

OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

PARSHA INSIGHTS

L'CHAIM!

“...A festival of Hashem for us.” (10:9)

It's said that caterers don't like doing Jewish weddings. There's not a lot of profit in catering the food for a wedding. There's not much of a mark-up. The majority of the profit is in the alcoholic beverages. And Jews are notoriously small drinkers.

Statistics show that Jews have the lowest incidence of alcoholism of any ethnic group.

Why?

A Jewish boy first encounters wine when he's eight days old. The *mohel* (one who performs the circumcision) usually puts a few drops of wine in the baby's mouth. In other words, the first contact that this little fellow has with wine is in the context of a *mitzvah*. This experience is fortified throughout his childhood. Every Friday night and Shabbat morning, the Jewish child hears *kiddush* said over a glass of wine. And he himself will be given some to taste. At the departure of Shabbat, in the *havdala* service, wine will again play a central role.

On festivals, wine figures prominently. And on Purim, one of the *mitzvos* of the day mandates drinking until one cannot distinguish between Mordechai the blessed and Haman the accursed! On Pesach the child will see his parents drink four cups of wine, symbolizing the four aspects of freedom from the servitude of Egypt.

A Jewish child isn't afraid of alcohol. He doesn't see it as a method of escapism — something to drown his sorrows — rather, it connotes the blending of the physical and the spiritual. Its context is exclusively positive.

Judaism, unlike some religions, doesn't preach asceticism as the ideal route to spirituality. It does not see this world as a minefield where physicality exists

to trip man up. Rather, the world is a resource. You can allow it to dominate you, or you can take everything in the physical world and use it to come closer to G-d.

When Moshe told Pharaoh they were going to make a Festival of Hashem, he said it was a “festival of Hashem **for us.**”

To be a holy Jew, you don't mortify the flesh, you elevate it. Every festival of Hashem is also “for us.” It is for us

“...Hashem gives us a multitude of *mitzvos* so that we will be deeply affected emotionally, and our hearts will be drawn to a powerful love for our Creator.”

to partake of the wonderful gifts of this world and, through experiencing the world's pleasures in their correct context, reach a higher appreciation of the One who sends us all these exquisite gifts. *L'Chaim! To Life!*

A MULTITUDE OF MITZVOS

“...And you shall not break a bone of it (the Pesach offering).” (12:46)

In the Second World War, during the “blitz” on London, large numbers of families were evacuated to safer areas. Sometimes, the family itself was divided, with some children evacuated

to places as far as Canada, while other children stayed with their parents in the relative safety of the English countryside.

One can well imagine the tremendous outpour of emotion when the war ended and these families were reunited. But after the initial overwhelming emotion, it became clear that the bond between the parents who had stayed with their children was far closer than their relationship with those children from whom they had been separated for more than four years.

We think that because we love our children we give to them. The reverse, however, is closer to the truth: *Because we give to our children, we love them.* Every time you get up in the middle of the night to get your child a glass of water or to change a diaper, you are giving, and that leads to love. What was lacking in the relationship between the parents and their evacuated children? Four years of not getting up in the middle of the night to give them a glass of water.

The same is true in our relationship with Hashem: People often say “*I would love to have your faith! But I just don't feel it!*” The truth of the matter is that **doing leads to feeling.** When you “give to Hashem” by doing what Hashem wants you to do, it's the spiritual equivalent of getting up in the middle of the night to give your child a glass of water.

That is why Hashem gives us so many *mitzvos* to help us remember the Exodus. If we just needed a memorial, wouldn't eating a little *matza* be enough? But Hashem gives us a multitude of *mitzvos* so that we will be deeply affected emotionally, and our hearts will be drawn to a powerful love for our Creator.

PARSHA OVERVIEW

Hashem tells Moshe that He is hardening Pharaoh's heart so that through miraculous plagues the world will know for all time that He is the one true G-d. Pharaoh is warned about the plague of locust and is told how severe it will be. Pharaoh agrees to release only the men, but Moshe insists that everyone must go. During the plague, Pharaoh calls for Moshe and Aharon to remove the locusts, and he admits that he has sinned. Hashem ends the plague but hardens Pharaoh's heart, and again Pharaoh fails to free the Jewish people. The country, except for the Jewish People, is then engulfed in a palpable darkness. Pharaoh calls for Moshe and tells him to take all the Jews out of Egypt, but to leave their flocks behind. Moshe tells him that not only will they take their own flocks, but Pharaoh must add his own too. Moshe tells Pharaoh that Hashem is going to bring one more plague, the death of the first born, and then the Jews will leave Egypt. Hashem again

