

From: The Rabbis at Chicago Torah Network

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Home for the
Wondering Jew.™

THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX[©]

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

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 10 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2009 / 1 TEVES 5770 CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:01 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:11 (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!

TORAH PORTION: MIKAITZ (GENESIS 41:1 - 44:17)

This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is sponsored by Boris Maslovsky, in memory of Moshe Goldner z"l, who passed away this week. May his memory be a blessing.

Special Chanukah Issue

1. **"And all eight days of Chanukah these candles are holy ..."** (From the Chanukah Prayers)

It's the end of Chanukah. This Friday evening is the last candle.

Right?

Well, yes and no.

... It's the last *Chanukah* candle.

But there are candles every Friday night.

... The weekly Shabbat candles.

And which candle lighting would you think is more important?

... Jewish tradition says the Shabbat candles are.

Why?

It's a powerful lesson.

... Chanukah candles remind us of the Chanukah story.

That the ancient Greek Empire tried to destroy Judaism. And the Jewish People defeated them.

... *So Chanukah candles are about Jewish survival.*

But Shabbat candles celebrate something more fundamental.

... *The reason for our survival.*

Shabbat candles are about bringing the warmth and beauty of Judaism into the Jewish home.

Because Synagogues are important. And Hebrew schools are important.

... But they are not enough to inspire our children to remain Jewish.

What we need are Jewish homes. Filled with the beauty and meaning of Jewish life.

Because that is the only way to guarantee Jewish survival.

... It's something to think about as Chanukah comes to an end.

It's a great time to do what we can to keep our 'Jewish momentum' going.

And Shabbat is a perfect way.

... So we not only celebrate Jewish survival in the past.

But we insure it in the future.

2. The Chanukah story.

The ancient Greeks wanted to destroy Judaism. And replace it with Greek culture.

The Jews went to war. And preserved Judaism.

... Here's something to think about. As we light the Chanukah candles.

Imagine it's 167 B.C.E. Close to the story of Chanukah.

And you're reading the Athens Times.

Here's what you might have read.

"The Syrian Greek army has taken control of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. It will be converted to a pagan temple.

King Antiochus has declared the following to be capital offenses.

The observance of Jewish dietary laws. The Jewish Shabbat. And the study of Torah.

All Torah scrolls will be burned!"

In the near future Judaism and Monotheism will be things of the past. Of interest only to historians".

... Fast forward to August 4th, 2004. And you're reading the New York Times.

A headline catches your eye: "Keeping Kosher, Greek Style, at the Olympics"!

"Rabbi Mendel Hendel glued a mezuzah to the doorway of the only kosher restaurant in Athens.

And the kitchen soon sent out the first bowl of hummus".

... It's amazing!

The ancient Greeks are gone.

And the Jews? *We're putting up a mezuzah. The Jewish symbol of Monotheism.*

In Athens.

On the door of a kosher restaurant!

For Jews who come to see the Olympic games!

... And what about Shabbat?

Read further: *"The restaurant will be closed to walk-in customers from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.*

But special precooked Sabbath meals can be ordered in advance, to eat in or take out"!

... King Antiochus would be shocked. And very upset!

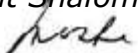
And you know what else would shock him?


The words on top of this message.

"The Shabbat Fax. A weekly publication of Jewish thought."



Shabbat Shalom, happy Chanukah and have a great week!


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