



# THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn  
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

**Parashat Vayeshev**  
25 Kislev, 5767  
**נר ראשון של חנוכה**  
**1st Day of Chanukah**  
**December 15, 16 - 2006**

The Haftorah is read from Zecahria  
2:14 – 4:7

Friday  
Candle Lighting 4:11 PM  
Mincha 4:15 PM

Shabbat  
Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM  
Shacharit 9:00 AM  
Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:33 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 4:10 PM  
Maariv and Havdala 5:16 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM

## **From Ezras Torah:**

We light the Chanukah Menorah at home before lighting the Shabbos candles. (One should recite Mincha before lighting the Chanukah lights. However, one must be careful not to delay the welcoming of Shabbos because of this. One may not light neither Chanukah nor Shabbos lights, earlier than Plag HaMincha – one and one-quarter proportionate hours before sunset, (a proportionate hour is one-twelfth of the daylight period). One must be careful to use enough oil (or light a large enough candle) that will remain lit until

thirty minutes after the appearance of the stars.

We make the following three Brachos before lighting the candles: להדליק נר של חנוכה, שעשה נסים שהחיינו. After lighting we recite "הללו הנרות" etc." We also light the Chanukah Menorah, with all of its Brachos, in the southern side of the Shul (where the Menorah was lit in the Holy Temple) so as to make a public declaration of the miracle. "שהחיינו" is recited only on the first night. The first candle that is lit is at the extreme right of the Menorah.

## **שחרית**

We take out two Sifrei Torah; in the first Sefer Torah we have seven Aliyahs in the weekly Sidrah (Vayeishev). The Maftir reads in the second Sefer Torah from Parshas Naso (7:1-7:17) from "ויהי ביום כלות "עמינדב נחשון בן "משה" until ;" the Haftorah is read in Zechariah 2:14-4:7.

## **Shabbat Mevarchim**

We bless the new moon of Teves. The Molad of Teves is on Wednesday morning, 49 minutes and 9 Chalakim after 9.

Rosh Chodesh Teves is Thursday and Friday

## **Torah Insights – Harav Shlomo Riskin**

**Shabbat Shalom: Parshat VaYeshev**  
**Genesis 37:1-40:23**  
**By Shlomo Riskin**

Efrat, Israel – In the "Al HaNissim" ("for all the miracles") prayer which we recite during every Amidah and Grace after Meals prayer during all eight days of Hanukkah, our praise to G-d opens, "In the days of Mattathias son of Yohanan High Priest Hasmonean and his sons, when the wicked Greek Kingdom rose up against your nation Israel to cause them to forget your Torah..." Why the seemingly superfluous words, "and his son's"? We have identified the period by mentioning the name of the High Priest: is that identification not sufficient?

We have previously explained that the major war which was fought between the Hellenists and the Hebrews began not as a fight between the foreign Greek Syrians and the Judeans but rather as a Civil War within Judea, an internecine battle between the more traditional Jews who remained faithful to the Jewish laws of Kashrut, circumcision and the Sabbath sanctity and the more "enlightened" and sophisticated "Grecophile" Jews who wished to transform Jerusalem into a Greek city-state (Polis) and bring into the Holy city the Olympic Games

dedicated to a god of Greek mythology.

Now it might have been thought that while the older generation remained true to Torah-Judaism, the younger generation was seduced by the more modern attraction of Greek philosophy, Greek theatre, Greek art, and Greek hedonistic pleasures. This was not the case, insists our Al HaNissim prayer; the children of the High Priest remained together with their father in their joint battle against the Hellenistic heresy. That is why the addition of "and his sons" is so significant to the prayer! It is as if we are being told that the younger Hasmoneans as well clung to the eternal truths and values of our G-d-given religion and national life-style; the fathers and sons fought side by side to purify our menorah. And when the traditionalists seemed to be emerging victorious, the Greek-Syrians were brought in by the assimilationist ruling-class of priests in the false hope of turning the tide.

This special religious relationship between father and son is most poignantly expressed by a famous Talmudic Commentary on a critical moment in the life of Joseph in Egypt, described in this week's Biblical reading. The young and handsome Joseph, having been sold into Egyptian slavery by his jealous brothers, is purchased by Potiphar, the Egyptian Minister of Culinary Arts, who quickly appoints the Hebrew his steward, in charge of all internal and household affairs. The minister's wife, obviously attracted by Joseph's ability and charm, attempts to seduce him. "And (Joseph) refused" (Gen. 39:8), cries out the Biblical text – but with the drawn out and multi-trilled cantillation known as the shalshet. This is explained by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch in his nineteenth

century Biblical commentary to imply that Joseph took a long time in refusing, that it was difficult for him – a stranger in a strange land – to resist the advances of such a beautiful and powerful woman. What gave him the inner strength to resist? "The persona of his father (Jacob) appeared to him in his mind's eye", suggest our Talmudic Sages (Rashi on Genesis 39: 11, citing B.T. Sotah 3).

Rav Haim Sabbato, well-known Talmud teacher and author, recounts that once, when lecturing to a non-religious kibbutz, he mentioned this incident regarding Joseph, and the response was cynical disbelief. At such an intense, erotic moment, the very last image in Joseph's mind would be his aged father, his audience insisted. Rav Sabbato suggested to them what I believe was an ingenious interpretation. In Biblical times, only the very rich had mirrors, and then only in the bed-room. Hence Joseph had never seen how he himself actually appeared. When ushered into Mrs. Potiphar's boudoir, he saw his image for the first time in the mirror hanging on her wall – and Joseph was the exact physical replica of his father Jacob (Rashi on Genesis 37: 3). Now Joseph did know how his father looked – and at this point of his life and suffering, he most probably had a beard which was turning grey if not white. In other words, Joseph thought he was actually seeing his father Jacob in the mirror of Mrs. Potiphar's boudoir; and he immediately sensed hearing his father's teachings of morality and ethics. Because of this he found the moral strength to resist temptation.

There is a great literal truth to the picture I have attempted to verbally communicate. We are our parents and our parents are us – genetically, historically and

culturally. If not, there is no historical continuity and there is no palpable tradition. This is the real meaning behind giving our children ancestral names; Jacob's blessing to his grandchildren, "they shall be called in my name and in the names of my ancestors," refers not merely to a name but also to a life-style, not merely to a calling card but also to a set of immutable values. This indelible relationship between the generations is the deepest expression of our eternal covenant.

In this way we also understand even more profoundly the commitment of "Mattathias the son of Yohanan High Priest Hasmonean and his sons "to fight unto death for a Jewish future based upon a Jewish past. The entire focus of the Jewish family has always been the transmission of our sacred tradition of values and life-style from generation to generation, father to son, mother to daughter. And that is why we celebrate the miracle of the cleansing of the menorah first and foremost within the context of the Jewish home rather than the Jewish synagogue, "a candle lit by each individual within the familial home" (ner ish u-veito).

### **Shabbat Shalom and Hanukkah Sameah**

Shlomo Riskin  
Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone  
Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel



SHABBAT SHALOM

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