hardens Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh warns Moshe that if he sees Moshe again, Moshe will be put to death. Hashem tells Moshe that the month of Nissan will be the chief month. The Jewish people are commanded to take a sheep on the 10th of the month and guard it until the 14th. The sheep is then to be slaughtered as a Pesach sacrifice, its blood to be put on their door-posts, and its roasted meat to be eaten. The blood on the door-post will be a sign that their homes will be passed-over when Hashem strikes the first born of Egypt. The Jewish People are told to memorialize this day as the Exodus from Egypt by never eating *chametz* on Pesach. Moshe relays Hashem's commands, and the Jewish People fulfill them flawlessly. Hashem sends the final plague, killing the first born, and Pharaoh sends the Jews out of Egypt. Hashem tells Moshe and Aharon the laws concerning the Pesach sacrifice, *pidyon haben* (the redemption of the first born son) and *tefillin*.

HAFTORAH: YIRMIYAHU 46:13-28

"As Tavor is fixed among the mountains and Carmel traveled across the sea...."

(46:18)

When the Almighty was about to give the Torah, two mountains, Mt. Tavor and Mt. Carmel, had a great desire that the Torah be given on them. So great was their desire that the angel appointed over mountains began moving them towards Mt. Sinai.

Nevertheless, Hashem chose Mt. Sinai as the site of the giving of the Torah. These two mountains, however, were recompensed for their disappointment by being uprooted and replanted in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Later, the Jews were miraculously saved on Mt. Tavor in the time of the Prophetess Devorah, while on Mt. Carmel Hashem's unity was proclaimed in the time of *Eliyahu*. If these two mountains were moved

to *Eretz Yisrael* because of their intense longing for the Torah to be taught on them even for the brief moments of the giving of the Torah, then how much more will all the world's *Batei Midrash* (study-houses), where the Torah has been studied continuously for over 3,000 years, merit to be transported to *Eretz Yisrael* in the coming epoch!

• *Megilla 29b, Maharsha, Rashi, Bereishis Rabba 99:1*

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LOVE OF THE LAND

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael

BY ANY OTHER NAME

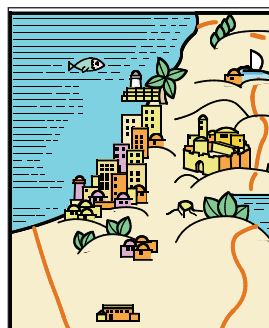
Mount Hermon, "the Israeli Alps," which lies on Israel's border with the Amorites and the Tzidonites, is called by several other names in the Torah: *Siryon*, *Senir*, and *Sion*. These names were given to it by these neighboring nations: The Tzidonites called it *Siryon*, and the Emorites called it *Senir*. (*Devarim 3:9*)

The Torah relates this to show how beloved *Eretz Yisrael* was even to the other nations. The names *Siryon* and *Senir* were originally names of

mountains *within* the borders of the Land of Israel. The nations loved *Eretz Yisrael* so much that when they built cities on Mount Hermon, they graced those cities with names of mountains in *Eretz Yisrael*.

This appreciation takes on a special dimension when we note that *Senir* means "a snow-capped mountain." Even the uninhabitable mountain peaks of *Eretz Yisrael* were so beloved by the nations that they called their great mountain-top cities by that name.

• *Chullin 60b*



PARSHA Q&A ?

1. What was Pharaoh's excuse for refusing to allow the Jewish children to go into the desert?
2. How did the locusts in the time of Moshe differ from those in the days of Yoel?
3. How did the first three days of darkness differ from the last three days?
4. When the Jews asked the Egyptians for gold and silver vessels, the Egyptians were unable to deny ownership of such vessels. Why?
5. The plague of the first born took place *exactly* at midnight. Why did Moshe tell Pharaoh that it would take place *approximately* at midnight?
6. Why did the first born of the animals die?
7. How did Moshe show respect to Pharaoh when he warned him about the aftermath of the plague of the first born?
8. Hashem told Moshe "so that my wonders will be multiplied" (11:9). What three wonders was Hashem referring to?
9. Why did Hashem command the mitzvah of *Rosh Chodesh* to Aharon, and not only to Moshe?
10. Up to what age is an animal fit to be a *Pesach* offering?
11. Prior to the Exodus from Egypt, what two *mitzvos* involving blood did Hashem give to the Jewish People?
12. Which parts of the *Pesach* offering (as distinguished from other offerings) were the Jewish People forbidden to eat?
13. Why were the Jews commanded to stay indoors on the night of *Makkas Bechoros*?
14. What was Pharaoh screaming as he ran from door to door the night of *Makkas Bechoros*?
15. Why did Pharaoh ask Moshe to bless him?
16. Why did the Jewish People carry their *matza* on their shoulders rather than have their animals carry it?
17. Who comprised the *erev rav* (mixed multitude)?
18. What three historical events occurred on the 15th of Nissan, prior to the event of the Exodus from Egypt?
19. What is the source of the "milk and honey" found in *Eretz Yisrael*?
20. The only non-kosher animal whose first born is redeemed is the donkey. What did the donkeys do to "earn" this distinction?

