

The Masters of Kabbala, in particular Chabad, speak about עלמא דאתגליא and עלמא דאתכסיא, the world that is Revealed and the world that is Hidden. Our superficial reality, what we refer to as Revealed, is the final phase in a quiet, long process undertaken for the benefit of the human being who only sees the final product. Man sees the visible but not the Hidden, or the large role it plays in history. Historians often see only the Revealed; they miss the Hidden. They discern a false picture of historical periods and personalities.

The observation about the difference between the Hidden and the Revealed applies to Chanukah. It is **that** holiday that is not understood. It is the only יום טוב, holiday, not mentioned in the Canon, כתבי הקודש. As a result, it became a sort of הפקר, or free for all, where everyone offered their own opinion as to the meaning of the holiday. Even the anonymous author of ספר החשמונאים, the Book of the Hasmoneans, who **should** have understood the holiday, did not. Questions raised against Chazal from ספר החשמונאים can be answered simply, that its author got it wrong and made mistakes, similar to those made by current historians. Chazal had a sharper eye than typical historians. Everyone looks at the Revealed aspects of Chanukah, which are indeed impressive and are mentioned in על הנסים. Even the miracle of the oil is an example of עלמא דאתגליא. Still, they miss the hidden aspects of Chanukah.

A Jew can indeed ask why do we have to delve into Kabbala to observe the Hidden when it comes to Chanukah? There is much to learn and observe from the Revealed to make it a festival. The answer is if we focused on the Revealed miracles mentioned in ספר החשמונאים, the victories and the miracle of the oil, we would not have to celebrate Chanukah today. After all, Chanukah was not the first military victory for the Jews. King David was victorious on many occasions, yet we don't celebrate his conquests. Rambam says that the original sanctity of the land of Israel, קדושה ראשונה, was nullified because it rested on a military conquest by Joshua and his generation. Nebuchadnezzar was ultimately stronger, so his conquest of the land nullified the sanctity imparted by Joshua's conquest. A military or political victory is transient. It can always be erased or overridden. And regarding the miracle of the oil, there were many miracles in the Temple that we don't commemorate. The menorah in the time of Shimon HaTzaddik would burn overnight even when it did not have enough oil. Why not commemorate those occasions? Because when the fire eventually went out there was no reason to continue to celebrate it. If Chanukah is a miracle we observe in perpetuity even though all its associated miraculous events have long passed, it must be because of its Hidden aspect. One who lights candles and sings על הנסים is not fulfilling the purpose of the celebration. It is not enough to understand what happened in those days, בימים ההם. We must also understand its relevance today, בזמן הזה.

The Talmud's (שבת כא ב) description of the entry of the Greeks to the Temple is similar to the description of Titus' entry to the Temple at the destruction of the Second Temple. The entry of the non-Jew to the Temple is the symbol of destruction and downfall. There is a difference between the way Titus and the Greeks defiled the Temple. Titus simply sacked and destroyed the Temple. He took a sword and slit the Paroches. On the other hand, the Greeks did not touch or destroy anything in the Temple when they entered. The Talmud tells us (ibid) when they entered the Temple, they defiled the oil used to light the Menorah. Where the Romans preferred destruction, the Greeks preferred defilement, טומאה. Were they better than the Romans?

To understand this, we must understand a specific rule. The Talmud (מועד קטן כו א) says:

אמר רבי חלבו אמר רב הונא הרוּאָה סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה שֶׁנִּקְרַע — חַיִּיב לִקְרוֹעַ שְׁתֵּי קְרִיעוֹת: אֶחָד עַל הַגָּוִיל וְאֶחָד עַל הַכֶּתֶב, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "אַחֲרֵי שָׂרוּף הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת הַמִּגְלָה וְאֶת הַדְּבָרִים"

Rav Huna said one who sees a Torah scroll that is torn is obligated to rend his garments twice, once for the parchment and once for the writing. This is a Halacha in Shulchan Aruch. The Talmud says (עבודה זרה יח א):

אמרו לו תלמידיו רבי מה אתה רואה אמר להן גליון נשרפין ואותיות פורחות

When they burned Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon with a Torah Scroll wrapped around him, his students asked him what he saw. He answered he sees the parchment burning but not the letters. They are floating in the air. He gave testimony that when a Torah is burned only the parchment burns and not the Torah, the writing, the letters. How could Rav Huna, who lived hundreds of years after Rabbi Chanina Ben Tradyon, disagree with Rabbi Chanina and say that both the parchment and the letters burn, and both are to be mourned?

