answered that the lights were small and he feared they might burn out quickly. The Rebbe smiled and said, "The light of Chanukah is not measured by the size of the flame but by its power to drive darkness from the marketplace."

He then shared that in earlier generations, during periods of severe decrees, Jews would light their menorahs with trembling hands, hiding the flames behind shutters. Yet those tiny lights broke the might of empires. Their prayers, he said, still stand with us. The Rebbe reminded the man that every Chanukah lamp connects the present generation with the yearning of the patriarchs and the courage of the Hasmoneans. "You are not lighting alone," he said. "Their hope burns in your flame."

Inspired, the man walked home more slowly that night, allowing the glow of the menorah to linger in his mind. As he reached his doorway, he heard children singing beside the candles and felt an unfamiliar calm. He later described it as the moment when the "feet of the marketplace" ceased, leaving only the quiet strength of faith.

TPX - The Light That Outlasts the Marketplace

Sometimes spiritual life feels like trying to keep a small flame alive in a windy street. We try to hold onto meaning, clarity, and purpose, but the "marketplace" of life is loud and distracting. The teaching in this maamar reframes Chanukah as a time when the light is meant to shine *until the feet leave the marketplace*. Emotionally, this is an invitation to stay with the light long enough for the noise to settle. If we give the flame a chance, it begins to change us.

The sages say that one who is "accustomed to the lamp" merits children who are Torah sages. On a psychological level, this does not only refer to literal children. It means that when you cultivate light consistently, you begin to give birth to new thoughts, new insights, and new ways of being that are wiser and more grounded. The "Torah scholars" inside you leave the marketplace because they don't belong to the noise; they belong to study, reflection, and inner truth. Chanukah strengthens this inner scholar, the part of you that can rise above distraction.

The Power of Seasonal Return

This segment teaches that every mitzvah has a season where its original spiritual power becomes accessible again. Pesach is the annual ability to escape what enslaves us. Shavuot is the renewal of clarity and direction.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl

Me'or Einayim

Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

Sukkot is the return of divine protection and softening. Purim is the breaking of destructive forces that block joy. And Chanukah is the reminder that no matter how much external pressure tries to push you away from your core identity or your values, a light within you refuses to go out.

Across the generations, spiritual giants prayed for us. The text teaches that the strength we find today is because earlier souls prayed that their descendants would survive, persevere, and return. That means your ability to reconnect spiritually is not only your own effort; it is supported by a lineage of love, hope, and unseen guidance.

Living with Hidden Help

Avraham hinting to Chanukah, Yosef blessing Binyamin with “God will be gracious,” and the recurring downfall of those forces that oppose goodness all teach the same psychological truth: we don’t walk into our struggles alone. There is always a thread of grace woven underneath our efforts. Even when the world feels like a battlefield or when hostile forces seem strong, this teaching reassures that every year brings fresh opportunities to overcome negativity, internally and externally.

The promise that “I have arranged a lamp for My anointed one” becomes a therapeutic metaphor: your small acts of spiritual light arrange the future you are growing into. They shape the person you become. Lighting the menorah is not just commemorative; it is formative. Each flame becomes a rehearsal for hope, a training ground for resilience, and a seed for transformation.

A Contemporary Story: The Light Outside the Marketplace

A young therapist once shared a story about a client who came into her office during December feeling completely drained. Work deadlines, family demands, and emotional fatigue had turned her inner world into one long marketplace: noisy, overwhelming, and exhausting. The therapist asked her to choose one small ritual she could hold onto each night, something that symbolized a spark of meaning. The client chose lighting a candle.

At first she lit it absentmindedly. But over the week she began turning off her phone before lighting it. A few days later she found herself sitting in silence for a few minutes after the flame was lit. By the end of the week, she felt something shift. She described it as “the marketplace emptying out.” Her anxiety softened. Her sense of self returned. A small light created space for her to reconnect with her inner world. She later told the therapist, “The candle didn’t fix my problems. But it reminded me that I’m still here. That there’s more to me than my stress.” That small ritual became her personal Chanukah: a moment when light lasted longer than she expected, and longer than she thought she deserved.

Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl
Me'or Einayim
Parshas Mikeitz & Chanukah

Chanukah invites you to do the same. Light your flame long enough for the marketplace to quiet. Even a single moment of steady light can remind you who you are, where you come from, and what you are capable of becoming. **END NOTE]**