

[**CHANUKAH**](chanukah.html)

By Rabbi Daniel Lapin



Good Evening ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to launch into the subject for this evening's commentary. Before doing that I would like to explain the rules of the game. We are going to be probing, in some depth I hope, into what makes [Chanukah](chanukah.html). But, at the same [time](time.html) in order to make sure that what we are discussing is not mere fantasy, we are going to have to make sure that everything is rooted within the structure of halachah. So that we can be absolutely certain that we are not superimposing our own ideas on what [Chanukah](chanukah.html) might be about, but, rather we are extracting some of the true meaning that [Chanukah](chanukah.html) will yield for us. Part of what I'll be doing is starting off with an approach that my late father took on this matter. It was story that he would tell me often, even when I was too young to understand the meaning of the story. So, I remember the story very well. It took me a [number](nchart.html) of years before I got an understanding of the value of the story. The story is about the vacation he took when he was a yeshiva student, in Lithuania. Now what do you do when you want to take a vacation from Lithuania? Now Lithuania is a very horrible place. It really is just a frozen waste. It is just this side of the Arctic circle. It is not a big vacation destination. If any of you are thinking of somewhere nice to go this winter - there are nice places that I can recommend - I do not think that Lithuania is [one](one.html) of them. What my father, and some of his friends, did was to decide that they were going to visit several [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [communities](community.html) that lay even further north. Now this is well before [World](worlds.html) War II, so they decided to visit some [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [communities](community.html) in Finland. Now if Lithuania is just this side of the Arctic circle then most of Finland is apparently way the other side. It was just about this [time](time.html) of the year ([Chanukah](chanukah.html)). [One](one.html) night my father and some of his friends from the yeshiva found themselves staying at a hotel. Now a hotel in Finland in the 1930's - was not the Sheraton. It was a little inn. That's all. There were a few rooms upstairs and a big room downstairs. And after dinner - now obviously these [Jewish](gen-jew.html) boys had acquired their own [food](food.html) along, which they [ate](eating.html). After dinner all the guests - now there must have been about [twenty](twenty.html) guests staying at this inn. Now after dinner they all [gathered](gather.html) around the fireplace, in their coats, shivering away, because it is a long night and there are several hours before it is [time](time.html) to go to bed. So, no TV, so you may remember an old custom - you converse - they talked! So they have a conversation and the conversation lags. You [know](daat.html) how sometimes crowds are just like a black hole - nothing to talk about, and nobody to talk with. Eventually somebody said, "well can anybody entertain us? Does anybody [know](daat.html) anything?" Finally [one](one.html) fellow there, not a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) guy, just another [one](one.html) of the travelers, said," I am a hypnotist." All of a sudden everybody perks up. My father said, "Do some hypnosis for us". The hypnotist said," I'll need a volunteer." Somebody steps forward and the hypnotist puts him into a trance. While he is in the trance he said to him, "at the stroke of midnight, tonight, you are going to run to that window and you are going to fling the window open". Everybody gasped because at the beginning of winter, in Finland, they shut the window and the next [time](time.html) they open them is in the spring - it is too cold. It takes hours for the [fire](fire.html) to heat up the room. Now you don't go and let all the heat out by opening up the window. Well he said that is what you are going to do. Then you are going to come out of your trance and you are not going to remember anything. The fellow then returned to his seat and the hypnotist too. And everybody is watching - carefully. At [eleven](eleven.html) [thirty](thirty.html), he starts going like this (fanning himself)... My father said that at [eleven](eleven.html) [forty](forty.html) he starts taking his jacket off. He takes it right off and throws it aside. At [ten](ten.html) to [twelve](twelve.html) he undoes his shirt. At [twelve](twelve.html)-o-clock he jumps up and says, "I can't take this heat anymore." He runs to the window and opens it, takes a deep breath, and says, "at last, some fresh air." And then he wake up and says, "My God what have I done". He slams the window shut and he says, "how did that happen?"

It is a funny story except that there is a terribly important point to come out of all this. The point is that everybody in that room, but [one](one.html), [knew](daat.html) what was really going on. That [one](one.html) man thought that he opened the window because he was hot. But everyone else [knew](daat.html) the truth which is that he was hot because he had to open the window. This was a reversal of the cause and effect. If you had not [known](daat.html) anything about what had happened - you had come into that room at [eleven](eleven.html)-[thirty](thirty.html) you would have seen a man getting hotter and hotter and then opening the window. And you would have thought that he had opened the window because he felt hot. But, had you been there all the [time](time.html), you would have watched in amazement as his [body](body.html) started preparing for the incomprehensible action that he was programmed to do. He was going to have to open the window, and since this is inexplicable the only way his [body](body.html) could tolerate it was to create this heat that his [body](body.html) felt. And he goes off to open the window. This is fascinating because it is a valuable key to understanding the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [calendar](calendar.html).

I always thought that [Jewish](gen-jew.html) holidays are as the result of certain [events](feasts.html) which took place in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history. And now here I am about to disturb you. I am going to say that it is not like that. This little story of the reversal of cause and effect is very valuable in our understanding. I thought that [Pesach](passover.html) was because we were taken out of the land of Egypt. The real story is that we were taken [out of Egypt](thebirth.html) on the [fifteenth](fifteen.html) day of [Nisan](feasts.html) because that was the day which was already preordained as [Pesach](passover.html), long before we associate these [one](one.html) to another. How do we [know](daat.html) that? Well for [one](one.html) thing we [know](daat.html) that when the [angel](angels.html) visited [Abraham](avraham.html) and Lot, they were given matzos to [eat](eating.html). They baked matzos to feed to the visitors. Why did they do this? And Rashi says very explicitly - well, because it was [Pesach](passover.html)! So, the proposition has some meat to it. [Pesach](passover.html) existed long before anybody went [into Egypt](thebirth.html)! And caring [Jews](gen-jew.html) actually [ate](eating.html) matzos on that day. Isn't that bizarre?

More than that, we [know](daat.html) that in the days of [creation](bara.html) at the beginning of Bereshit, it says that at the end of each day it says "days" with no definite article. A "second day" a "[third](three.html) day" a "[fourth](four.html) day" a "[fifth](five.html) day". But, what happens when we get to the [sixth](six.html) day? This is something that we say with kiddush every Friday night. "The [sixth](six.html) day"! Why does it say it? It should be "a [sixth](six.html) day" just like on the "[fifth](five.html) day". And now we are going to come to the [seventh](seven.html) day. Now look what it says, "the [seventh](seven.html) day". Because that was the [seventh](seven.html) day, which was a special day - so it make sense. What does the [sixth](six.html) day have to do with it? The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says that the reason it was, is because every [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [holiday](festival.html) has a specific day of the month associated with it. And there is only [one](one.html) [holiday](festival.html) on the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [calendar](calendar.html) which falls on the [sixth](six.html) of the month. That is the [holiday](festival.html) of [Shavuot](shavuot.html). The [holiday](festival.html) of the giving of the Torah. And the [Talmud](orallaw.html) say that [sixth](six.html) day was already defined as "the" [sixth](six.html) day, not "a" [sixth](six.html) day because the entire validity of that day depended, retroactively, on the accepting of the Torah by the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people on the [sixth](six.html) day of the month of [Sivan](feasts.html). So, there again we find that [two](two.html) thousand years before the Torah was given, there is already the day designated, which was going to be the [holiday](festival.html) that the Torah is given.