BONUS QUESTION?

Rashi never "just" comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi answers unspoken questions arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah text. Anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask: "What's Bothering Rashi?"

"Please speak in the ears of the people and let every (Jewish) man ask his fellow (Egyptian), and every (Jewish) woman ask her (Egyptian) friend for vessels of silver and vessels of gold." (11:2) Rashi: The word "please" implies an entreaty. [Hashem said] "I entreat you, Moshe, urge them to do this so that the righteous Avraham won't say: [Hashem] fulfilled His promise that 'they will serve them and they will afflict them,' but He did not fulfill His promise that 'afterwards they will go out with great wealth.'"

An interesting Midrash, but why the need for it? Why doesn't Rashi take this verse at face value; i.e., that Hashem politely asked Moshe to tell the Jews to take gold and silver from the Egyptians? **What's bothering Rashi?**

answer on page six

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

"This month shall be for you the first month" (12:2)

The currently used names of the Hebrew months — *Nissan, Iyar, etc.* — are Babylonian names which came into use among Jews only after the destruction of the First Temple. These names were retained as a reminder of the redemption from Babylon, which resulted in the rebuilding of the Second Temple.

• *Ramban*

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week's Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 10:11 - Since children don't bring sacrifices there was no need for them to go.
2. 10:14 - The plague brought by Moshe was composed of one species of locust, whereas the plague in the days of Yoel was composed of many species.
3. 10:22 - During the first three days the Egyptians were unable to see. During the second three days they were unable to move.
4. 10:22 - Because during the plague of darkness, the Jews were able to see, and they searched and found the Egyptians' vessels.
5. 11:4 - Moshe thought Pharaoh's astrologers might miscalculate. If he said the plague would begin exactly at midnight, they might make a mistake and accuse Moshe of being a fake.
6. 11:5 - Because the Egyptians worshiped them as gods, and when Hashem punishes a nation He also punishes its gods.
7. 11:8 - Moshe warned that "All these servants of yours will come down to me" when, in fact, it was Pharaoh himself who actually came running to Moshe.
8. 11:9 - The plague of the first born, the splitting of the sea, the drowning of the Egyptian soldiers.
9. 12:1 - As a reward for toiling together with Moshe in bringing about the plagues.
10. 12:5 - One year.
11. 12:6 - Circumcision and *Korban Pesach*.
12. 12:8 - The bones and the sinews.
13. 12:22 - Since it was a night of destruction, it was not safe for anyone to leave the protected premises of their homes.
14. 12:31 - "Where does Moshe live? Where does Aharon live?"
15. 12:32 - In order that he would not die in the plague, for he himself was a firstborn.
16. 12:34 - Because the commandment of *matza* was dear to them.
17. 12:38 - People from other nations who became converts.
18. 12:41 - The angels came to promise that Sarah would have a son, Yitzchak was born, and the exile of the "covenant between the parts" was decreed.
19. 13:5 - The milk is from goats and the honey is from dates and figs.
20. 13:13 - They helped the Jewish People by carrying loads of silver and gold out of Egypt.

WEEKLY DAF

SHABBOS 58 - 64

WHEN LEFT IS RIGHT

Which shoe do you put on first, right or left? In a *beraisa* we are taught that the right comes first. The basis for this is the Torah's command (*Shmos 29:20 and Vayikra 14:14*) regarding a *kohen's* inauguration and a *metzora's* purification, to place sacrificial blood upon the thumb of his right hand and the big toe of his right foot.

Rabbi Yochanan, on the other hand, sees a reason for favoring the left foot from the fact that the Torah directed us to place our *tefillin* on the "weaker arm" (*Shmos 13:16*) — the left.

