The essence of Chanukah

BY: R' YAAKOV WEINBERG ZT"L

About R' Weinberg zt"l

HaRav Yaakov Weinberg, zt"l, was the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, Maryland from 1987 until his petira in 1999. For many decades he was a force for Torah in the Jewish world. He was the ultimate Rebbi, transforming the hearts and minds of thousands of talmidim with his unfaltering adherence to the truth of Torah and the words of Chazal. With his incisive analysis and penetrating insight, he developed generations of outstanding leaders. They follow his example in their understanding of Torah and in their responsibility for its transmission. His talmidim have been instrumental in creating communal organizations including shuls, schools and kiruv centers. Rav Weinberg was a sought-after advisor, involved in hundreds of private and public issues within the Jewish community. He often conducted the question and answer sessions at Torah Umesorah conventions where many benefited from his counsel. Rav Weinberg was married to Rebbetzin Shaina Chana Ruderman, the daughter of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman, zt"l, the founder of Ner Yisrael. He was the older brother and mentor of Rav Noach Weinberg, zt"l, the founder of Aish HaTorah.

Dedicated by Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Berkowitz l'iluy nishmas Moshe Gershon ben Yekusiel Yehuda a"h

Dedicated by Dr. and Mrs. Michael Ring l'iluy nishmas Chaya Leah (Vivian) bas Shmuel a"h

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The Rosh HaYeshiva had a distinctive and expressive style of speaking. The text has been edited extensively for readability. However, where necessary, the usual grammatical rules have been relaxed to retain the force and flavor of the Rosh HaYeshiva's delivery.

Purim, as we described, was the event, and therefore the *Yom Tov,* that enabled us to deal with a relationship to *Hashem* that wasn't in His actual presence - what we call *hester punim,* where His reality and divinity is hidden from us. To make this adjustment from the period of the first *Beis HaMikdash* to the period of the second *Beis HaMikdash*, - from a period where His reality was a daily experienced truth for all Jews, to a period where they no longer found it as a daily experience - His actuality. This adjustment had to be made. And it was through the events of *Purim* when the *B'nai Yisrael* reacted to the threat of annihilation with a realization that they are still with *Hashem* in spite of the *galus*, and in spite of his hiddenness, and were aware of His hand in directing their fate, and aware of the closeness that still existed. This enabled them to establish that relationship with Him that could survive a *galus*, that could survive a period of non-direct awareness, and that's what *Purim* gave us.

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But *Klal Yisrael* lived in a situation then where, even though it was difficult to feel G-d's presence, no one seriously questioned the truth of His Torah. The tradition, the passing on from age to age, was firm, total and complete. There was no way by which a Jew would question the validity of his faith.

There now arose a totally different threat to the survival of the Jew as a people, Greece, *Yuvun! Yuvun* offered the Jew *k'firah* – apostasy - but seductively. The *k'firah* that *Yuvun* offered the Jew was an indirect *k'firah*, and therefore the deeper and more fully developed *k'firah.*

There now arose a totally different threat to the survival of the Jew as a people, Greece, _Yuvun! Yuvun_ offered the Jew _k'firah_ - apostasy - but seductively.

Let us first say what it was that Greece *wanted* from the Jew, and then we will be able a little bit more clearly to recognize what the *danger* was, what the *response* was and what the *mark* on the Jewish soul was thenceforth on.

The first problem that we face in dealing with the events of *Chanukah* is the following rather remarkable fact. The invention of Alexander and of Greece was *"CONQUER, RULE, BUT DON'T INTERFERE WITH THEIR RELIGIONS."* They discovered early on that to interfere with the religions was to produce tensions and conflicts, that just didn't pay. So, they said what do we need it for? "You want to have this religion and worship this god, whatever you like. *As long as* you're also subject to Greece you can worship the god of your choice. We won't interfere." Why did all of a sudden they find that the G-d of Israel was the *one* religion out of all the thousands of religions with which they had to deal, that they found intolerable? All other religions they learned to tolerate, and they did, and they lived with, and they were comfortable. Why was it that the one religion that was intolerable to them was the Jewish religion? It's certainly not the most grotesque religion that