If that is the case, then it would be no surprise to us to hear that the [holiday](festival.html) of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) falls into exactly the same category. And that, not surprisingly, [Chanukah](chanukah.html), contrary to popular belief - Do you [know](daat.html) what the popular [Chanukah](chanukah.html) belief is? The belief is that it is a latter day [holiday](festival.html) that the Rabbis came up with. There were not enough things on the [calendar](calendar.html) so they threw in another [holiday](festival.html) - an [eight](eight.html) day [holiday](festival.html). And somehow or another, magically, it caught on. Apparently not the best. Really [Chanukah](chanukah.html) existed just the same way [Pesach](passover.html) and [Shavuot](shavuot.html) and [Succoth](succoth.html) did beforehand. And the [events](feasts.html), with the Greeks, took place at this [time](time.html) of the year because it was the obvious [time](time.html) of the year for it to take place. It had to take place then.

Now if [Chanukah](chanukah.html), in fact, was always in existence, then it would be reasonable that you ought to be able to find some allusion to it in the Torah. Well of course we do. We find several allusions to it. I will show you [three](three.html) or [four](four.html) tonight. [First](one.html) of all in ... the Torah lists all the holidays on the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [calendar](calendar.html). Now which is the [holiday](festival.html) immediately preceding [Chanukah](chanukah.html)? [Succoth](succoth.html), right? We just finished it. So lets go through the listings in the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) year. The [first](one.html) [holiday](festival.html) would be [Pesach](passover.html). Well actually the very [first](one.html) [holiday](festival.html) it mentions is a weekly [one](one.html) called [Shabbat](sabbath.html). The next [one](one.html) is ...The [first](one.html) [one](one.html) is on the [fourteenth](fourteen.html) day of the [first](one.html) month of [Nisan](feasts.html) - [Passover](passover.html). Then, after that, it says you must count fifty days and you have the [holiday](festival.html) of [Shavuot](shavuot.html). And after that you come to the [seventh](seven.html) month, on the [first](one.html) day of the month we have got [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h. And then on the tenth day of that month, [Yom Kippur](kippur.html). And then on the [fifteenth](fifteen.html) day of that month, [Succoth](succoth.html). And right after that, the very next thing... God [spoke](mashal.html) to Moses saying, "[command](cmds613.html) the children of Israel that they must bring olive oil to light the menorah." (Leviticus 24:2) It is incongruous. What is it doing there? It does not make sense. It is not in the context that we should be talking about the menorah, there, or the oil. Obviously that is the plain meaning. The other meaning is that we have here a listing of all the holidays and right after [Succoth](succoth.html) is listed the [holiday](festival.html) of the olive oil to light the menorah. That's pretty straight forward. But what is the [holiday](festival.html) for? If this [holiday](festival.html) existed before the incident that you all [know](daat.html) about, with the Maccabees and the Greeks, what is the [holiday](festival.html) about, if it is not to celebrate that? What is it about that day which makes it necessary that the incident with the Greeks had to take place on that day? What is the [holiday](festival.html) about? The beginning of the Torah - and obviously it has something to do with [lights](lights.html). Everyone calls it the [festival](lights.html) of [lights](lights.html). And that central theme obviously goes back a very long [time](time.html). As a matter of fact our good Christians friends were looking for a day to identify as [the birth](thebirth.html)day of their God. They wanted to select a birthday for [Jesus](yeshua.html). Now this birthday was selected long after [Jesus](yeshua.html) was born - long after He had died. So nobody actually had any slight idea when He was really born. Some authorities say that He was born in [Nisan](feasts.html). But that does not matter. His birthday has nothing to do with the day He was born. It was designated for convenience reasons, not for [calendar](calendar.html) reasons. So what date did the Christians select for [the birth](thebirth.html)day of [Jesus](yeshua.html)? They took the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) day of the month of December. Why the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html)? Because if you want to suggest that your God's [birth](birth.html) brought light into the [world](worlds.html), then you might as well choose a date which the whole existing [world](worlds.html) already [knew](daat.html) was associated with the idea of light. So they picked the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) because the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) of a month has to do with light.

Does anybody [know](daat.html) why [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html) has to do with light? The [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) word in the Torah is "light"! And so obviously if you are talking about light it has got to have something to do with [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html). That is why we choose [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html). Correction, we did not choose it, but, that is why it is the day [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html). Why our Christian friends chose [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html) is because they followed us. That is why it is called the Judeo-Christian tradition. Not the Christian-Judeo tradition. Because [Jewish](gen-jew.html) came [first](one.html).

Now, what do you need a [holiday](festival.html) of [lights](lights.html) for anyway? You need a [holiday](festival.html) of [lights](lights.html) because of a strange reason. Which if you just read the words in the Torah is not immediately evident. But the [Talmud](orallaw.html) says the following: God made this light - a certain [type](types.html) of light. It was too penetrating. So He only let it last for [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours. And after [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours He took it away and hid it for sometime in the [future](future.html) that has not yet come. And He replaced it with a weaker merely [physical](physical.html) aspect of that light. But that as long as that light was there, for those [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours, [Adam](adam.html) by means of that light was able to see from [one](one.html) end of the [world](worlds.html) to the other, and from the beginning of [time](time.html) to the end of [time](time.html). So that light was the light of total understanding. Isn't that what light signifies? The [Talmud](orallaw.html) says anytime that the word "light" is used anyway in the Torah or rabbinic text "light" always means [knowledge](knowledge.html) and wisdom and understanding.

