

◆ SEASONS OF THE MOON ◆

The Month of Kislev

Kislev 5756 / 24th November - 23rd December 1995

THIS MONTH'S SIGN

KESHET/SAGITTARIUS

Kislev's sign is The Bow. (*Keshet* in Hebrew). For it was at the beginning of Kislev that the first rainbow was seen after The Flood. The rainbow symbolizes the pact that G-d made

with Noah never again to destroy the world with water.

The bow also echoes the military victory of Chanukah - the bow of purity of Israel vanquishing the bow of impurity of Greece. Mystically, the bow symbolizes the power of prayer: Just as the closer the bow-string is drawn down to the ground, the higher the arrow soars when it is released skyward, so similarly, ***the deeper the source of a prayer, the higher it reaches into the heavens.***

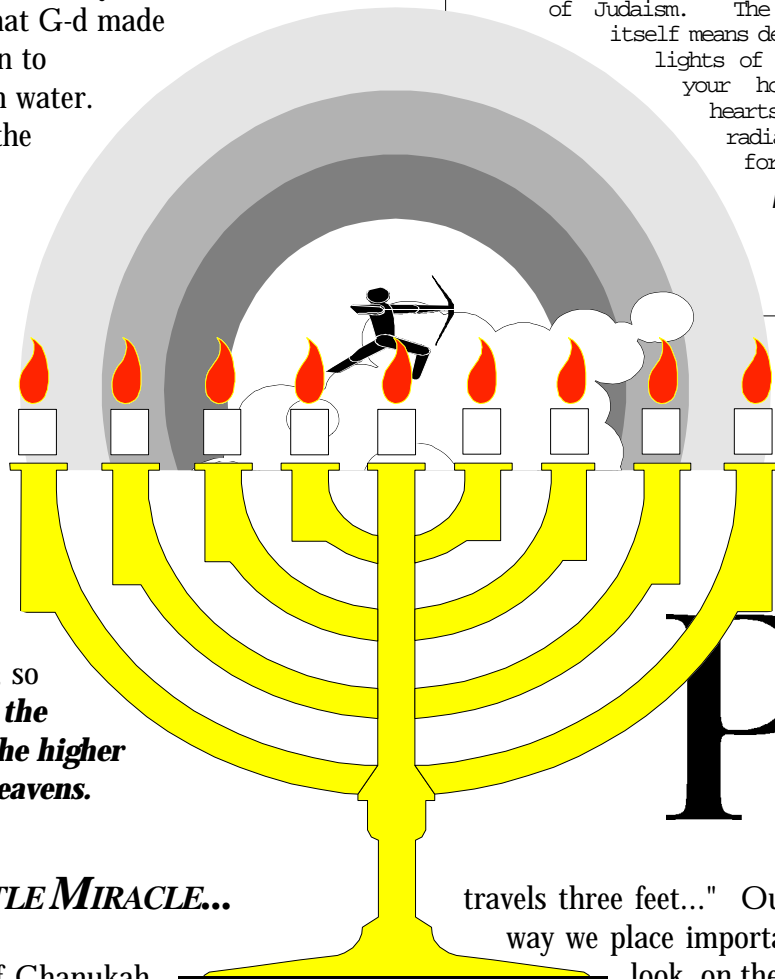
JUST A LITTLE MIRACLE...

The lights of Chanukah celebrate a little miracle: After a small band of Jews had beaten the might of Greece, one small flask of oil for the Menorah was discovered in the Holy Temple - One small flask, un-defiled by the Greeks...

(Continued over)

At this point in the year, when time is measured by how many shopping days are left..., the Jewish person often finds himself re-defining who he is in relationship to his Judaism. The festival of Chanukah - the most noticeable aspect of Kislev, is all about redefining, and rededicating ourselves to the values and principles of Judaism. The word Chanukah itself means dedication. May the lights of Chanukah shine in your home and in your hearts, and may their radiance be a beacon for your life!

Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair



TRUTH AND BEAUTY

Peter Finch, the Oscar-winning Australian film actor, once remarked "When you move an eyebrow in Cinemascope it

travels three feet..." Our age is unique in the way we place importance on the way things look, on their external appearance. Whether that appearance is the carefully groomed lines of a Lexus sedan, or the mandatory shape of the human anatomy painfully carved in sweat and toil of so many man-hours of aerobics. We live in a world that is replacing substance

(Continued over)

***Truth is Beauty,
but what is
beautiful
may not be true...***

JUST A LITTLE MIRACLE...*(Continued from other side)*

That flask contained enough oil to last just one short day. But it burned and burned for eight days... To commemorate that little miracle we kindle the lights of Chanukah for eight days.

But if you think about it - we should really only light the lights **for seven days**, because on that first day the lights burned completely naturally - *there was enough oil for one day!*

So why do we light candles for eight nights - one of those nights was no miracle at all!

That eighth candle we light is for the little miracle called the Jewish People. When Louis the XIV asked Voltaire for one piece of evidence of G-d's presence in this world, he replied "The Jews, Your Majesty..."

The survival of the Jewish People is like that one pure flask of oil. It seems so frail. You think it will never survive. But it goes on burning and burning and burning... And the reason it goes on burning is because it is pure.

It's just a little miracle...

TRUTH AND BEAUTY*(Continued from other side)*

with form, reality with appearance.

In his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, John Keats, the English Romantic poet, wrote "Beauty is Truth, Truth, Beauty". Truth and Beauty - two values representing a historic and perpetual confrontation between The People of the Book and The "Beautiful People", between Jerusalem and Athens.

It's interesting that Keats chose to write his poem on a *Grecian* urn, for it was Greece that gave the world the idea that Beauty is, in itself, a supreme ideal. Judaism says that that ideal can become an **idol**. If Beauty doesn't dwell in the tents of Truth, then 'Beauty' may become the 'Beast' - a pretext for hedonism and immorality.

But don't think that there is no place for Beauty in the Jewish world-view. The Torah states categorically that aesthetics **has** a value, but its value is to the extent that it serves

Truth, and uplifts the soul. **In other words, Truth is Beauty, but what is beautiful may not necessarily be true.** When you gaze into the light of your Chanukah candles, remember that their light shines out with the radiance of the Jewish love for Truth in all the ages.

One Step Beyond

Seven days of the week,
Seven notes of the scale,
Seven is the rhythm of the natural world
and Eight...

Eight is
ONE STEP BEYOND.

Eight are the days till Mlah,
Raising the body beyond itself.
Bris Mlah is
ONE STEP BEYOND.

Eight- Shmoneh- and Soul- Neshama-
are written with the same letters
Because
The Soul is
ONE STEP BEYOND.

And Eight are the lights of Chanukah
Because
Chanukah
is ONE STEP BEYOND.

SOURCES :

THIS MONTH'S SIGN - *Sefer HaToda'ah*, *Shem MiShmuel*, Rabbi M. Glazerson;
JUST A LITTLE MIRACLE... - Beis Yosef, Rabbi Mendel Weinbach;
ONE STEP BEYOND - MaHaral;

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