All other religions they learned to tolerate, and they did, and they lived with, and they were comfortable. Why was it that the one religion that was intolerable to them was the Jewish religion? This is a puzzle that we have to address if we are to understand the conflict that took place between Israel and Greece.

they dealt with. There were all kinds of weird customs and rituals, and whatever it was they took it in good stride and with a tolerant acceptance. All of a sudden, the Jews. No *Shabbos*! No *milah*! What no *milah*? Why do you care if there is *milah*? What do you care if they keep *Shabbos*? What is it that you want? What is it that you don't like? This is a puzzle that we have to address if we are to understand the conflict that took place between Israel and Greece.

Just by using that term, we begin to start finding the answer. The conflict is between Israel and Greece. What does Jerusalem stand for? What does Athens stand for? Athens stands for *philosophy*, *gymnasium*s and *aesthetics*. What do these three sum up? What is there in common with all that Athens stands for?

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Athens said we will worship "god" *in our ways*. But the main, and most important thing is to recognize that Man creates and directs his own destiny. We are what we make ourselves. And therefore, we've got to grow in philosophy and we've got to make sure that our bodies are the finest. We're all that matter and we're all that count. Everything *derives* from us.

It's seductive. The gymnasium is seductive for the perfect body, for the good reflexes, for wellbeing. The philosophy is seductive. Man thinks and clarifies it with his own mind. He can reach his own conclusions, achieve his own insights and awareness by using that mind. And of course, art is seductive: the appreciation of beauty, the recognition of it, the living with it. Therefore, Athens is the establishment of the primacy of Man.

Yerushalayim, on the other hand, stands for the recognition that Man has his justification only in that which transcends him. He cannot find his truth, his purpose and his meaning within himself, but from something greater than himself. Something outside himself and beyond himself is the source of his meaningfulness, significance and having a purpose. There is no way we can find purpose within humanity itself. There's got to be something that transcends, that stands above, that's beyond and greater than Man through whom he can achieve completeness, wholeness, greatness, nobility, whatever it is. The achievement has to come through something that's outside and greater than himself.

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This then is the conflict between Athens and *Yerushalayim*. It is a conflict that Greece has with no other people! In all other people, the *avoda zarah* – their worship - is also themselves. *To the Jew, Man is a tzelem of Elokim, to the gentile, Elokim is the tzelem of Man.* The *goy* sees his gods in his shape, he sees his gods in his characteristics and he sees his gods in his ideals. If to him the

greatest thing in the world is to be able to drink and drink, and swill, without getting a hangover, then that's what he attributes to his god.

What is the god of the *oved avoda zarah*? He can drink and swill and do every *davar asur* and come out without a hangover. He can come out without being tired because that's his ideal for himself. That's what he would do if he had unlimited power, isn't it? What would he do if he had no limits to his power and ability, he could do anything he wanted? What he would want is to get drunk, to live with women and continue doing so forever and ever *without suffering consequences*. So his god whom he says has power, surely that's what his god does. Their god is made in the image of Man. They project to their gods their own greediness, their own *middos ruos*, their own hopes and ambitions. That's how they picture their god. In contrast – *l'havdil,* by *Yisrael*, he knows that he is made in the image of *Hashem!* And that therefore, he has to formulate himself, and find himself in that image, and in that closeness to the *Ribono Shel Olam*, which means that *Yisrael* is G-d directed, and Athens is Man directed. This is THE conflict and is THE rubbing between the two.

To the Jew, Man is a *tzelem* of *Elokim*, to the gentile, *Elokim* is the *tzelem* of Man.

By all the *ovday avoda zarah* the Greeks let each nation worship its own idol, but the culture was Greek culture. They went to the Greek theater. They went to the Greek gymnasium. They accepted Greek values. They accepted Greek assessments of the world. Who cared about the ritual? The Jew, on the other hand, didn't have *different rituals*, he had *a whole different value system*. He stood in opposition to all that Greece stood for.