What does a cartoonist use as a device to show that the subject, in a frame, just had a great idea? A light bulb! What do people say when they are trying to tell you they understand the directions you have given them on how to get to your house? "Oh, I see"! Someone else says, "I see the light". This means I understand something. This is something that is common in most languages. This is very interesting. You would have thought that just in the marvelous diversity of life, on this planet, some cultures would have said, "Oh, I smell", when they mean that they understand. Or, "I taste it now. Thanks for the explanation". In most languages and most cultures the phrase is "I see". Because of this primitive memory in the minds of men of that original light which was the light of total understanding. But, it only lasted for [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours. Before [Chanukah](chanukah.html) your shopping lists say make sure, before next Saturday night, I buy [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) candles. Because you are going to burn [one](one.html) on the [first](one.html) night, [two](two.html) on the next night, [three](three.html) on the night after that, [four](four.html) on the night after that, [five](five.html) on the next night, [six](six.html) after that, [seven](seven.html) after that, and [eight](eight.html) after that for a total of [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) candles. We have [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) candles why? Because it is connected to the [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours that the light burned in the beginning!

So now I have an understanding of why we need to have [Chanukah](chanukah.html). I need to have [Chanukah](chanukah.html) - I am not up to the Greeks yet, we still need to talk about why the incident with the Greeks had to fall out on this day - the real meaning of the day I am beginning to understand. The real meaning of the day is that since God took away the light of total human understanding after [thirty-six](thirtysix.html) hours and since we must remain eager to recover it sometime in the [future](future.html), the only way not to forget that it ever existed is to celebrate once a year the fact that there once was the light of total understanding. And for [eight](eight.html) days, each year, we give ourselves an inoculation, a [spiritual](physical.html) reminder that there is such a thing as light that is different from all other light.

There are other candles that we light on a regular basis, every [Shabbat](sabbath.html). Are you supposed to use that light, or is it supposed to be symbolic and not used? What are you supposed to do with the light of the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) candles? You put it on the table because you are supposed to use it! It is designed to enhance the light of the evening. Because it is just plain [physical](physical.html) light - that is what it is there for. But how about the light of [Chanukah](chanukah.html)? It is not usable. Why? Because this is not [physical](physical.html) light. For [eight](eight.html) days we light these candles to show us this, that it is not [physical](physical.html) light that we use to find something that rolled into a dark corner of the room. But this is now symbolic of a [spiritual](physical.html) light of total understanding. So that is why it is going to be once a year. And that is what the theme of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is.

And by the way the very root of the word [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is Chenuk - which means education, wisdom, [knowledge](knowledge.html). And that is what we are celebrating here. That is what light means to almost anybody. There is also [one](one.html) other substance, on earth, in addition to light which is used as a metaphor of wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html). That is water. We heard, in English, expressions like: to be thirsty for [knowledge](knowledge.html). They don't say "hunger" for [knowledge](knowledge.html) as much as they say "thirst" for [knowledge](knowledge.html). They [speak](mashal.html) of a "fountain" of information. A fountain of [knowledge](knowledge.html). Wells of wisdom. "Water" ties in to wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html), as well as "light" does. Which brings us, now, to the next question. Which is: If we already [know](daat.html) that there has to be a [holiday](festival.html) dedicated to the deeper light of total wisdom and understanding. And it has to be on the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) of the month, because the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) word is "light". And for other [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html) reasons ...

The question is: Which month should it be in? Which month would you put it in? The [third](three.html) month, [Kislev](feasts.html), also corresponds to the [third](three.html) [tribe](tribes.html). What is the [third](three.html) [tribe](tribes.html)? What was the [tribe](tribes.html) that was victorious against the Greeks, much later? The [tribe](tribes.html) of Levi. And so, already, the [third](three.html) month is interesting because of the tie-in to the [tribe](tribes.html) that is going to be victorious against the Greeks. But, the [third](three.html) month has more to it than that. Our father [Abraham](avraham.html) gave a specific [sign](signs.html), a heavenly [sign](signs.html), every month of the year. Not everybody knows that the astrological [signs](signs.html) have a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) origin. And that is why people are confused because an astrological [sign](signs.html) runs from the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fourth](four.html) of September to the [twenty](twenty.html)-[third](three.html) of October, they are trying to match up with the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) month. Each astrological [sign](signs.html) belongs to a [Hebrew](hebrew.html) month. Does anyone [know](daat.html) what the astrological [sign](signs.html) for the month of [Kislev](feasts.html) is? Sagittarius, the archer. Now here is the difficulty: Who do you think gave it the [name](name.html) Sagittarius? [Abraham](avraham.html) did not go around saying it was the archer. He did not say, "I think that I'll give the [third](three.html) month the [name](name.html) 'Sagittarius'". [Abraham](avraham.html) gave it another [name](name.html). Who do you suppose gave it the [name](name.html) 'Sagittarius'? The Greeks! Now, there is something interesting that you have to [know](daat.html) about the Greeks, and we are going to see more of that this evening as well. Were the Greeks anti-Semitic in today’s conventional understanding of the word? Yes, but [spiritually](physical.html) - that's all. And so as people and as people capable of understanding development they certainly did not want to be difficult, but, they did want to extract the [spiritual](physical.html) meaning out of Judaica.

Now just to see an example of how effectively they did this. I'll give you some interesting information. [First](one.html), what are the [three](three.html) [spiritual](physical.html) [letters](letters.html) in the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) alphabet? yod, hay, and vav. Those are the [three](three.html) [letters](letters.html) that comprise God's [name](name.html). Now "hay" is the [fifth](five.html) [letter](letters.html) of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) alphabet. Now lets see what the Greeks did: Alpha, beta, gamma, delta. Then instead of taking an "h" sound, they have epsilon, and the [Gemara](orallaw.html) explains that the whole reason that the "h" sound belongs to God is because it sound is like a breath. So, the Greeks destroyed the "h" and replaced it with an "s". And that is why to this day: what is [one](one.html) of the words you'll find on Greek statues, the [name](name.html) of a Greek - Helena. But, they do not pronounce the "h" because they do not have an "h", they destroyed it. They wanted an alphabet without the [letter](letters.html) "hay". Good, what is the next [letter](letters.html) that should be there after epsilon? Vav, because that is a holy [letter](letters.html) they omitted it and skipped right over it. So what is the next [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [letter](letters.html)? So they went from epsilon to zeta. "Hay" and "vav" they demolished. Then when we come to yod they changed that also to iota. And the take away the "yod" sound. Anything that is [spiritual](physical.html) has to be extracted. So, when the Greeks took the month of [Kislev](feasts.html) they took away the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [name](name.html), for the month, and gave it Sagittarius, a Greek [name](name.html). They did that with all of the months. After all the month of [Adar](feasts.html), the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) [name](name.html) is "twins" and the Greek [name](name.html) is Gemini, which is also twins. So, they did not see it necessary to change that.