The answer is it depends on who destroys the Torah. If it is destroyed by non-Jews then only the parchment is mourned. A gentile, no matter how powerful he may be, only destroys the physical parchment. The אותיות, letters, remain untouched. They cannot be burned. They float in the air. The more parchment the non-Jew burns, the stronger the letters become. Rav Chanina said as long as the letters don't burn, they can find many other parchments to cover. . As Rabbi Akiva said, על כל קוץ וקוץ תילי תלים של הלכות, we

will derive thousands of laws from the calligraphy lines at the top of each letter. We will answer every גזרת שמד with thousands more Halakhos and increased Torah Study. For the many incidents over our history where the Torah was burned by non-Jews, we tore only one קריעה, for the parchment.

There is no disagreement between Rav Huna and Rabbi Chanina. Rav Huna quoted the story of Joachim son of Josiah burning the Torah. When Jews like יהויקים burn the Torah, not only do they destroy the parchment but also the letters. The Jew doesn't usually destroy a Torah physically. However the Jew can defile the Torah and the letters to render them unusable.

Why does it say מזמור לאסף באו גויים בנחלתיך (תהלים עט א), a song to Assaf for non-Jews have destroyed your Temple? It should have been קינה לאסף, a lamentation to Assaf? As the Chatam Sofer says, the reason it is a song and not a lamentation is because gentiles destroyed it. Had Jews destroyed it, it would have been much worse. Not only would they have impinged on the physical edifice but also the spiritual content.

When the Romans entered the Temple to destroy it, no Jew helped them. They brought physical but not spiritual destruction. The נשמה, the Jewish soul, remained intact. By Chanukah, Jews participated in the desecration. We usually associate the start of the גזרת השמד, the attack on the Jewish religion, with the events in Beitar when Hadrian tried to separate the Jews from the Torah. In truth, it began many years before in Jerusalem, when the Hellenists sought to affect the Temple. Yosef Meshita was a stooge of the Hellenists who stole from the Temple. He drew the line when they told him to steal the Menorah and died a martyr's death (בראשית רבה סה). The main issue of Chanukah was not באו ישראל בנחלתיך but באו גויים בנחלתיך. They beautified the Temple by inserting altars for other gods. The problem of Chanukah was that Jews defiled the Temple. They took its real beauty and desecrated it.

We make a mistake when it comes to understanding the story of Chanukah. The additional prayers associated with Chanukah focus on the story of repairing the Temple because they did not want to indict the Jews who helped the Hellenists nor highlight the terrible impact they had when the Jewish Hellenists took control. The Revealed was a battle against the Greek Hellenists, who desecrated the Temple itself, the physical parchment. The Hidden was the battle against the Jews that wanted to desecrate the Torah Letters.

We have such Jews today as well. Whoever looks at Chanukah as a battle against שעבוד מלכיות, the enslavement of the Jew to the nations of the world, only stresses the Revealed, not the Hidden. Indeed, Chazal did not want to publicize the Jewish role in the desecration of the Temple and the attack on Judaism in order not to speak לשון הרע against Jews. They submerged the core story of Chanukah, that it was an internal battle against טומאה, defilement. Apparently, they were successful in defeating the interior טומאה that defiled the Letters, referred to by על הנסים. בנחלתיהם emphasizes they first cleaned the Temple, that the strength of the Hasmoneans was shown by purifying the spirit of the Temple. In the periods after the Hasmoneans, a minority of Jews strayed from Judaism. We have had sects throughout our history that seduced Jews to abandon their faith. But in the time of the Hasmoneans, it was the majority that moved away. The real victory is we overcame that.