Greece didn't just establish these values for itself, it brought them to all mankind. Rome took over Greece teachings. The Roman Catholic Church combined teachings from our *Torah* with teachings from Greece. *Yuvun* became the culture of *Edom* as well.

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So the major conflict that started to arise at this point, which remains the major conflict of our time, from then forever, is, are we G-d oriented? Or are we Man oriented? Which is primary? Is the prime G-d, and therefore His worship and our reaching out to Him? Or is the prime Man, and therefore the gymnasium and the academia, where he achieves his fullest flowering of mind and body, together with the studio, where he can appreciate his beauty? What's the beauty of Greece? The perfection of the human figure. This is the conflict between the two.

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It was through the *Tzadukim* that this conflict took place. For Greece didn't mind the Jew as *Jew*. The Greek minded the Jew as *G-d-oriented*. The *Tzadukim* found that he can be Man-oriented while being a Jew. How? *Get rid of the Torah sheba'al peh!*

As long as you dispense with the oral law and you just read the *Chumash* and *Tanach*, you can have it any way you want! You become the boss. You become the determiner of values. Because in the *Chumash* you can put in your beliefs and your interests, and push them as the portrayal of what the *Chumash* is saying. Where do we have the definitive sculpture of the *Chumash*, of what it is really demanding and what it is really teaching? Only in the *Torah sheba'al peh* - only in the oral law!

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The *Tzaduki* wanted to be "*misyavan",* to become part of Greece, that's why they are called "*misyavnim*" - the Greece fobs - the Athens seekers. Therefore, they rejected the *Torah sheba'al peh*. They kept their religion. Nobody objects to a religion. But they rejected the base of values, meanings and understandings of life which derive from the *Torah-sheba'al peh* rather than the *Torah shebik'sav*.

The *Tzadukim* were Greece! The *Perushim* who kept the *Torah sheba'al peh* were anti-Greece! It is the *Perushim* who were not tolerated and therefore the conflict arose.

And it was through the application of the *Torah sheba'al peh* that victory was achieved. Now you have to hear this very carefully, what I mean when I say that *it was through the Torah sheba'al peh that victory was achieved.*

Now, the Greeks weren't idiots. Why should they fight a battle during the week and risk getting killed, when, on *Shabbos,* they would have helpless, passive victims, who would lie there without resistance, while they came in and chopped them do bits!? What happened? *Mattisyahu Kohen Gadol* told them *pikuach nefashos* is *docheh Shabbos.* He then organized it so that they fought the wars on *Shabbos* as well. And this was the beginning of their achieving of victory.

The Jews resisted Greece and were being systematically defeated and butchered. The reason for this was very simple. The Greek army would rest in its bivouacs and wait for *Shabbos*. *Shabbos* they would go out and try to find the caves where the Jews were hiding and slaughter them. *Because the Jews wouldn't do battle on Shabbos*. Now, the Greeks weren't idiots. Why should they fight a battle during the week and risk getting killed, when, on *Shabbos,* they would have helpless, passive victims, who would lie there without resistance, while they came in and chopped them do bits!? What happened? *Mattisyahu Kohen Gadol* told them *pikuach nefashos* is *docheh Shabbos*, that for the sake of saving their lives they can desecrate the *Shabbos*. He then organized it so that they fought the wars on *Shabbos* as well. And this was the beginning of their achieving of victory.

Now, what are we talking about over here? Let's take a look and see what we mean. There is no way that we can understand that the Jew of that time didn't know this *din* that *pikuach nefashos* is *docheh Shabbos*. *There is no way!* Number one, we knew it from *Moshe b'har Sinai* all along. Number two, is it not a historical fact that the Jews survived in the *Bayis Rishon*? If they didn't fight on *Shabbos* you know very well they'd all be dead! You had all their enemies there ready to fight them all the time: *Moav*, and *Amon*, and *Edom*, and *Amalek*. They were all there to do the battle. If the Jews didn't resist on *Shabbos* they would all be dead! King Dovid didn't fight on *Shabbos*? What did he say, "wait a truce until after *Shabbos*?" And the *Plishtim* would respond and say "okay, we'll wait until after *Shabbos* and you can grab your spears again?" Could anybody

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believe such nonsense? How could any Jew have thought that you don't fight wars on *Shabbos*? Clearly absurd.