"The man who fears Heaven," said Rabbi Nachman bar Yitzchak, "fulfills both views."

He was referring to the Sage Mar, the son of Ravana, who found a way of accommodating both views. He first put on his right shoe but did not tie it. Then he put on the left shoe and tied it before proceeding to tie the right one.

This seems like a perfect compromise which gives each foot precedence at one stage. But what if you wear shoes which have no laces — which shoe do you then put on first?

Tosefos offers a simple resolution to this problem. Rabbi Yochanan never intended to give the left foot precedence in anything else but *tying* the laces, because only in regard to "tying them on your arm" did the Torah designate the left arm as the one where the *tefillin* are placed. Where no tying is necessary, the

left foot no longer has any primary status and it is the right shoe which goes on first.

This explanation is the basis for the halacha codified in *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim (2:4)* which has become the daily practice of most observant Jews. But if you are a lefty who ties his *tefillin* on his right arm, add the halachic authorities, you should also tie your right shoe first.

An interesting extension of the precedence given to the right foot applies to the custom for the *chasan* at a wedding to break a glass at the end of the *chupah*, which recalls the destruction of the *Beis Hamidkash* at the height of his joy. He does so with his right foot because this is an act in which there is no element of tying and is therefore the domain of the right foot.

• *Shabbos 61a*

WHAT GOES IN THE WORLDS TO COME

“They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any more.”

This prophecy of Micha (4:3) is the vision which has inspired all those who seek universal peace. But when is it scheduled for its ultimate fulfillment?

One opinion of the Sages is that the Prophet Micha was referring to the days of Mashiach. This led the proponents of this view to conclude that weapons are only a necessary evil in an imperfect world, and

can therefore not be considered an adornment for the one who bears arms. This is the position expressed in the *mishna* which declares that it is forbidden for a man to carry a sword or spear in the street on Shabbos.

In contrast to this approach is the declaration of the Sage Shmuel. Shmuel stated that the only significant difference between today and the days of Mashiach is that then Jewry will not be subservient to other nations. Wars between those other nations, however, will continue to be waged until a period called the "World to Come" when Micha's prophecy of weapons converted into agricultural instruments will be fulfilled.

But when we speak of the "World to Come" we conjure up an image of a world in which there is no eating or drinking or any physical activity, as the Sage Rav describes it in *Mesechta Berachos (17a)*. What need is there in such a spiritual world for agricultural tools?

Maharsha solves this problem by distinguishing between the finite period following the resurrection of the dead, when there will still be a physical world, and the infinite world of souls which follows it. Micha's prophecy of peace will be fulfilled in that post-resurrection era when man still needs to eat, and it promises him the ability to cultivate his food without fear of war. This "World to Come" comes after resurrection. It will be followed in due time by an even more perfect "World to Come" when the only activity will be to delight in the glory of the Divine Presence.

• *Shabbos 63a*

continued from page one

PARSHA INSIGHTS

NIGHT AND DAY

"And it shall be a sign upon your arm, and an ornament between your eyes, for with a strong hand Hashem took us out of Egypt." (13:16)

When Hashem created the world, there was no doubt it was He who had brought everything into existence, that He knew all that was going on in the world and that He was involved in the smallest event that happens in this world.

From the time of Enosh, Adam's grandson, people started to make mistakes about G-d. Some people denied G-d altogether. Others conceded the existence of a divine power, but said that he was so removed and exalted that he only had knowledge of the spiritual realm, but didn't know what was going on down in this world.

Yet a third group admitted to a god who

knows what is happening in the lower realms, but isn't interested in what we do. In other words, he created the Universe, and then, as it were, went off to play golf.

G-d decided once and for all to quash these mistakes. Through a series of miraculous events, by altering nature, G-d would show that He creates and controls nature.

The plagues of Egypt were these miraculous events.

But how can the mere alteration of nature prove that G-d created nature? The fact that I can fix a car doesn't prove that I can make one.

To answer this, we have to understand the nature of this change in nature on a deeper level.

When G-d created the world, He did so with Ten Utterances: "In the beginning..." "Let there be light..." etc. **The Ten Plagues were the reverse of the Ten Utterances.** They were their negative counterparts. The

first utterance corresponds to the tenth plague, the second utterance to the ninth plague, etc.

For example: The second utterance, "Let there be light" corresponds to the ninth plague, the plague of darkness. The plague of darkness was not just an absence of light; rather, G-d changed the whole order of Creation, so that **light became the absence of darkness**. Instead of there being photons of light which pierce a black nothingness, during the plague of darkness **photons of darkness pierced a white nothingness**.