What was Sagittarius original [name](name.html)? In some old astrology books, to this day, you will still see the original [name](name.html). The original [name](name.html) is Rainbow. Why? Because as Rashi points out in the sedra for the flood: What was the month that the flood stopped? On the [twenty](twenty.html)-[eighth](eight.html) of [Kislev](feasts.html). And when was the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) that the rainbow is mentioned in history? Right there after the flood. So, that is why the rainbow belongs there. Why did the rainbow have to change to Sagittarius? What do the [two](two.html) have to do with [one](one.html) another? Simple. What does the rainbow represent? The general rule, in the Torah, if you want to get some [insight](insights.html) into peoples names is turn the [name](name.html) around backward. This will give you the adjective to describe what the person did. So, for example, [Noach](noach.html): If you read "[Noach](noach.html)" backwards you got the root [letters](letters.html) of the word "chen". Which means - we don't [know](daat.html) what it means, but, we do [know](daat.html) that it is something good because God says that [Noach](noach.html) found chen in God's [eyes](body.html). So chen is something good, it would seem. There is a terribly interesting individual called "Laban". You might have been tricked because his [name](name.html) means "white". If you really want to [know](daat.html) what his [name](name.html) means you've got to read it backwards. What is that? Nabal. In [Hebrew](hebrew.html) - "despicable". And so it is throughout the Torah. So [Noach](noach.html) has plenty to do with [Chanukah](chanukah.html). But now back to the rainbow. Why did the Greeks change it from rainbow to Sagittarius? The answer is simple. Now think, for a moment back to the day when you watched westerns. What is the symbol of peace? If the native American wanted to say peace: If he wanted to say no more war. He took his tomahawk and he held it out handle [first](one.html). How many of you had mothers who told to [hand](fourteen.html) a knife to someone handle [first](one.html)? Why? You would have to be an idiot to grab a knife blade [first](one.html). A person can hold a knife blade [first](one.html) and you can reach around and take it by the handle. It is not a problem. If somebody handles it by the blade, it could be anybody...The reason is that it just isn't polite. If you push a knife blade [first](one.html) to somebody, it is threatening. If you push a knife towards somebody handle [first](one.html), it is a peaceful gesture.

If an archer is about to shoot: which side of the bow is the business end? The convex side or the concave side? The convex side! If you find yourself facing an archer and you can see the convex side, of the bow, you had better get out of the way because you are in the wrong place. The concave side means that he is holding his bow pointing at himself and therefore he is showing you peace. And therefore if God [wants](needs.html) to take His bow, from which He shot a flood at us, and He [wants](needs.html) to point it at Himself so as to show us the peace side, which way does He have to put the rainbow? Just the way that it is - shooting upwards at Himself. And that is why it is a [sign](signs.html) of peace to us. The Greeks came along and said, "we are not having any God rainbows over here...". We will have a human bow. Everybody understood that the rainbow is God's archery [covenant](covenant.html). They said, "we are not doing that". We are putting a human in that place. The Greeks introduced the idea of fashioning gods in the image of people. And that's why they took the original month of [Kislev](feasts.html) and swapped it for Sagittarius. The Greek [name](name.html) is the humanized version.

Now what's the rainbow? What's that got to do with anything? I'm still explaining why there had to be a month of the rainbow. There has got to be a month of [Kislev](feasts.html) if you want a [holiday](festival.html) of [lights](lights.html) which celebrates the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of wisdom and understanding. What [two](two.html) things make a rainbow? Light and water. The [two](two.html) things that are metaphors for wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html). And you put light and water together and you get a rainbow. Exactly what we are talking about. And there we have the date of the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) of [Kislev](feasts.html) when the [holiday](festival.html) of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) has to be.

Now, if the [holiday](festival.html) of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is about deeper wisdom, [knowledge](knowledge.html), and understanding, would it be [speaking](mashal.html) more about the written Torah or more about the [oral Torah](orallaw.html)? [Speaking](mashal.html) more about the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) because that is the deeper [knowledge](knowledge.html) and understanding. And by the way, the Greeks would have had no objection to the written Torah, it is the [oral Torah](orallaw.html) that is the edge of the problem for them. So, therefore we are going to go on now beyond what we have already established which is that there was originally a [holiday](festival.html), before the Greeks, to celebrate light which is wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html) and understanding and therefore has to be on the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) day of the [eighth](eight.html) month and what's more has to be on the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) day of the [third](three.html) month. And that is why it is going to be the [third](three.html) of the [twelve](twelve.html) [tribes](tribes.html) that is going to become the saving force in later [events](feasts.html), in history, which will revolve around [Chanukah](chanukah.html).

We still want to take a look, now, at what the [holiday](festival.html) is all about. And surely to do that we would want to go look at the [oral Torah](orallaw.html). Because in the written Torah we may well have the very powerful reminder and powerful hints. The [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) word is the word for light. and we [know](daat.html) that after all of the holidays are listed in sequence, after [Succoth](succoth.html) come mention of lighting the menorah. And there is something more than that, also, which we will look at. What does the word [Chanukah](chanukah.html) spell, if you write it out? "Chanuk kape", "they kept on the [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html)". Let's think about that for a moment. When the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people kept on the way through, [from Egypt](thebirth.html), they camped in different places. Which parsha details the [camp](stages.html) site? [Numbers](nchart.html). You will be amazed if you start counting the [camp](stages.html) sites. Guess what the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) [camp](stages.html) site is called? What [name](name.html) do we give to the descendants of Levi that vanquished the Greeks? What do we call them? We call them the Maccabees. But, they were the dynasty of the Hasmoneans (Hashmonah in [Hebrew](hebrew.html)). Do you [know](daat.html) what the [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) campsite is?

[Numbers](nchart.html) 33:29 They left [Mithcah](stages.html) and camped at Hashmonah.

Hashmonah, of course! This is what we are talking about. Every thing, in the Torah, that has to do with [twenty](twenty.html)-[five](five.html) will point a finger at [Chanukah](chanukah.html). Is that strange? Now, we want some more information on the subject. Where do we find material on [Chanukah](chanukah.html) in the [Talmud](orallaw.html)? What part of the [Talmud](orallaw.html)? In tractate [Shabbat](sabbath.html). Which chapter in the tractate [Shabbat](sabbath.html)? The [twenty](twenty.html)-[fifth](five.html) chapter! It turns out that there is only [one](one.html) record, on [Chanukah](chanukah.html), in the whole [Mishna](orallaw.html). There is only [one](one.html) reference in the whole [Mishna](orallaw.html). Want to here it? in the tractate of bahamara. the end of the [sixth](six.html) chapter is the following story:

This is the story of a blacksmith who is working in his shop. I am [walking](walking.html) down the road outside his store. It is a little alley. Have you ever seen a blacksmith's forge: sometimes they turn a crank. For what? What does it do? It makes sparks fly out of the forge. He turns this crank which blows air through the forge just when I am [walking](walking.html) past. A spark flies out and singes my jacket. Who pays? Who's liability is it? The blacksmith's liability, says the [Mishna](orallaw.html).

