

## **D'var Torah: The Chief Rabbi's D'var Torah for Chanukah**

by Eli Shebson - Wednesday, December 05, 2018

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**This week, the Chief Rabbi explains which surprising character trait we are taught to value on Chanukah**

What is the secret message of Chanukah?

Rav Naftali of Ropshitz, one of the great early Chassidic masters of the eighteenth century, found an allusion to Chanukah in the Parasha of Mikeitz.

Yosef was hosting his family. They did not know his true identity and he gave gifts to them. “Vateirev Masa’at Binyamin Mimasat Kulam Chameish Yadot – He gave Benjamin five times the amount that he gave to others.”

‘Chameish Yadot’ is a strange term to use for ‘five times the amount’. What are the ‘Chameish Yadot – the five hands’?

Rav Naftali says it is an allusion to the prayer of ‘Al Hanisim’, where five times we are told about ‘Yadot’. We thank Hashem, “Masarta Giborim B’Yad Chalashim – You have delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak. “V’Rabim B’Yad Ma’atim – and the many into the hands of the few.” “Utmei’im B’yad Tehorim – and the impure into the hands of the pure.” “Uresha’im B’Yad Tzadikim – and the evil into the hands of the righteous.” “V’Zeidim B’Yad Oskei Toratecha – and the arrogant into the hands of those who engage in Torah study.” The ‘Chameish Yadot – the five hands’ are mentioned there.

It is intriguing – that these are all opposites except for the concluding one: ‘The arrogant into the hands of those who engage in Torah’...

In fact they are opposites. Because the message here is that if you are arrogant then you cannot successfully engage in Torah. That is why the greatest teacher that has ever lived on earth, Moshe Rabbeinu, was “Anav Mikol Adam – he was more humble than any other person.”

Chanukah is, of course, a time of great celebration - it is a time when we recall the military prowess of the Maccabees over the Hellenists. But during Chanukah we also need to take a step back in order to appreciate with requisite humility the greatness of Hashem who delivered our enemies, through ‘Chameish Yadot’, into our hands.

Therefore the secret message of Chanukah is that if you want to grow as a person then there is no place for arrogance, you need to have that touch of humility.

Shabbat Shalom and Chanukah Sameach

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