Now we can understand why these plagues showed that G-d creates and controls nature. For these were not *diversions* of the normal current of nature, but rather the re-creation of nature itself.

Sources:

A Multitude Of Mitzvos - Sefer HaChinuch, Rabbi Elyahu Dessler

Night And Day - Ramban, Reb Tzadok HaCohen

CALVIN KLEIN VS. LABEL KLEIN

Dan Kerchner from Silver Spring, MD
<kerchner@washington.jhuapl.edu>
wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
I recently bought a new coat. I took off the price tags but I left on the label on the outside of the sleeve that said the name of the designer. The other day I was in a Jewish book store, and the woman working there told me that halachically one should take all of the labels off a garment before you wear it. Can you explain what she was talking about?

Dear Dan Kerchner,

Carrying an item in a halachic “public domain” is prohibited on Shabbat. Of course, you’re allowed to wear clothes outside on Shabbat because you don’t “carry” your clothes, you “wear” them.

But what’s considered “clothing?” Something that’s normally removed, like a price tag, is not considered part of your clothing. So it’s forbidden to “wear” a price tag outside on Shabbat, because you’re not really wearing it, you’re carrying it.

Regarding manufacturer labels, it depends. If it’s a tag which people remove (for example, a “Cheapo’s Bargain Basement” label) then it’s like a price tag and must be removed before Shabbat. But if it’s a label that people wear — such as designer labels intended to be worn as part of the clothing — then you don’t have to remove it before Shabbat. Since people usually remove the label (even a designer label) from the sleeve of a suit jacket, you should do so before Shabbat.

KEEPING KOSHER IN KOSHERLAND

David Waxman
<davidwaxman@hotmail.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
I was on Malchei Yisrael street in Jerusalem last Friday shopping for kugel and salads for Shabbos. I found

two non-fleishig deli-type places that had what I wanted. Neither of these places had a certificate of kashrut. In one place, the clerk told me that all of the ingredients had the b’datz hechsher [kosher certification of the Rabbinical court]. Both of these places were filled with customers who looked quite observant. Thus, it seems that people are relying on strength of reputation for the kashrut of these establishments. Put another way, “everyone eats there.” Is that enough? Does it make a difference how “frum” and religious the neighborhood is? Does it matter if you are a local resident and know the proprietors?

Dear David Waxman,

Certainly if you know the proprietor personally as a knowledgeable, G-d-fearing Jew, you may eat there. Furthermore, if you don’t know the owner personally, but the owner has a reputation of reliability among knowledgeable, observant Jews, then you may rely on that (provided you have no evidence to the contrary).

The simple fact that a store is in a religious neighborhood, however, is not an indication that its kashrut can be relied upon.

Which reminds me of a story: A woman once entered a deli and asked to see the kashrut certificate.

“Don’t worry about it!” said the man behind the counter.

“But how do I know if it’s kosher?” she asked.

The man pointed to a black-and-white photo hanging on the wall. “You see that?” he said, gesturing to the angelic face of an old man engrossed in Talmud study. “That was my father!”

“Look,” said the woman, “If it was the other way around — if he was behind the counter and your picture was on the wall — I wouldn’t ask for the kashrut certificate.”

WHO IS A GOOF?

Ed <Ed@email.icrossroads.com>
wrote:

Dear Rabbi,
What is the “guff,” or is there such a term in Jewish history or tradition? I saw a video entitled “The Seventh

Sign” and it mentioned the “guff” in relation to the Hall of Souls. I want to know if it is purely fiction or not. Thank you.

Dear Ed,

The “guff” is a term the Talmud uses to refer to the repository of all unborn souls. Literally, the word “guff” means “body.”

The Talmud says, “The Son of David (Mashiach) will not arrive until there’s no more ‘soul’ in the ‘body.’” This means that there are a certain number of souls in heaven waiting to be born. Until they are born, they wait in a heavenly repository called “the body.” The Mashiach won’t arrive until every single one of these souls has been born into the physical world.

This teaches that each person is important and has a unique role which only he, with his unique soul, can fulfill. Even a newborn baby brings the Mashiach closer simply by being born.