So what then were we talking about? What were we dealing with? The answer is really very clear and very simple. The *halachah* of *Kiddush Hashem* says that for certain *mitzvos* a Jew must die, namely, the following three sins: Idolatry, incest, and murder, a Jew must die rather than commit one of these sins. That's called the *mitzvah* of *Kiddush Hashem*. Any other *mitzvah* in the *Torah* the *halachah* is that a Jew is supposed to *violate it rather than be killed.* That's the *din.* There is, however, a period during which the *din* of choosing death rather than violating *ANY mitzvah* applies. Namely, *b'shas hashmad.* If there is a time when the non-Jews want to impose on the Jews *not that they do aveiros,* but that they do *aveiros in order to do aveiros!* Let's describe that. If a non-Jew says to a Jew "build me a house on *Shabbos* or I'll kill you." It's because the non-Jew *wants the house*. There, you violate the *Shabbos* and don't let him kill you. But suppose he says "you're going to violate *Shabbos* or I'll kill you." Or "light that fire! - I don't need it, and I don't want it, *I just want you to violate the Shabbos*. And if you don't violate the *Shabbos* I'm going to kill you!" There, the *din* is you have to get killed rather than violate the *Shabbos* because his purpose is to make the Jew violate the *Shabbos*.

"...וכל הדברים האלו שלא בשעת השמד. אבל בשעת השמד, והוא כשיעמוד מלך רשע כנבוכדנאצר וחביריו (מלכות יון, אגרת קדוה"ש) ויגזור שמד על ישראל לבטל דתם או מצוה מן המצוות, יהרג ואל יעבור אפילו על אחת משאר מצוות בין נאנס בתוך עשרה בין נאנס בינו לבין גוים..." [רמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה, פרק ה, הלכה ג].

Therefore, *b'shas hashmad*, when the Greeks decreed that the Jews are not allowed to keep *Shabbos*, *milah*, or any other *mitzvah*, the *halachah* became that you have to die rather than violate. If a non-Jew in the time of this war would say to a Jew "build me a house on *Shabbos* or I will shoot you dead," the Jew has to let himself be shot dead. Because since it's a time when the non-Jew is trying to force the Jews to give up their acceptance of the *mitzvos, you have to die for anything*. So, he would have to die rather than violate the *Shabbos*. Therefore, they all thought that since this is a time of *shmad*, they are *not* allowed to do battle on *Shabbos*. Because by a *g'zaros shmad,* you have to die even for *Shabbo*s, not only for the *big three* but for *all mitzvos* in the *Torah*. Therefore, they chose to die rather than violate the *Shabbos*.

Mattisyahu came along and said to them, "My dear friends, you are making an error! If you're *SURRENDERING* to the non-Jew, then, the *din* is *Kiddush Hashem* - die rather than surrender. But if you're *mechalel Shabbos* by *RESISTING* him, then the *din* remains that you're *mechalel Shabbos* and don't die." In other words, the *halachah* that *b'shas hashmad* you have to die for *ANY mitzvah* is only that you have to die rather than *surrender* a *mitzvah*, but if you're dying *to resist and defy the non-Jew who's forcing you*, then, the ordinary *halachah* that you violate the *Shabbos* for the sake of saving a life comes into play. Therefore, they got up and resisted again, and the battle was won!

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This give and take is *Torah sheba'al peh*. It is the whole force of using explanation and judgment with which to apply properly the laws of the *Torah* that came to the fore. And this application of *Torah sheba'al peh* became the base by which *Yisrael* began that *avoda* that resulted in their ultimate victory, which means that the source of the victory lies in *Torah sheba'al peh*.