What happens, if in another case, I am [walking](walking.html) down an alley and all of sudden I see that my pants are on [fire](fire.html). What happened was that somebody left a candle burning in the public thoroughfare outside the rear of his store. Who's responsible now? Me, because I should have looked where I was going, or, the store keeper for putting a candle out in the public thoroughfare? The store keeper, because I am entitled to expect that a public thoroughfare is free of obstacles. I am entitled to expect a public thoroughfare that has no hazards. Rabbi Yehuda says that there is [one](one.html) exception to that. The candles of [Chanukah](chanukah.html). For the candles of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) who is liable? Me, because the candles of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) are supposed to be out in public and you are supposed to watch out. That's it. End of story. That's the only mention of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) in the whole [Mishna](orallaw.html).

[Korban](korbanot.html) means [sacrifice](korbanot.html). Let's see what the very [first](one.html) [Korban](korbanot.html) in history was made up of. [Hebrew](hebrew.html) has a way of letting you find the hidden meaning of words. What you have got to do is break down the word into it's [letters](letters.html) and look at each [letter](letters.html). So, what's the [first](one.html) [letter](letters.html) of [Korban](korbanot.html)? Kuf. Now the [first](one.html) [letter](letters.html) of the [name](name.html) "kuf" is the [letter](letters.html) "kuf" which belongs to [Korban](korbanot.html). But, what is the hidden [letter](letters.html) of the word "kuf"? Am I losing you? (yes).

OK, let me give you an example: Take the word: dog. It would be as if (and there is no significance in any other language in doing this; only in [Hebrew](hebrew.html)) It would be as if in English I said, "what is the hidden meaning of dog. To find this out you would take the [first](one.html) [letter](letters.html) of "dog" and spell it out. Which is "dee". Now the "d" you can't use because it is part of the word "dog". But, the hidden aspect of the [letter](letters.html) "dee" is the end of it's [name](name.html) which is "e". Now we take the [letter](letters.html) "o" for dog. The middle [letter](letters.html). And spell it out; which is "oh". Which is the hidden [letter](letters.html)? the "h". Now we take the last [letter](letters.html) of "dog" which is "g" and spell it out which is "geigh" and um.... lots of [laughter](mashal.html). So, that's the idea.

Now, let's take the word "[Korban](korbanot.html)". This is now a [sacrifice](korbanot.html). The [first](one.html) [sacrifice](korbanot.html) of history. [Korban](korbanot.html) - "kuf", the hidden [letter](letters.html) then is "hay". The next [letter](letters.html), in [Korban](korbanot.html), is "resh". The hidden [letter](letters.html) is "shin". The next [letter](letters.html) of [Korban](korbanot.html) is "bet". The hidden [letter](letters.html) is "ta". So far we have "hay", "shin", and "ta". The last [letter](letters.html) of [Korban](korbanot.html) is "nun". The hidden [letter](letters.html) is "nun". So, what is the hidden meaning of the word "[sacrifice](korbanot.html)"? Ishta: which means flax. And so that is why Rashi there says that the fruit of the earth that the agricultural kind that he brought for his [sacrifice](korbanot.html) was flax. What did his brother bring? It didn't say he brought sheep, because people were not giving animals yet. We did not have permission to kill animals until after the flood. But, this [time](time.html) it says that he brought "from" his sheep. so, what did he bring? Wool! Exactly! Now this raises an interesting point which is "shatnes" - wool and flax. There is a very important rule, in the Torah, which says that you mustn't wear clothing made up of wool and linen. No mixture of wool and linen. Now what does that have to do with anything? By the way, once we are on the subject; the sefer Torah is written magnificently, not only are the [letters](letters.html) beautifully formed, but, [seven](seven.html) [letters](letters.html) have been crowned. So there are certain [seven](seven.html) [letters](letters.html), when ever those [letters](letters.html) appear, whenever [one](one.html) of these [seven](seven.html) [letters](letters.html) appear the [letter](letters.html) is written with a beautiful crown above it. What are the [seven](seven.html) [letters](letters.html)? "Shin, Ayin, tet, nun, zayin; those are [five](five.html) out of the [seven](seven.html). There are only another [two](two.html): gimel and sai. The flax story keeps on showing up. So the flax story shows up with Cain and Able - who fight. Then it shows up as a reference to [Jacob](israelja.html) and [Esau](edom.html). And it shows up again in the context of [Chanukah](chanukah.html). And while we are at it: it also shows up with another [two](two.html) brothers who fought. Not only Cain and Abel, who fought to the death. Not only [Jacob](israelja.html) and [Esau](edom.html) who fought.

There is another set of brothers who did not get on too well with [one](one.html) another. [Isaac](isaac.html) and Ishmael. What does that have to do with flax? There is a [psalm](psalms1.html) that goes, "A woman of valor, who can find...". Who composed that section? Solomon? Solomon reported it, but, it was composed by [Abraham](avraham.html). He said that it was a eulogy to his wife Sarah, when she died. And every line refers to another incident in the life of Sarah. For example: she caused a [field](field.html) to be purchased - acquired. How did she do that? She died! Then it says: She inquired into wool and flax. What are wool and flax a metaphor for? [Two](two.html) brothers who don't get along too well. Remember she was the [one](one.html) told [Abraham](avraham.html) to get rid of Ishmael. She could tell the difference between the wool and the flax. "Thou shalt send out Ishmael". Isn't that beautiful?

So, this theme of shatnes shows up with Cain and Abel: [two](two.html) brothers who couldn't handle it. [Two](two.html) brothers: [Isaac](isaac.html) and Ishmael. [Two](two.html) brothers: [Jacob](israelja.html) and [Esau](edom.html). And [Chanukah](chanukah.html)... So what do you think it is telling us about the true fight on [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is about. Between [Jews](gen-jew.html) and Greeks? No, it was a civil war between [Jews](gen-jew.html) and [Jews](gen-jew.html)! So that's the primary thing. Josephus, for what it is worth, tells us, in "History of the [Jews](gen-jew.html)", that [one](one.html) of the most popular plastic surgery operations, in [Jerusalem](city.html), at that [time](time.html) was replacing the foreskin because [Jewish](gen-jew.html) men were embarrassed not to have a foreskin for the race. So, Josephus says that a lot of doctors got rich putting back the foreskins. It was a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) problem at [Chanukah](chanukah.html). Not [Jews](gen-jew.html) and non-[Jews](gen-jew.html). The problem was [Jews](gen-jew.html) who wanted to adopt a Greek way of life. We don't have a problem with Greeks adopting a Greek way of life. That is what they should do. The problem is that is what the [Jews](gen-jew.html) wanted to do. So we got a message here, that this shatnes theme: this theme of wool and flax has to do with brother fighting brother: Cain and Able, [Jacob](israelja.html) and [Esau](edom.html), [Isaac](isaac.html) and Ishmael. So, not surprisingly, in the context.