The story of Chanukah is also an example of the concept of העלאת הרע, elevating the bad and evil to good. If one was to inquire as to the meaning or essence of David's Monarchy, מלכות בית דוד to the Jew, he may discover several answers and perspectives. On the one hand, David was a mighty king whose military victories were breathtaking as he consolidated his power. He was served by many great generals and officers. He built great cities and his son Solomon built the first Temple. However, this perspective would be lacking, as all of David's conquests and building were upstaged by others who came afterwards. We have been without the Davidic Monarchy for more than 2500 years. It would be hard to sustain David's role in the Jewish legacy on the memory of his political and military accomplishments.

David was not called עבדי דוד, My servant David, because of his military conquests. His devotion to, and praise of Gd, as set forth in the Book of Psalms, set the standard of fealty to and reliance upon Gd for us. There is no major prayer or praise that we offer to Gd that does not mention or remind us of David. To appreciate David's importance and role for the Jewish People, we must examine where he came from, who his ancestors were. Only then will we be able to appreciate his past and future role as monarch and direct ancestor of the Messiah King, מלך המשיח. Let us examine three stories that describe David's lineage and form the foundation of his connection with our past, present and future.

The first story involves Lot and his daughters. When Gd destroyed Sodom and the surrounding cities, he sent angels to rescue Lot and his family. The messengers were not sent because Lot was a righteous individual, but rather because of Gd's love for His servant Abraham. When Lot's daughters suspect that they are the lone survivors of a cataclysmic event on the scale of the great flood in Noah's time, they conspire to bear

children from their own father. The children are Moab and Amon, who would ultimately be thorns in the side of the Jewish people. How could such a seemingly vulgar tale be part of תורת משה?

The second incident involves Judah and Tamar, and the strange, seemingly deceitful story that results in the birth of twin sons from their union. Tamar marries Judah's eldest son who refuses to allow her to bear children and is taken by Gd. When his brother refuses to have a child that would be connected to his older brother, similar to the rules of Yibum, he too is taken by Gd. Out of fear that he would lose his third son, Shayla, if he too married Tamar, he deflects her by telling her to return to her parent's home until Shayla is ready. Tamar disguises herself and seduces Judah, bearing him twin sons, Peretz and Zerach.

In addition to these two stories, we also have מגלת רות, the Book of Ruth. Chazal debate why it was included in the Canon. The Scroll itself tells us that Ruth, who came from Moab, converted and married Boaz, a descendant of Judah, and they had a son Oved who had a son Jesse who had a son David. This is the central part of the Scroll. This story also seems odd, as converts from Moab were specifically rejected by the Torah, yet Ruth was the example that proved the rule of עמוני ולא עמונית מואבי ולא מואבית, Ammonite and Moabite males were excluded from conversion to Judaism but not females. A story that began with Elimelech and his two sons leaving the land of Israel and marrying local Moabite women, concludes with the birth of King David himself. How could this be?

Jewish history is often viewed from the visible, open, revealed perspective. Stories such as those noted above can appear harsh and vulgar when taken at face value. This is referred to as עלמא דאתגליא, or the revealed realm. The bible critics and agnostics who mock the Torah focus only on what they read at surface level. Events in the Torah must be viewed from עלמא דאתכסיא, a deeper, hidden perspective. These stories, when viewed from the hidden perspective, yield fascinating truths and lessons that form the core of our belief system. Let us analyze these 3 stories through the lenses of עלמא דאתגליא and עלמא דאתכסיא.