This is as far as we have spoken because the whole opposition was to *Torah sheba'al peh*. That's where the Greeks felt the anti-Greece sentiment, and therefore, through *Torah sheba'al peh* we resisted back.

But it goes a great deal deeper! It is in the *Torah sheba'al peh* where the primacy of *Hashem* is found! It is in *Torah sheba'al peh* that we find the antithesis to Athens. What does the Greek say to the Jew? *"We are mind! We are the achievement of the human soul!"* What does the Jew say to the Greek? *"You are subordinate! The true achievement of the Jewish soul is in ultimate truth, which is Torah!"* And in that ultimate truth, the Jewish mind achieves the highest and noblest achievement of a human mind. Because it is a human mind that achieves absolute truth of *Torah*. With *Torah*, the human mind achieves eternal truth, absolute truth. It is through his responsibility in *Torah* that a Man achieves his highest and his noblest accomplishments. It is this responsibility in the ultimate reality of the world that can give direction to the mind of Man and to the talents of Man, to enable him to travel in those paths that are in consonance with absolute truth.

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Therefore, where should the true greatness of Athens be found? *"B'ohalay Shem"*, under the guidance of a *Torah*. Under the guidance of *Torah sheba'al peh*, which will give you the parameters of human achievement, the direction in which the talents and abilities, mental and physical, of a human being can be given proper direction, and in which the proper relationship of body to mind can be achieved. There, you can set the greatness of Greece into a perspective which will enable it to be constructive, and eternal. However, once it finds itself outside of *"Ohalay Shem,"* outside this guidance, it is eventually going to get lost, which is ultimately what happened to Greece and Greek culture. Therefore, the resistance to Greece is only through *Torah sheba'al peh*.

"...יפת אלהים ליפת וישכן באהלי-שם..." [נח, ט, כז].

That we need this forever is, of course, the fact! Our response has to be to this unceasing conflict of human mind, of science, of human values, the relative ethics of human establishment of worth, do your own thing, individual rights…these are the sources that are in constant conflict, in constant battle with all the truths of what Jews stand for. It is *that* which is being used to try to swamp Jewish belief, behavior, culture, and the life of a Jewish nation as a nation itself. Where are we going to get the strength to resist it? Only through *Torah sheba'al peh*! It is the *Torah sheba'al peh* that enables us to achieve a defiance to all these conflicts that would want to annihilate the Jew as a separate people. Therefore, it is only in the *Yeshivah* where *Torah sheba'al peh* can be learned, that one can really find the strength, the ability, and the approach, with which to deal with these problems of our time.

But how did this show itself in *Chanukah*? The "miracle" of *Chanukah* is the miracle of winning the war. The "celebration" of *Chanukah* is the celebration of the miracle of the lights. What is the miracle of the lights? The *menorah* was lit in a miraculous way. What is the *menorah*? The illumination of the world. What does it stand for in Jewish values? The *Torah sheba'al peh!* If the *aron* is that which stands for the *Torah shebik'sav,* then the *menorah*, which is lit by the **"...שפתי כהן ישמרו-דעת ותורה יבקשו מפיהו..." [מלאכי, ב, ז]** - by the *Kohen* who has the specific

"...וללוי אמר...יורו משפטיך ליעקב ותורתך לישראל..." [וזאת הברכה, פרק לג, פסוק ח, י].

obligation to teach *Torah sheba'al peh* to Jews**.** The *menorah* that illuminates and lights up the world stands for *Torah sheba'al peh.* It is the source by which *Torah-sheba'al peh* is brought down.

