



## DVAR TORAH

## MIKEITZ/SHABBOS CHANUKAH/TEVES



By: Rabbi Tzvi  
Yehuda Smith

### **The Avodah of Ayin Tovah**

This year, Parshas Miketz coincides with Shabbos Chanukah and Rosh Chodesh Teves. This combination is hard to understand.

Chanukah is a time of joy, light, and miracles. It is a time when Hashem's presence was clearly revealed. Teves, however, is described by the Zohar (1:183) as one of the three months of judgment, together with Tammuz and Av. These months are linked to difficulty and pressure. They are times when Hashem's presence feels hidden.

How do we understand this contrast? How can a month connected to judgment come together with Chanukah, a holiday defined by open miracles?

There is another question. The Gemara in Shabbos (23a) says that on Chanukah we say the blessing she'asah nissim la'avoseinu not only when we light the menorah, but even when we simply see someone else's candles. We do not find this by any other mitzvah. Why is Chanukah so connected to seeing?

Our sefarim explain that each month of the year is connected to a part of the body. The month of Teves is connected to the right eye. The focus of this month is learning how to see properly. This is called ayin tovah, seeing things in a good way.

Two people can go through the same situation and see it very differently. One person sees problems and darkness. The other sees opportunity and growth. The situation does not change. Only the way it is seen changes. This is the avodah of Teves.

The Zohar calls Teves a month of judgment. Still, the sefarim point out something important. The root of the word Teves is tov, good. The good is there, but it is hidden. The challenge of Teves is not that good is missing. The challenge is learning how to find it.

This idea is reflected in a Mishnah in Pirkei Avos (2:9). Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai asked his students which trait a person should hold on to. One answer was ayin tovah. The Rambam explains that this comes from inner balance. When a person learns to be satisfied with what he has, jealousy fades. Anger fades. A person begins to see more clearly.

Now Chanukah and Teves fit together. Chanukah is not only about light. It is about how we see light. The mitzvah is to light the candle, but the blessing is also said when we see the candle. Chanukah trains our eyes. It teaches us to notice light even when there is darkness. It teaches us to see Hashem's hand even when it is not obvious.

The contradiction is no longer there. Teves is not a bad month. It is a month that asks us to look deeper. Chanukah gives us the tools to do that. Through the Chanukah lights, we learn how to look at difficult situations and find the good inside them.

This is our job, not only to go through life, but to understand it in the right way. To train ourselves to see that Hashem is always there, even when things are unclear.

May we merit, through the light of Chanukah and the lessons of Teves, to see the good in every situation.



By: R' Roey Tal

# HALACHA CORNER

## MOVING THE MENORAH ON SHABBOS



**May Chanukah candles be moved after they are extinguished on Shabbos?**

**Does placing bread or another permitted item on the tray help?**

**Does making a condition before Shabbos change the halacha?**

When Shabbos begins, any item that supports muktzeh becomes muktzeh itself. This is called a basis l'davar ha'asur, a base for a prohibited item. A flame is muktzeh. The candle or oil that serves the flame is also muktzeh. The menorah therefore becomes a basis. Any tray or surface that holds the menorah at the start of Shabbos also becomes a basis. Once an item becomes a basis, it remains muktzeh for the entire Shabbos, even after the flames go out.<sup>1</sup>

There is sometimes a leniency with Shabbos candles. If a table holds both the candles and a significant permitted item, it is not considered a basis for muktzeh alone.<sup>2</sup> However, Rav Moshe Feinstein writes that a tray used exclusively for candles is viewed as a utensil designated for the menorah. Placing a permitted item on such a tray does not remove its status as a basis.<sup>3</sup>

Chanukah candles are more stringent. The menorah must remain in its place for the mitzvah and is not intended to be moved. The tray is therefore considered fully dedicated to the candles at the onset of Shabbos. Adding bread or any other permitted item does not change this status.<sup>4</sup>

Making a condition before Shabbos can help according to Sephardic practice. The Shulchan Aruch holds that a condition can prevent the tray from becoming a basis. After the flames go out, the tray may be moved. Ashkenazim follow the Rema, who rules that a condition does not prevent basis status. The tray remains muktzeh for the entire Shabbos.<sup>5</sup>

The tray or surface holding the menorah becomes a basis and remains muktzeh all Shabbos.

Adding bread or any permitted item does not help.

Sephardim may rely on a condition to move the tray after the flames go out.

Ashkenazim may not rely on a condition.

When necessary, one may ask a non-Jew to move the tray.

1. S.A O.C 279:1

2. M.B 277:18

3. Igros Moshe O.C 5:22[11]

4. Shvus Yitzchok Muktzeh citing Rav Elyashiv

5. S.A and Rema O.C 279:4

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