This is wonderful. I am going to read to you the verse in the Torah which says you mustn't wear clothing of wool and flax. A very important thing. Here is what it says: The clothing made out of the mixture of shatnes, (which is wool and flax), should not get onto you. Do you [know](daat.html) what the very next door sentence is? The phrase that is just before this? Love your brother, your close [one](one.html), like yourself. That's the juxtaposition of the light and the darkness. The [two](two.html) alternatives are that you either love your brother like yourself or alternatively there is the civil war theme. Brother fighting brother.

So, that is part of the [insight](insights.html) into [Chanukah](chanukah.html) that the [Mishna](orallaw.html) is trying to give us. When Rabbi Yehuda just puts [one](one.html) mention of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) in he says on this whole story of flax and everything, that on the nights of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) it is okay and the camel drive is liable because the shop keeper is allowed to put the candle of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) outside. That leads us into a cool analysis of what is really going on.

The paradox of [Purim](Purim.html) and [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is that at [Purim](Purim.html) the enemy attacked us [physically](physical.html) and we responded [spiritually](physical.html): we [prayed](prayer.html). At [Chanukah](chanukah.html) the enemy attacked us [spiritually](physical.html) and we responded [physically](physical.html). That's the paradox of [Purim](Purim.html) and [Chanukah](chanukah.html).

The theme, obviously then, that we are dealing with is light and it's juxtaposition is darkness. When we [spoke](mashal.html) of the dark ages in Europe. Do we mean that somehow the [sun](hachama.html) did not rise during that period? What does darkness mean? It is the opposite of what the light bulb means. Darkness: the dark ages, in Europe, were ages of ignorance. It was a bad [time](time.html). And so [Chanukah](chanukah.html) then is the juxtaposition of light and of darkness. Where, in the Torah, do we have a most interesting juxtaposition of light and darkness? Obviously right at the beginning as I have already read. When God said, "let there be light". When was the next [time](time.html) when we have the most fascinating juxtaposition of light and darkness in [Jewish](gen-jew.html) history? The [ten](ten.html) [plagues](plagues.html). The [ninth](nine.html) [plague](plagues.html) was the [plague](plagues.html) of darkness. And it says in the Torah that darkness was everywhere in Egypt with [one](one.html) exception. The [one](one.html) place it wasn't was...? In the land of Goshen. In Goshen there was no darkness. And how does the Torah spell Goshen? For example the very [first](one.html) [time](time.html) we get there is when [Jacob](israelja.html) is arriving, [coming](coming.html) down to Egypt with all his children, all his family, his wagons, his son [Joseph](joseph.html), etc. He sent Yahuda ahead to show the way to Goshen.

Do you [know](daat.html) how it is spelled there? Gimel, shin, nun, hay - to the land of the [lights](lights.html). Do those [letters](letters.html) mean anything to you? They are the [letters](letters.html) on the dreidle that we p[lay with](marriageact.html) at [Chanukah](chanukah.html). So, just to clarify that point: there are explanations that we give to children in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) school which are fine to give to children in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) school. The problem is when we start believing that they are the answers. It is [one](one.html) of the great tragedies of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) life in America today that most American [Jewish](gen-jew.html) adults are [walking](walking.html) around with [Hebrew](hebrew.html) school's level of [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [knowledge](knowledge.html). As a result of that many people out there truly believe that the nun, gimel, hay, shin on the dreidle spells nays gadol haya sham - which is nonsense. It is complete nonsense because it means "a great miracle happened there". Why there? It was in Israel that it happened. Not anywhere else. And the dreidle goes back all the way to the beginning. So, do you [know](daat.html) what they actually do? Some people make dreidles that have a "pay" instead of a "shin".

The [two](two.html) most famous producers of olives in the [world](worlds.html) are Greece and Israel. Now when you look on the hill sides of Greece you will see old olive trees. And they are very proud of them because they go back a long [time](time.html). And if you look at the hills of Israel you will see old olive trees. Why? What is the [secret](sod.html) of the olive tree? What is so special about them? When was the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) we saw the olive? [Noah](noach.html). So, we are back to [Noah](noach.html) again. And who brought the olive? The dove. Now does anyone [know](daat.html) what the olive stands for throughout the [Talmud](orallaw.html)? Peace. Not only peace, but, it has also come to mean the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. The [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people are classified as the olive. And that why the [Zohar](orallaw.html) explains on... Why did [Noah](noach.html) send out the raven? He sent the raven out as a punishment. The raven had misbehaved. That's a different story: not for tonight. That was a trick question. (lots of [laughter](mashal.html)). Why did he send the raven out? I'll give you a clue what the raven did. It's a joke I really should have told during my [three](three.html) week [ten](ten.html) [commandment](cmds613.html) series, but, I was too serious. I couldn't tell it then. It was a joke about how Moses came down to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people and said, "I have bad news for you and [good news](mishna1.html) for you". The [good news](mishna1.html) is that I have got Him down to only [ten](ten.html). The bad news is that adultery is still on the list. (lots of [laughter](mashal.html)). So, that gives you a clue about what the raven was supposed to do. Why did [Noah](noach.html) send out the raven? To see if the waters had subsided yet. What does it say there when the dove came back the [first](one.html) [time](time.html)? Do you remember what it said? It did not find any resting place. It just had to keep flying around. Do you see why the dove is compared to the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. The next [time](time.html) the dove came back he brought an olive branch. Now let's look at this word "olive". What's really interesting about it is that once again if you look at that [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word it's the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. But, what's it made out of? What is the word "yovanh (olive) made out of? The hay is [one](one.html) of the [letters](letters.html) for God's [name](name.html). And what are the [first](one.html) [three](three.html) [letters](letters.html)? Yod, vav, nun. This makes Yovan - Greece. And by the way, that is the original [name](name.html) of Greece. Do you [know](daat.html) what the old classical [name](name.html) for Greece use to be? Ionia. Where did they get Ionia from? Yod, vav, nun. Ionia, that's where it's from. And what does a yod, vav, nun look like if you think about it? There is a little stick and a longer stick and a longer stick. Doesn't it look like everything that led the Greek culture - just a bunch of hulks of different races. The dove is that yovan. But, [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [name](name.html) is in it as well. Where is that link between [Jew](gen-jew.html) and Greek - [first](one.html) of all. The very [first](one.html) interface between Greece and Israel is when the - again after the flood. [Two](two.html) of [Noah](noach.html)'s sons got together and did something very nice. [One](one.html) was Shem, [one](one.html) was Japheth. And they tried to rectify a very dreadful thing that was done by [Noah](noach.html)'s [third](three.html) son, Ham. The important news is that Japheth and Shem worked together as brothers. Now, who are the descendents of Shem? We are that is why we are called Shemites. And who is descended from Japheth? Yovan - the Greeks come from Japheth which is why they have a recognized eye for the esthetic. Because the word Japheth means beautiful.