"אלא הענין בכ"ז דיש לדעת דאור התורה שהוא תכלית המשכן ועיקר המשרה שכינה בישראל. בא בשפע ע"י אמצעות שני כלי קודש. היינו הארון והמנורה. ונשתנו פעולותיהם. הארון בא ליעוד הדברות שבכתב וגם לצווי בקבלה בע"פ וכמש"כ לעיל כ"ה כ"ב. ועדיין אין בזה כח הפלפול והחידוש שיהא אדם יכול לחדש מעצמו דבר הלכה שאינו מקובל. ולזה הכח הנפלא שנקרא תלמוד ניתן כח המנורה אשר נכלל בו שבע חכמות וכל כחות הנדרש לפלפולה ש"ת. וכ"ז נכלל בכפתורים ופרחים. עד דאי' בב"ר פצ"א ר' טרפון בשעה שהיה שומע דבר מתוקן היה אומר כפתור ופרח. ושיח רבן של ישראל ללמדנו בא שמה שתלמיד ותיק מחדש דבר טוב הוא ע"י כח שנרמז בכו"פ של המנורה. וע"כ בבית שני שרבו ישיבות והעמידו תלמידים הרבה להויות דאביי ורבא שהוא התלמוד מש"ה נתחזק כח המנורה ע"י נס דחנוכה. וע"ע להלן ל"ט ל"ז שהראיתי לדעת שמרומז ג"ז בתורה. והיינו דאי' בברכות דנ"ז הרואה שמן זית בחלום יצפה למאור תורה :שנא' ויקחו אליך שמן זית וגו'" [העמק דבר, פרק כז, פסוק כ]

In what did *Hashem Yisborach* display his acceptance of the Jewish sacrifice of *Chanukah*? In the *Torah sheba'al peh*, as shown in the *menorah*. The miracle of *Chanukah* is expressed in the *menorah* because the *menorah* stands for the *Torah-sheba'al peh*!

Chazal tell us that *Purim* is the *last* of the *nisim*, of the miracles. The *Gemara* asks, how can one say *Purim* is the last of the miracles? *Chanukah* followed! The *Gemara* answers that *Purim* is the last of miracles that were **"ניתן ליכתב" .** *Purim* still belongs to *Tanach.* It was able to be written and is not yet *Torah sheba'al peh*. *Chanukah* cannot be written! There is no *Megillas-Chanukah*. *Megillas-Antiochus* is not a portion of *Tanach. Chanukah* is the *Yom Tov* of *Torah sheba'al peh!* Its strength is *ba'al peh*, its essence is *ba'al peh*, and therefore, it remains forever the *Yom Tov* of *Torah sheba'al peh*.

"...א"ר אסי, למה נמשלה אסתר לשחר? לומר לך מה שחר סוף כל הלילה, אף אסתר סוף כל הנסים. והא איכא חנוכה? ניתנה לכתוב קאמרינן..." [יומא דף כט.]

So, it's from this *Yom Tov* of *Chanukah,* from which the usage of *Torah sheba'al peh* enabled us to understand what it is that we stand for in terms of the final justification of human nobility and greatness, that tells us the grandness of the human mind is to be found *only* in subordination to *Hashem's* direction. And it is in that subordination where the mind achieves its highest degree of achievement, because it achieves eternalness, absoluteness and truth. In this, there is the recognition of the primacy of the Creator through whom alone value, truth, and absoluteness can be found. In this acceptance, *Klal Yisrael* defeated Athens. And it is in this defeat and *mesiros nefesh* that *Klal Yisrael* remains forever able to maintain its existence in spite of all the force and power of science and technology, and the loss of values that science and technology bring with it. Science and technology, not for *what it achieves*, but for the *values which it proclaims*, which is the primacy of Man, must inevitably bring with it a total rejection of standards, behaviors and values. Our defiance is to that! Our defiance isn't to science for what it achieves and gives over in truth, but for the values that it pretends to proclaim. To become not a means, but to become an ideology, an *avoda zarah* as it were, a culture that we demand you join! This is what science and technology with its resulting loss of morality and standards have brought about. This we can resist with the *kochos ha'nefesh* which *Chanukah* implanted within the Jewish soul.