We begin by examining David's lineage, specifically on his great grandmother's and great grandfather's sides. The first story in the Torah about his ancestors can be found in פרשת וירא, in the story of Lot and his daughters. In the middle of the beautiful story of Abraham, the Torah veers off into the story of Lot and Sodom. Gd spared Lot and his two daughters in the merit of Abraham, His servant. With the destruction of their city of Sodom, Lot and his daughters found themselves alone, taking refuge in a cave. Only

hours before, they lost their sisters, home, acquaintances. Their mother turned to a pillar of salt before their very eyes. Frightened by the events they just witnessed, they believed the entire world had been destroyed and they were the lone survivors. The older of the daughters suggested they seduce their father in order to procreate. They ply their father with wine and, in his drunken stupor, have relations with him. Both bore children from their father, Moab and Ammon. On the surface, this story is unseemly. It violates our most basic moral principles. This story was the source for many agnostic attacks on the Torah deriding it as no more than a pornographic book. Why is it included in the Canon?

Lot's daughters were simple girls, unsophisticated and uneducated as they grew up in Sodom and had minimal contact with the outside world, a world that likely shunned the city because of its well-earned negative reputation for hostility towards guests and visitors. Had they been a bit more educated they would have evaluated their predicament more deliberately and rationally and likely concluded there was no hope to rebuild on their own. After all, the picture of smoke rising from Sodom was still fresh in their minds. They thought the entire world was destroyed and they were the lone survivors. How could they speak of rebuilding when only a few hours before they lost their siblings and, even more recently, their mother? Yet despite, or perhaps because of, their lack of sophistication, they immediately set out to rebuild the world. It may have been a primitive and vulgar approach and act, but their intention was good. They demonstrated the importance of the strength of will to build, even while the destruction, חורבן, still raged. They were the new Adam and Eve. It was their responsibility to re-populate the world. As their father was the only option to bear children, they deceived him into having relations with them. While the act was despicable, their intentions were good.

Can there be a greater foundation for hope for the return of מלכות בית דוד, of having the vision and determination to rebuild after total destruction? After the destruction of the second Temple, Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakkai immediately established rules to commemorate Temple practices. Even while the ruins of the Temple and Jerusalem still smoldered, he established זכר למקדש to keep alive the memory of the two Temples that were destroyed and wait for the building of the third. Lot's daughters were able to elevate the negative aspects in their actions into a positive hope for the future that was imbued into the essence of the institution of משיח and כנסת ישראל forever.

This idea of rebuilding after such utter devastation underlies personal and national mourning. The loss of a relative is traumatic, and up until the time of burial, the mourner contemplates the magnitude of his irreplaceable loss. In this time period, man is gripped by helplessness. However, immediately after the grave is covered, this same mourner recites Kaddish which includes the verses that speak of hope for the future, where Gd

will reveal Himself anew and establish the reign of the Messiah King and rebuild the Temple. Two parallel rows immediately form, and the mourner is consoled as they say המקום ינחם אתכם. Even with the pain still fresh, we look to the future, to rebuild and start again.

On the night of Tisha B'Av, the Jew sits on the ground and pours out his heart over the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, crying בליל זה יבכיון. We read מגלת איכה and recite Lamentations over the destruction of both Temples, without wearing Talis or Tefillin, symbolic of the mourner who does not wear them the first day of mourning. But after midday, חצות, we again don the Talis and Tefillin crown, even though we are still considered mourners, אבלים. We add the blessing of נחם to our עמידה, expressing confidence that the Temple will be rebuilt. Where do we get this strength of character to believe in the future in the midst of mourning the destruction? The confidence in rebuilding comes from the daughters of Lot. Their actions were primitive and vulgar, but Gd elevated and purified them, sifting out the sparks of holiness. They provided a foundation for מלכות בית דוד and faith in its restoration.

Their actions fall under a category of situations that are called העלאת הרע, the elevation of negative or improper actions by a good intention into something positive. While the act itself, relations between father and child, is considered an abomination, we must look to see if there was a positive, redemptive intent for that act. If indeed they believed that the world was destroyed, as it had been destroyed by Noah's flood, they would be justified to believe that it was their responsibility to rebuild and repopulate the world just as Noah did. Based on the facts as they understood them, having children with their father would have been the only way to accomplish it.

