

From: The Rabbis at Chicago Torah Network

Number of pages: 3

To:



Chanukah Lunch & Learn ... and Latkes

“CHANUKAH. WHAT IF THE GREEKS WOULD’VE WON?”

Eight ways our lives are different – and better – today, because the Greeks were defeated over 2000 years ago.

This Wednesday, December 5, join Rabbi Moshe Katz for a fascinating – and delicious – Lunch & Learn, where you’ll explore:

- 🥂 What made our ‘bubbies & zadies’ take on the mighty Greek Empire?
- 🥂 Chanukah: Major Holiday or Minor Holiday?
- 🥂 Making Chanukah meaningful to our children and grandchildren?
- 🥂 *And much more ...*

Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2007 / The First Day of Chanukah 5768

At DrinkerBiddleGardnerCarton 191 N. Wacker Dr. 37th Floor

Hosted by Harold Kaplan

11:30 am - Networking & Lunch ♦ 12:00 - Chanukah Class

Cost: \$15 in advance (by Dec. 3) ♦ \$25 after Dec. 3

Advance Registration: www.torahnetwork.org/register.htm

Info: info@torahnetwork.org or 773.761.0400 x201



Happy Chanukah from Chicago Torah Network

THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX[©]

A WEEKLY PRESENTATION OF JEWISH THOUGHT PUBLISHED IN MEMORY OF RAE DANIEL

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 8 FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2007 / 20 KISLAIV 5768 CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:01 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:10 P.M. (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbat is coming!

TORAH PORTION: VAYAISHEV (GENESIS 37:1 - 40:23)

This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated by Jonah and Jo Bruck, 'in honor of the engagement of our daughter Ruchie, to Ari Renov. May your lives be filled with much mazal, bracha, simcha and everything good!'

SPECIAL CHANUKAH ISSUE

1. *There was enough oil for one day. And it burned for eight days.*" (Talmud: The Chanukah Story)

It's the famous *Chanukah* story. And the reason for the eight-day holiday

... But think about it: *It says that they had enough oil for one day.*

Which means that the miracle of the oil was really only seven days.

So why eight days?

What miracle is the extra day celebrating?

... There are many answers to this question. Here's one to think about this Chanukah:

... It was Chanukah in Bergen-Belsen. And as amazing as it sounds, Jews secretly got together for Chanukah candle lighting.

They had smuggled some dye out of the camp factory to be the 'oil'. And threads pulled from sweaters were the wicks.

Despite the danger, many hundreds of Jews were there. And the Rabbi of Bluzhev recited the blessings and lit the 'candles'.

A Polish Bundist leader – who was an avowed atheist – was also there. And later, he spoke to the Rabbi:

"You keep your traditions. Fine. I understand.

But how can you recite the blessing of 'Shehechyanu'? Thanking G-d for having kept us alive to see this day.

For allowing us to see this? Torture, death and hunger?

Haven't you made a mockery of our suffering?

Rabbi Spira listened. And then told him: I was also wondering how I could recite that blessing at a time like this.

... But then I looked around. And what did I see?

Thousands of Jews ... who have a right to give up hope ... yet they insist on remaining Jews.

Never have we seen such a demonstration of Jewish strength and courage.

For this alone, it is worth thanking G-d.

For giving us the privilege of seeing the greatness of our people. To see thousands of Jews who will never give up hope – who prove that we will rebuild!

... Years later, the non-religious Bundist told people how he was still grateful to the Chassidic Rabbi.

For giving him the strength to survive the war. And to rebuild in his own way.

(Based on Hasidic Tales of the Holocaust by Yaffa Eliach.)

... It's a great Chanukah message: Yes. Jews have been through a lot.

And some of them may have given up because of it.

And who could blame them?

But throughout history, there have been so many Jewish men and women who never gave up.

Who remained committed Jews no matter what.

And did all they could, to make sure their children would remain committed and proud Jews.

... And that may be the greatest miracle of all.

THE FLAME OF CHANUKAH

The flames of the Chanukah Menorah. A celebration of the victory of Torah and Judaism over Greek culture.

There's actually a fascinating difference between the two world views.

... About fire.

In Greek mythology, fire was stolen from the gods. The gods were very angry and punished the 'thief'.

The Rabbis of the Talmud tell us a very different story.

'After the first Shabbos, G-d inspired man with wisdom, and he discovered fire.'

... It's a difference that says it all.

The ancient Greeks also had 'gods'. Lots of them.

And man was busy either appeasing the gods, avoiding their wrath or figuring out how to work around them.

... Not a very meaningful relationship.

In Judaism, there's One G-d. Who created the world.

And Who invites us to become His partners in completing that creation. To perfect the world. Physically. And spiritually.

... Being partners with G-d!

Nothing can be more meaningful than that.



Shabbat Shalom and best wishes for a joyous and meaningful Chanukah and a wonderful week!

Handwritten signature of Rabbi Moshe Katz in black ink.

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Handwritten signature of Rabbi Doni Deutsch in black ink.

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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