And so, [HaShem](hashem.html) says there that God has a special relationship with Japheth. And there is going to be something of a relationship between these [two](two.html). The question is what sort of relationship? And the relationship turns into a relationship of tension between [Jerusalem](city.html) and Athens. It's a tremendous tension. We are going to try to understand now some examples of where that tension lies. [One](one.html) of the things that the Greek authorities banned - they did not ban that much when they came into Israel. They did not destroy the [Temple](temple.html). How much damage did they do to the [Temple](temple.html)? A few dollars. They broke some seals. They did not spill the oil. It's hard to say that there is any monetary value attached to that. Go to a judge and tell why they ruined your oil by opening the seal. And then what they did was make [thirteen](thirteen.html) holes - the [Talmud](orallaw.html) says [thirteen](thirteen.html) gaps in a small little lattice-work barrier that existed in the [Temple](temple.html). They did not destroy it, they just made some doorways in it: [thirteen](thirteen.html) holes.

So, they were very nice people, they did not make any damage. But, they did object to certain of our customs. [Three](three.html), to be specific. There are [three](three.html) things that they prohibited the practice of. The [first](one.html) [one](one.html) was to observe [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html). That's bizarre. Why, of all the things we do should they be so obsessed about stopping the practice of observing the [new](new.html) [moon](chodesh.html)? They did for the following reasons: The passage of the [new](new.html) [moon](chodesh.html) makes the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people aware of the passage of [time](time.html). That's what the [moon](chodesh.html) does. The [moon](chodesh.html) is a basic [time](time.html) clock. It tells us that [time](time.html) is going by. To the Greeks the passage of [time](time.html) is anathema! They hate the movement of [time](time.html). To a [Jew](gen-jew.html) timing is everything. Have you ever heard that expression: Timing is everything? If you find a great [new](new.html) way to make a buggy whip except that it is [ten](ten.html) years after Henry Ford started making [new](new.html) cars: you just blew it. Because timing is everything. Greeks don't like feeling [time](time.html). To give you an example: You have always thought of them as good mathematicians right? But their mathematics revolve chiefly around geometry. Which are plain figures which don't go anywhere. As soon as you deal with things that move, the Greeks have a tremendous problem with them. So much so that in the Greek academies they used to have a paradox they [studied](study.html) called Zeno's paradox. Zeno's paradox is very simple. Achilles, the great Greek athlete could run, shall we say, [ten](ten.html) times faster than a particular tortoise. And so this tortoise challenged Achilles to a race. And the tortoise said that as long as you give me a [ten](ten.html) meter start, I will win the race. So, Achilles says great, you can have a [ten](ten.html) meter start. You start over there at the end. The course will be to the end of the block. I'll start over here. And here is the paradox: since Achilles runs [ten](ten.html) times faster than the tortoise, when Achilles reaches the place the tortoise started from, [ten](ten.html) meters ahead: where is the tortoise now? The tortoise is now [one](one.html) meter ahead. When Achilles reaches the point [one](one.html) meter ahead: where is the tortoise now? [Ten](ten.html) centimeters ahead. When Achilles reaches that point [ten](ten.html) centimeters ahead: where is the tortoise now? [One](one.html) centimeter ahead. When Achilles covers that [one](one.html) centimeter: where is the tortoise? [One](one.html) millimeter ahead. You see, Achilles will never beat the tortoise. What's wrong with the logic? The answer is that if you [study](study.html) that paradox, using [time](time.html), instead of using separate stationary snapshots. Because in each stationary snapshot the tortoise is ahead. Because in between the [two](two.html) snapshots Achilles overtook the tortoise. But they don't [know](daat.html) movies, they only [know](daat.html) stills. Do you [know](daat.html) what the best example of Greek hatred for the passage of [time](time.html) is confirmed by the English poem "peace". What is he glorifying in there? The fact that the young lovers portrayed on the earth will stay that way forever. No passage of [time](time.html). The Greeks see no beauty in [two](two.html) people growing old together. To the Greek only eternal youth. What is the chemical [hair](hair.html) coloring that is sold more than any other, in the United States? Grecian formula. Because that is basic to an understanding of how the Greeks think.

Now what is the form of romantic love most favored by the Greeks. Homosexuality. And it is called the "Greek way". The Greeks gave it to the [world](worlds.html). They gloried in it. If you say the "Greek way", everybody knows what that means. Now what is better about living with a man rather than living with a woman? If you are a Greek what is so terrific about living with a man and terrible about living with a woman? If you look at a woman you have to be aware of the passage of [time](time.html). If you look at a man, there is no such thing as [cycles](cycles.html), you are not aware of the passage of [time](time.html). And even better than that, there are no such thing as children. And children will run like small [walking](walking.html) alarm clocks. You ask my wife what year we did you and your husband do this? How is she going to figure out the year. The kids. She will figure out what age the child was and calculate from there. Because children are like little calendars or little alarm clocks. And so Greeks don't want them around. So, consequently, [Rosh Chodesh](chodesh.html) as the basic [Jewish](gen-jew.html) observance of [time](time.html) had to be banned.

Another thing that [Jews](gen-jew.html) had that was pretty obvious was [circumcision](circumcz.html). Firstly, to the Greeks it was an esthetic disfigurement of natural beauty because natural beauty, to them, was anything the way it naturally was. Anything that the human being did, made it worse. There approach was to leave human being's contribution out of it. Out of it if is that God and man are partners. God makes little boys, but, we have the job of finishing off the job. We are participators on the [eighth](eight.html) day. So, the Greeks tried to ban [circumcision](circumcz.html). Let's look at that for a moment. The Greeks obsession with [circumcision](circumcz.html), so much so that they managed to make us feel embarrassed about it. What does a little boy get on the [eighth](eight.html) day? I [know](daat.html) what he loses, but, what does he gain? He gets a [name](name.html): or in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) "shame". Now if you add just [one](one.html) [letter](letters.html) to the word "[name](name.html)", in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) - "shame", you get the word "sheman". Which is what we are discussing which is having to do with [Chanukah](chanukah.html) which is also [eight](eight.html) days long, by the way. It is an [eight](eight.html) day [holiday](festival.html). Now, while we are up to "sheman" add a [letter](letters.html) hay to the end, and what have you got? "Shemanah". Which is [eight](eight.html) itself. And to just really lock things in, if you take the [eighth](eight.html) [letter](letters.html) of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) alphabet which is hay, and stick it in the front of the word you have Hashemanah. Which was Rebecca of the Hasmoneans. So, the essence of [circumcision](circumcz.html) was something that the Greeks had to object to.