[It is interesting to note that Lot and his daughters were descendants of Terach. They shared a common ancestry with Abraham and his children. Even though Abraham broke away from his father's family and forged his own covenant with Gd and destiny, Terach was an interesting personality in his own right. Chazal tell us Terach repented later in life. Like his son Abraham, he too had greatness and a drive to come closer to Gd within him. It could be that he passed that gene on to his other descendants as well.]

The establishment of the State of Israel after the murder of 6 million Jews and generations of pogroms and massacres is another example of the strength of character we received from Lot's daughters, to build again, to hope again, even when confronted with destruction.

Let us turn our attention to David's paternal grandfather, Boaz, as we examine the second story in Parashat Vayeishev. Boaz was a descendant of Judah and Peretz. Who was Peretz? The story surrounding Peretz's birth was also told in great detail. Like the story of Lot and his daughters, it could be considered vulgar and unfit for inclusion in the Canon. The story begins with Judah taking a wife who bears him three children. Judah takes a bride for his eldest son, Er, named Tamar. Er acts inappropriately and Gd takes him. Following the format of יבום, which was presumably practiced even before מתן תורה, Er is told to marry his brother's widow. He too sins and Gd takes him as well. Having lost two sons due to their association with Tamar, Judah deflects her by telling her to return to her father's home and to tarry there as a widow until his third son Shayla comes of age.

It appears that Judah had no intention of allowing Shayla to marry Tamar. He likely feared that he too would die as his older brothers did from their association with Tamar. By telling her to sit in her father's home as a widow, he was condemning her to a life of loneliness. Imagine how she felt when all her friends married and started families while she sat in black shrouds, mourning her previous husbands with no hope of remarrying and a family of her own. Her friends likely mocked her, saying why is she bothering to wait for Shayla. After all, Shayla was likely significantly younger than she and he could marry anyone he wanted. Why would he want to take the older Tamar for a wife? Yet she persisted in waiting until she heard that Judah's wife died, and he began to reenter the world by participating in a sheep shearing festival. Tamar saw that there was no prospect of her marrying Shayla, so she decided to act and find a way to have relations with Judah.

While this story is perhaps not as drastic as the story of Lot and his daughters, it still seems like an unseemly tale that should not be a part of the Canon. It appears to have little connection to the founding of the Jewish People and כנסת ישראל. It appears to be another pornographic story that facilitates the arguments of agnostics and critics. In fact, while the Torah is notably stingy with words, leaving us to derive major sections of Jewish law from a single word or even a hint, the stories of Lot and his daughters and Judah and Tamar are related in great detail. The words of these stories have the same sanctity as the verse of שמע ישראל. If the words or letters of these sections are lacking or imperfect, the Torah scroll is rendered unfit.

What drove Tamar to act? Apparently, she could not separate from Judah. Something attracted her, either to Judah's sons or Judah himself. It led her to the extreme action of sitting at the crossroads in hope of enticing him. When looked at through the עלמא

דאָטגליאַ, the story is not logical. But from the perspective of דאָטכסיאַ it comes into clear focus. Through the דאָטגליאַ, we cannot maintain our connection to בית דוד. Instead, like Tamar, we have to look at the דאָטכסיאַ to see what can. and did, come from this story.

We cannot look at the destruction visited upon us by Hitler וזכרו, or the taunts of Christians and our enemies mocking us for clinging to our faith, and abandon hope. For we are mocked just like Tamar's friends mocked her. What do we do? We show the same faith and dedication by sitting on the floor on Tisha B'Av and wear our black shrouds waiting for morning to come. אַחכּה לוּ בכל יום שיבא, no matter how long it takes. Tamar demonstrated the strength of patience and resolve not to lose confidence and hope even when all around her mocked her. To reenforce our resolve in the face of our critics, like Tamar, we have to ignore the דאָטגליאַ and focus on the דאָטכסיאַ.

