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Home for the
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THE CHICAGO TORAH NETWORK SHABBAT FAX[©]

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

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 9 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2011 / 27 KISLEV 5772 CANDLE LIGHTING: 4:03 P.M. SHABBAT ENDS: 5:14 (CHICAGO)

Hang in there - Shabbos is coming!

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

*This week's CTN Shabbat Fax is dedicated by the Taussig and Katcher Families,
"in memory of our parents, Ernst & Thekla Taussig and Archie & Molly Katcher."*

SPECIAL CHANUKAH ISSUE

1. **The Chanukah story.**

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

The Jews went to war. Preserved Judaism. And the next year Jews began celebrating Chanukah.

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

One symbol of Greek culture was the Olympic Games.

And the symbol of the games? The Olympic torch.

Picture asking someone in Ancient Greece the following question:

Which is likely to last longer? *The mighty Olympic torch? Or those little Jewish candles?*

The answer you probably would have gotten?

"Are you kidding? I'd be surprised if there are any Jews around in a hundred years.

But the Olympic torch? It's part of Greek culture.

It will be here forever!"

... But that's not quite how it turned out.

In fact, the Olympic Games stopped a few hundred years later.

The great Olympic Stadium? It was destroyed by an earthquake.

Buried. And forgotten. For centuries.

Until it was discovered in 1875.

The Games resumed. And the Olympic torch was lit again.

For the first time in fifteen hundred years.

... And all that time?

Jews around the world never stopped lighting their Chanukah candles.

- *According to tradition, the eight lights of the menorah should be the same height.*

We all have our unique roles and light to shine into this world. It is very easy to look at one person's role as being more important than another's. But when a little gasket in your car starts leaking, it can totally incapacitate your vehicle. This little piece may not be as glorious as the engine, but it is no less important to the operation of the vehicle.

We may not all have high profile roles to fulfill in this world, but each and every one of us is unique and the world needs our unique light! (Dr. Simcha Shapiro, on www.aish.com)

2. Joseph recognized his brothers. He spoke to them harshly ... Joseph left them and wept. When he returned he spoke harshly to them ... Joseph rushed out. His emotions had been aroused, and he had to weep ... (42:7 - 43:31)

Joseph and his brothers. One of the most famous Bible stories.

Full of questions. And lessons.

Here's one: Joseph recognized his brothers. But instead of telling them who he is, he talks tough.

Accuses them of being spies.

But then he does something strange. He turns away. And cries.

He regains his composure. And continues his charade.

He has them framed as thieves.

And then again he leaves the room. And cries.

It's seems as though he's forcing himself to go through with it.

But why?

The Torah commentaries give us a powerful insight.

Joseph would have loved nothing more than to embrace his brothers.

To say: *"I am Joseph. I am alive. I forgive you for selling me into slavery.*

Let's put the past behind us. Let bygones be bygones."

It would have been much less painful. And a lot faster.

But there's something we often overlook.

If we really want to work something out, fastest and easiest is not always the best.

We have to address the root of the problem.

Think about it: How did this whole story begin?

Joseph has dreams. Of royalty. He tells them to his brothers.

And they misunderstand him. See him as a threat. As wanting to rule over them.

And now there's something Joseph feels he must do. Before revealing himself to his brothers.

He shows them how powerful he has become in Egypt.

How if he wanted to punish them or make them his slaves, he could. Easily.

But he won't.

Because he never wanted to.

And only then – after they understand this – can the family be truly reunited.

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


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