They want to object to [one](one.html) more thing, as well, which is the observance of [Shabbat](sabbath.html). If you were to go to a Greek and say that I want to rest. I don't mind working [six](six.html) days, and I'll rest on the [seventh](seven.html) day. He would have said that was fine. Do you [know](daat.html) when he would get upset? You have to look at the tractate of [Shabbat](sabbath.html). If you really want to [experience](experience.html) [Shabbat](sabbath.html); how many things should you refrain from doing? [thirty](thirty.html)-[nine](nine.html). Which is the key [one](one.html)? The paramount [one](one.html) that is dealt with right up front? It is not the [first](one.html) in the listing, but, it is the [first](one.html) [one](one.html) that the tractate, of [Shabbat](sabbath.html), deals with. Do you [know](daat.html) what it is? The carrying of something on private property and public property. So, if you told the Greek that you wanted to rest on the [seventh](seven.html) day, you would have no trouble. You would only have trouble when you are about to go for a [walk](walking.html) with him and you are about to leave your house. You reach into your pocket to get your keys and leave them in your house. He says, "what are you doing?" Oh, [Shabbat](sabbath.html) is about making a distinction between private and public property, and so I do not want to take them out. That's when he would get upset. Why? Because the Greeks despise distinctions between public and private property. If you notice Greek architecture: what is distinctive about the Parthenon? Open spaces. It is very hard to [know](daat.html) when you are inside and when you are outside. What is [Chanukah](chanukah.html) all about? Where are you supposed to put the menorah? In the window. If you have a choice of windows you should put it right opposite the [mezuzah](mezuzah.html) by your front door. It is the guardian of that point at which public property ends and private property begins. And that is why it is required to be put there. The Greeks want to see things with no distinctions there at all.

Which brings us to the last area that we are going to have [time](time.html) for tonight. And that is another area where there is tension between [Jerusalem](city.html) and Athens. That is an economic area. If you notice once we are talking about private property and public property; who says no private property - everything should be the same? Communism. And where does communism find it's [spiritual](physical.html) roots more than in any other book? Plato's republic. That's the key to it because if there is no distinction between private and public, then there are no limits on the power of the soviet.

So, let's take a look at a very weird halachah. This seems to perpetuate the worse stereotypes that people have about us. This is what it says. I mentioned earlier that on Friday night you can use the [Shabbat](sabbath.html) candles: you must use them (for light). On [Chanukah](chanukah.html) you mustn't use those candles for light. So, if you need to be in a room where [Chanukah](chanukah.html) candles are burning: what must you do? Turn on the [lights](lights.html). So that you will use the light from the main [lights](lights.html). To drive home this point that you mustn't use these [lights](lights.html) when [eating](eating.html), you might say that you shouldn't even use them to [eat](eating.html), [pray](prayer.html), or [study](study.html) Torah. But, that is not what it says. It says you mustn't even use [Chanukah](chanukah.html) [lights](lights.html) for counting up your money. What? All we do, day and night, is count our money? That is what we are in to? Isn't it bizarre? Another example that points in the same direction: the halachah [wants](needs.html) to tell you what [time](time.html) it is appropriate for the [Chanukah](chanukah.html) candles to be lit. What is the normal way the halachah, throughout [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [law](law.html), defines [time](time.html). Tell me I should light the candles between half an hour and an hour after the [sun](hachama.html) sets. That's easy enough. Do you [know](daat.html) what it says there? The [Chanukah](chanukah.html) candles must be lit during the [time](time.html) when [Jews](gen-jew.html) are working in the market place. There you are; counting money and market place. What does that have to do with anything? It has to do with a great gift which [Jacob](israelja.html) gave the [world](worlds.html). That root word of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) which is het, nun, hay - you were all wondering what hay means? What does "hay" mean; favor [grace](grace.html)? Sorry. It doesn't make sense because the most regular place we [Jews](gen-jew.html) use the word hay is where? What do we say, usually several times a day? Baruch atah [HaShem](hashem.html) elohein melach haolam hazan et al. Thank you God for feeding the whole [world](worlds.html). Thank you for feeding the whole [world](worlds.html) with your mercy and goodness. What are you feeding me with Your hay for? What's hay? How does God feed us with hay? It's a big mystery: the root of [Chanukah](chanukah.html). And what present do we give to all the children? Money: [Chanukah](chanukah.html) geld. And that's the stuff that you are not supposed to count if front of the [Chanukah](chanukah.html) candles. And you talk at the market place. And the [one](one.html) place the Torah uses the hay as a verb is when [Jacob](israelja.html) comes to the town of [Shechem](city.html). He invented, for that [city](city.html), money, currency, and markets. He invented an economic system for that [city](city.html). By the way, what is the numerical value for [Shechem](city.html)? 360. Do you remember that we had 36 candles. And now the [city](city.html) of [Shechem](city.html) where a lot of the [Chanukah](chanukah.html) story takes place having to do with [Joseph](joseph.html). So, we have 36 candles and 360 in the [number](nchart.html) of [Shechem](city.html). In what year did the [events](feasts.html) of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) take place? 3600. And we have got this lead running throughout. Private property, public property, [economics](economics.html) and - what does oil itself represent? Wealth. A certain kind of wealth.

Look at the olive. Remember that olive that the dove brought to [Noah](noach.html)? This dove it say the [Midrash](orallaw.html) makes a statement at that point: it says I would much rather [eat](eating.html) olives than honey. Says the dove which is the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people. I would much rather [eat](eating.html) olives than honey. You see honey tastes sweet on the outside and that's it. What you see is what you get. There is nothing else to it. But an olive looks sour and unappealing on the outside. Inside, when you squeeze it, what comes out? Oil which is light, which is wisdom, which is the root of the month of [Kislev](feasts.html). If you check the etymology of "castle" you'll find that it comes from [Kislev](feasts.html). Why? Because the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word "castle" means a castle or security. It means security. Now what [type](types.html) of security are we getting at? Well the theme of [Chanukah](chanukah.html) is wisdom and [knowledge](knowledge.html) and understanding - are we getting [physical](physical.html) security? Does being smart mean that the local bully will not kill you? Of course not. What sort of security can you get from wisdom and education? Financial security. The key to financial security is education, wisdom, and [knowledge](knowledge.html). And that is the current theme of money throughout the story of [Chanukah](chanukah.html).

So, ladies and gentlemen I thank you for your patience.

This speech was given by Rabbi Daniel Lapin and transcribed by Rabbi Dr. Greg Killian.

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