

The Ultimate Chanukah Party

CTN Chanukah Party 2009
 Tuesday, December 15, 7:30 pm
 The CTN Center, 2832 W. Touhy

A fun, food, inspiration and prize filled evening, featuring ...

Live Musical Entertainment



Play fun Jewish trivia game ... win great prizes!



Candle lighting, inspiration and plenty of holiday spirit ...

Lots of great food and drink



Win raffle & game prizes, including Bulls tickets, luxury hotel stay, gift certificates and more ...



... and much more !!!

This Tuesday, December 15, 7:30 pm, at the CTN Center, 2832 W. Touhy, Chicago
 Register online at www.torahnetwork.org/register.htm
 Info: 773.761.0400 x201 or info@torahnetwork.org



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 9 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2009 / 24 KISLAIV 5770 CANDLE LIGHTING: 3:59 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:09 (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!

TORAH PORTION: VAYISHLACH (GENESIS 32:4 - 36:43)

This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated by Hillel and Leah Shapiro, with gratitude to Hashem upon the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of our son Zevi.

- 1. Joseph was placed in the dungeon where the king's prisoners were kept. Soon after that, Pharaoh was angry at two of his servants ... They were placed in the same dungeon where Joseph was imprisoned. When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw they were upset. "Why do you look so worried today?" he asked. (39:20 - 40:4)**

Joseph. One of the most famous people in the Bible.

His story is one that we can relate to.

A very difficult childhood. A victim of jealousy.

Sold as a slave. At the young age of seventeen.

Sent down to Egypt. A strange country. All alone.

Then he is framed. Arrested. Put in a dungeon. With criminals.

... It's a terrible story.

We can relate. And we feel his pain.

... But there's more to it.

We should also be inspired by Joseph.

Because of what he went on to be.

Not just the rise to power. But something more important.

In Jewish tradition he is called 'Joseph the *tzaddik*'. The righteous one.

Because he overcomes all his challenges.

And becomes a great person.

... Let's look at one small detail in the story.

That has a very big lesson.

Picture Joseph. Alone. In prison.

He had to be very scared. Worried. Maybe depressed.

Most people in that situation would probably not notice the sadness of others.

And it's understandable.

After all, they have their own problems. Their own pain.

But that's not Joseph. The righteous.

Instead?

He is *always* sensitive to the pain of others.

Even at such a difficult time.

He notices two people who seem upset. He feels for them. Cares about them.

And reaches out to see if he can help.

... It's something to remember. To be inspired by.

And to try to emulate.

The next time things are not going so great.

Of course it's important to do what we can to help ourselves.

... But it's also so important not to forget about others.

THOUGHTS FOR CHANUKAH

1. Chanukah begins this evening.

... We begin by lighting just one candle. And then we add one more each night.

It's a model for Jewish growth.

Because we want to grow in our Judaism. To make our life – and our children's – more Jewish. In a meaningful way.

But how?

The Chanukah answer? By starting with one little flame.

Take Shabbat as an example. It can be wonderful. But maybe it seems like too much.

So start small.

Light Shabbat candles. Have a special Shabbat dinner.

Choose a prayer you find meaningful. Or set aside some time to do some Torah study.

But we should do something. Because we have to start somewhere.

And then like the Chanukah candles – we add.

Slowly. One step at a time.

Because small steps are meaningful.

... And they add up.

2. Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, Who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time. (From the Chanukah Candle Blessings)

"... *in those days, at this time*". Because Chanukah is a time to reflect not only the miracle of the oil back in 'those days' ... but of the miracles at 'this time' as well.

Everyday miracles. Like the miracle of Jewish survival. And the miracles we call 'nature'.

The best gift we can give ourselves for Chanukah? To internalize its message and let it inspire us all year round.



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

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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