Sources:

- Tractate Yevamot 62a
- Tractate Avodah Zarah 5a

YIDDLE RIDDLE

Shira Phillips <philfam@erols.com>
wrote with the following riddle:

Dear Yiddle Riddle people: The following is a story I read about Rashi in a child’s Hebrew biography in perhaps fourth grade. Nobody I know has been able to solve the question without help. Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak) once went on a journey. On his trip, he wanted to visit a wealthy man to collect money for poor people. When he visited, the man was not at home but his servant was. The servant said that he recognized the great Rashi as a thief who had previously run off with a suit of his master’s clothing and forced Rashi to pay for the clothing! Rashi wrote the following Hebrew word on the door five times in a row: The word was spelled “Shin Lamed Mem Hey.” What did the message mean?

PS Rashi definitely got the hoped-for reaction: The wealthy man contributed to the *tzedaka* and was from then on always a follower of Rashi.

Answer next week...

continued on page six

New Feature!

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features

Re: Greece My Palm (Ohrnet Parshat Miketz):

I think the origin of Chanukah *gelt* dates from the triumphant coinage of silver by the Maccabees. As much of a proclamation of sovereignty as a TV announcement would be in today's world. Bar Kochba did the same, but to less avail.

• Edward Simon <esimon@bilbo.bio.purdue.edu>

Re: "Current Candles" (Ohrnet Parshat Miketz) concerning using an electric menorah:

The answer included a ruling by Rabbi Frank about the menorah requiring all the fuel to be present at the outset, and since electricity is generated on demand, this setup is invalid. The answer further stated that using this rationale, a battery-powered menorah should be permitted because the fuel is present from the beginning.

The answer presupposes that electricity is the "fuel" of the electric lamp. Assuming this to be correct, a battery-powered menorah should likewise be invalid, because a battery does not store electricity, *per se*. It merely stores chemicals which generate electricity on demand, entirely analogous to the current which comes from the wall socket.

The real question, though, is whether electricity is properly considered the fuel of the lamp at all. After all, it is not a substance which is consumed in the production of the light. In an incandescent bulb, a glowing filament produces light. Since, halachically, a glowing piece of metal is considered to be fire, the *filament* is the fuel; the electricity is simply what caused the fila-

ment to be heated in the first place. This is similar to an ordinary glowing piece of metal — the original source which imparted the heat to it is of little consequence. By this rationale, the electric menorah should be permitted.

However, I read a ruling by Rav Ovadiah Yosef some years ago, in which he stated that a valid menorah must have both a fuel source and a wick. For this reason, he stated, lighting a pile of sawdust or a gas jet is invalid, and an electric menorah, which also lacks the two components, is similarly impermissible.

• Barak Greenfield <MDinNYC@aol.com>

Although there are differing opinions about using electricity for Shabbos candles, I am not aware of any *Posek* of stature who has permitted this for Chanukah. On the contrary, it was the opinion of Maran Harav Moshe Feinstein that in order to fulfill the obligation of Chanukah, *you* have to be the one lighting and not a generator or in this case a battery. By turning on the switch you only act as a facilitator by opening up the pathways. If there are authorities who permit battery-powered *menorahs* please inform us who they are.

• Rabbi Yitzchok D. Frankel Cedarhurst, NY <Ydfrankel@aol.com>

Re: What if the Greeks had Won & Apocrypha Now (Ohrnet Parshat Miketz):

I enjoyed your Chanukah "Ask the Rabbi" but I wanted to bring to your attention a few things:

• Pompeii who conquered Israel several years after the Maccabees, was a Roman, not a Greek general. I think he was called in by some of the Hasmoneans to intervene in an internal dispute.

• What's in the back of the Birnbaum Siddur is the Megillath Antiochus, not the Book of Maccabees as you wrote. It differs in many ways from the Books of the Maccabees.

• Stanley Nachamie, JLE Israel Summer '88 <stnbn@cunym.cuny.edu>

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BONUS ANSWER!

Asking Moshe to tell the Jews to reclaim their justly due reparations from their cruel Egyptian taskmasters shouldn't require any "entreating." The word "please" seems out of place here. That's why Rashi had to find another reason to explain the need to request Moshe's cooperation — so that the righteous Avraham would have no cause for protest.

• Based on Dr. Avigdor Bonchek's new book "What's Bothering Rashi?" Feldheim Publishers

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

RAMBAN
10:14 Locusts and Crocodiles
10:23 A Different Darkness
12:2 Jewish Months

12:3 Symbolism of the *Korban Pesach*
12:31,51 Timetable of the Exodus
13:5 Five and Two – Seven
Canaanite Nations

SEFER HACHINUCH
7, 16 Eating Like Kings
18 Recognizing Hashem's Gifts
21 The Significance of the Exodus

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