

From: The Rabbis at Chicago Torah Network

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To:



CTN has a small gift for you that we hope will enhance your Holiday.

It's a special Chanukah booklet, "Chanukah: A Minute a Night" that is designed help you make Chanukah more meaningful one step at a time. We hope that you use it and enjoy it, and would love to hear your feedback.

You can read it and download it at

[http://www.torahnetwork.org/PDF/Chanukah\\_Book2.pdf](http://www.torahnetwork.org/PDF/Chanukah_Book2.pdf)

# THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX<sup>©</sup>

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

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 9 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2010 / 26 KISLAIV 5771 CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:00 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:10 (CHICAGO)

*Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!*

**TORAH PORTION: MIKAITZ (GENESIS 41:1 - 44:17) - SPECIAL CHANUKAH ISSUE**

*This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated with love by friends of Devorah bas Leah with heartfelt prayers for her speedy recover.*

**1. In the days ... when the wicked Greek Empire rose up against Your people Israel, to make them forget Your Torah and to cause them to stray from Your commandments ... (From the Chanukah prayers)**

The story of Chanukah. It starts with the ancient Greeks trying to destroy Judaism.

So they made laws. Forbidding many Jewish practices.

One of their first decrees?

*That the Jews should not observe Shabbat.*

*... It's interesting. How even our enemies sensed how important Shabbat is.*

How central to Jewish life.

In fact, the Torah has an unusual – and very powerful – description of Shabbat.

The Torah calls it a sign. *"The Children of Israel shall observe the Sabbath ... between Me and them it is a sign forever ..."* (Exodus 31:16-17)

... Think of a large business. It's been around for many years. And it's very successful.

But the old generation is gone. And the business is handed down to the next generation.

One day you pass by and notice that the store is closed.

A few weeks later – it's still closed.

And you wonder: Are they just taking some time off?

*Or are they closing for good?*

It's hard to tell.

Then, one day you see them repainting the sign on the front of the building.

Now you're sure.

It's here to stay.

*... Judaism is the business.*

*Our grandparents passed it on to us.*

*And maybe we're not as involved in it as they were.*

*But it means a lot to us. And we want it to continue.*

*The best way to make sure that we – and our kids – will keep it going?*

*Shabbat.*

*Setting aside the time.*

*With family. Friends.*

*Celebrating being Jewish. Each and every week.*

*A time to focus on our values. And on our Jewish growth.*

*Shabbat is 'the sign'.*

#### **DID YOU KNOW ...**

... why we read the *Haftarah* on Shabbat? (It's a portion from the Jewish prophets.

The part of the service usually done by a Bar Mitzvah.)

... It has to do with Chanukah.

When the Greek King Antiochus decreed that Jews could not read the Torah publicly.

*No more weekly Torah portion.*

So the Rabbis came up with a substitute.

We began reading from the prophets instead.

The *Haftarah*.

Eventually – like many other tyrants – Antiochus was defeated.

*Judaism and its Torah survived.*

And the Torah reading became part of the service again.

... *But we still read the Haftarah.*

It's a reminder. Of our history. And that we are an eternal people.

... If only all our kids knew this. Were inspired by this.

They'd stand a little taller. Read the *Haftarah* a little louder.

*And be a lot prouder.*

#### **QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

*'We often say, 'It's been so nice talking to you'.*

*But when's the last time we told someone, 'it's been nice listening to you'?*



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

Rabbi Moshe Katz

Rabbi Doni Deutsch

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