"ענין חנוכה ופורים הוא להאיר האור המאיר בימים ההם כפי התקונים שנתקנו בם. חנוכה בתגבורת הכהנים על הרשעים בני יון שהיו מתכונים להסיר ישראל מעבודת ה' ונתחזקו הכהנים ועל ידם שבו לתורה ולעבודה. ובפרט ענין המנורה לפי תיקוניה שהיו הקטרוגים נגד ענינה והחזירום הכהנים על בורים. [דרך ה', חלק ד]

The specific means that we use is by the further learning, usage and devotion to *Torah sheba'al peh,* signified by the lighting of the *menorah*.

We have to understand the *significance* of a miracle that is given to be written down, which is *Purim* and a miracle that is not given to be written down, which is *Chanukah*. A miracle that is given to be written down is a miracle that *comes from above*, and therefore is perfect! *Purim,* no Jew gets killed! A miracle that is not given to be written down is a miracle that *comes from below*, that comes from our own efforts. It is a miracle that *Hashem* enabled us to win the war, *but we have to wage it.* And therefore we suffer; thousands of Jews get killed!

A *Torah sheba'al peh* is our undertaking and our responsibility, with all the struggle and the fallibility that remains in it. But on the other hand, the covenant between *Hashem Yisborach* and *Klal Yisrael* was made through *Torah sheba'al peh*, where we achieve together with Him in *Torah-sheba'al peh.* That's where a real covenant takes place!

''...א''ר יוחנן, לא כרת הקב''ה ברית עם ישראל אלא בשביל דברים שבעל פה, שנאמר, כי על פי הדברים האלה כרתי אתך ברית ואת ישראל...'' [גיטין דף ס:]

And that's where we are completely separate from the *goyim!* The *goyim* took over our *Torah shebik'sav*. Greece reads our bible and proclaims it and stresses it, but not our *Torah-sheba'al peh!* That uniquely belongs to the Jew. That's where the covenant is between us and *Hashem*. And it is in there that we are going to find our separation, our uniqueness, our maintenance of ourselves as a people apart, and not get lost in the *goyim*.

And this is what *Chanukah* achieved for us, that we are enabled with the realization that, *at the cost of life itself,* these values separate us and make us a **''...עם לבדד ישכן'' [בלק, כג, ט]**, a nation that dwells alone, that remains different, and unique, it is in this that we know that we find the means of our survival.

''א''ר יוחנן, לא כרת הקב''ה ברית עם ישראל אלא בשביל דברים שבעל פה.'' [גיטין דף ס:]

''א''ר יוחנן, לא כרת הקב''ה ברית עם ישראל אלא בשביל דברים שבעל פה. '' [גיטין דף ס:]

"...נמצא מרב אשי עד משה רבינו ארבעים איש ואלו הן: א) רב אשי מרבא, ב) מרבה, ג) מרב הונא, ד) מר' יוחנן ורב ושמואל, ה) מרבינו הקדוש, ו) מרבן שמעון אביו, ז) מרבן גמליאל אביו, ח) מרבן שמעון אביו, ט) מרבן גמליאל הזקן אביו, י) מרבן שמעון אביו, יא) מהלל אביו ושמאי, יב) משמעיה ואבטליון, יג) מיהודה ושמעון, יד) מיהושע ונתאי, טו) מיוסף ויוסף, טז) מאנטגנס, יז) משמעון הצדיק, יח) מעזרא, יט) מברוך, כ) מירמיה, כא) מצפניה, כב) מחבקוק, כג) מנחום, כד) מיואל, כה) ממיכה, כו) מישעיה, כז) מעמוס, כח) מהושע, כט) מזכריה, ל) מיהוידע, לא) מאלישע, לב) מאליהו, לג) מאחיה, לד) מדוד, לה) משמואל, לו) מעלי, לז) מפינחס, לח) מיהושע, לט) ממשה רבינו רבן של כל הנביאים, מ) מעם י''י אלהי ישראל:..."

הקדמת הרמב''ם

A FRIELICHIN CHANUKAH!

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