When the Israeli parliament opened in Jerusalem it was a festival and major occasion, recognizing the miracle of the establishment of the State of Israel as a manifestation of an אַתחלתא דגאולה, a beginning of the impending redemption. The speakers at the event ascribed credit for this great accomplishment to Herzl and other political leaders. Yet no one mentioned the millions of Jewish women and men who throughout the long night of exile and Holocaust retained their unshakeable faith in משיח. It was their faith that was responsible for the miracle they celebrated. Women like Rachel, the daughter of Kalba Savua and the wife of Rabbi Akiva, who sent her husband away for 20 years to study with Rabbi Eliezer Ben Hurkanos. He departed an ignoramus but over those twenty years grew to become among the greatest of our Tanaim and heroes. During those 20 years she lost everything, her wealth, her beauty, her youth. When he returned surrounded by 24,000 students, she set out to greet him. The students pushed her away, thinking how can a poor, broken woman approach the great Rabbi Akiva? He told them to allow her to approach, for all the Torah I and you have is in her merit and is hers.

The great Rabbi Akiva said all we have is built on the determined faith of women like his wife who are able to look past the despair of the long night and have confidence in the arrival of morning. It was irrelevant if the long night represented the time it took her husband to become a great Torah scholar or the arrival of the Messiah and redemption. It is the seemingly vulgar and simple that forms the foundation of what we have and look forward to, not the strength of political parties in Israel. This ability to wait, persevere and elevate the vulgar and primitive to great heights, העלאַת הרע, is the special strength Gd infused in כנסת ישראל that sustains it.

When confronted with criticism by the agnostics, we have to recall the verse in the Book of Ruth, וותקם בעוד לילה, and she arose while it was still night, to understand and appreciate how Gd used and elevated the כוחות הנפש, the inner strength of a primitive like Lot, and established the foundation for the Messiah. At the time the incident occurred we did not understand it or appreciate it. Only after many generations do we understand what Gd did through Ruth when she came to Boaz that night.

Indeed, מלכות בית דוד was started by the primitive actions of women, Lot's daughters, Tamar and Ruth. Gd elevated their actions.

(תהילים עח מז-עב)

וַיִּמָּאֵס בְּאַהֲלֵי יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁכַּבְתָּ אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחָר: וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שִׁכְטָה יְהוּדָה אֶת־הָעֵרָצִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהָב: וַיָּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רָמִים מִקִּדְשׁוֹ כְּאֶרֶץ יִסְדָּה לְעוֹלָם: וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עַבְדּוֹ וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִמְּכֻלָּאת צָאן: מֵאַחֶר עָלוֹת הַבִּיָּאָה לְרַעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עִמּוֹ וּבִישָׂרָאֵל נִחְלָתוֹ: וַיִּרְעֵם כְּתָם לִבּוֹ וּבִתְבוּנוֹת פִּתְּיוֹ יִנָּחֵם:

Gd selected David, with his humble beginnings, over the princes of Ephraim and elevated him from defilement, from the most primitive level of caves, crossroads and shepherds. From this He groomed מלך המשיח. The greatest miracle is to elevate the negative, רע, to something positive. Not to destroy it, but perfect it.

It appears that the focal point of the story of Judah and Tamar was not Judah's three sons, but rather the daughter in law he attempted to avoid and marginalize. There was something special and unique about Tamar and her desire to have a child with Judah, or a member of his family. It was specifically that union, Peretz born from that union, that would change the world. The story on the surface seems cold, cruel, vulgar. Why include it in the Canon? Because it exemplifies the idea of העלאת הרע. Judah's actions which were initially improper were elevated into something special by both him and Tamar. Out of their negative beginnings, the birth of the מלך המשיח himself was set in motion.

Ruth, a descendant of Moab, followed the tradition of Lot's daughters and Tamar. She was driven by her desire for a connection with the Jewish people and Gd. She would not be deterred. Boaz too, would not be deterred from taking Ruth as a wife and having children with her. He had no fear of destroying his lineage, as he was aware of the rule עמוני ולא עמונית מואבי ולא מואבית. While their initial coming together at the wheat threshing festival may have seemed inappropriate, the story tells us differently. It was specifically this union that brought us King David himself. Again, it was an example of העלאת הרע, to achieve the great goal of the Messiah King himself.

The Mesorah wants us to understand David from both דאטגליא as well as עלמא דאטכסיא.

Important to דוד מלכות בית דוד is not his political strength and prestige, but the lesson it teaches about העלאת הרע. That is the message that sustains us for the thousands of years in exile we have endured. David's עלמא דאתגליא was destroyed by the destruction of the Temple. His prestige and monarchy are gone, but not the עלמא דאתכסיא. While we are forbidden to favor one Parasha in the Torah over another, these Parashios that are involved with העלאת הרע are among the most beautiful.

The Torah tells us in the beginning of the Book of Genesis that all Gd created was טוב מאוד, very good. If Gd created it, there can be no bad, even if it appears to be bad. We can use that which we think is negative to build worlds. It depends on how that negative aspect is used. Sometimes it can be used incorrectly, to defile and destroy. But if used properly, it can be great. It is man who controls these abilities. We have to sift the sparks of sanctity from the sand and dirt that contains them. From those seemingly negative and defiled כוחות, characteristics, in that cave in the stories of Lot and Judah and Tamar, Gd allowed us to select the sparks that gave us king David. Chazal say the story of Tamar represents Gd's involvement through the עלמא דאתכסיא in מלכות בית דוד, giving it the strength that sustains forever our hope for מלך המשיח.

Gd desires that we not get disillusioned with the hope for מלך המשיח when confronted with failure and destruction. A crisis should not destroy a person or a nation. The Jewish nation has displayed its resilience and has not been broken by חורבן, destruction, massacre or Holocaust. This was the strength of the House of David, to start over again in the face, and even in the midst, of destruction. Our strength is to wait patiently through a long night, even though we call out to Gd and it appears He does not answer us. What do we do then? We wait still longer and call again from the depths, ממעמקים קראתיך השם ונפשי להשם משומרים לבוקר שומרים לבוקר. We wait for morning to come. There are people who psychologically cannot handle night, they anxiously wait for morning. They keep looking out the window to see if morning has dawned. Despite their constant disappointment, they don't give up. They are confident it will eventually come. This is the strength of the Jew. Sometimes we acquire such strength of purpose in a cave or at a crossroads.

Chasidim tell of the meeting between The Baal Shem Tov and Oleksa Dovbush, leader of the Galician rebels in the Carpathian Mountains and how he elevated him and made a great impression on him. An encounter with a great person raises the individual to higher levels, it purifies their defilement lifting them to a greater level of sanctity. Even for a murderer like Oleksa Dovbush. The hidden miracle of Chanukah was העלאת הרע. The prayer of הנסים says You delivered the strong to the hand of the weak, the many in the hand of the few, the defiled in the hand of the pure, the wicked in the hand of the

righteous and the conspirers in the hands of those who were involved with Your Torah. We readily understand the open miracle associated with the first two groups, but what miracle was involved or evident with the other groups? Delivering the strong into the hand of the weak and the many into the hand of the few is an open miracle. It fits into עלמא דאתגליא. The other groups represent העלאת הרע. The טמא, defiled individual, wasn't destroyed when he came into hands of טהור, pure individual. Instead, he was purified and elevated. Judah HaMacabi didn't seek ובערת הרע מקרבך, to consume the evil in your midst, but rather he was מקדש, redeemed and sanctified, them. These are miracles that apply to עלמא דאתכסיא, that accomplish העלאת הרע. After these miracles, they rededicated the Temple.

Copyright 2022, Rabbi Joshua Rapps. All rights reserved. Permission granted to print for individual use. Inclusion in and/or distribution via printed or electronic media is prohibited without permission of the author.