

# פירות הארץ

## Divrei Torah for the Shabbos Table *From the Talmidim, For the Talmidim*

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**Chanukah 2007 / 5768 חנוכה**

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We all know that Chanukah celebrates the spectacular miracle that the tiny amount of oil left in the Beit Hamikdash lasted for eight days. However, few people are aware of the magnitude of this miracle and what led up to it.

In Jewish history, chaotic disunity and failure to follow Hashem's laws have ultimately led to destruction at the hands of many different oppressive empires. Yet in the midst of such terrible times, we often find some of the most devoted service to G-d, and some of the most miraculous turning points in Jewish history.

In 586 B.C.E. Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Babylonian empire destroyed Jerusalem and the First Temple. Then, 70 years later, the Jews returned to the land and built the second Temple. 200 years later, Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire and much of the known world, including the land of Israel, thus introducing Greek culture, philosophy, and technology to the Jewish people. But they also brought their polytheistic religion, superstitions, as well as rampant immorality. Unlike Judaism, Greek culture was centered on the pleasure of the physical world. They believed the human body and mind were the epitome of perfection. Their idols were of human form, and all athletes trained in the nude as a misguided testament to the beauty of the human body. Many Jews admired the Greek culture and were happy to assimilate into it, believing it could only add to Hebraic traditions, despite the fact that it was based on idol worship. Nevertheless, there were a few pious individuals (the original Hasidim) who completely rejected anything of this nature and stringently kept the laws of the Torah. They violently rejected any inkling of idol worship. As the desecrations against the Temple and Torah mounted, these pious individuals rioted against the oppressive government and those Jews who supported it. In retaliation, King Antiochus of Syria sent 20,000 soldiers to Jerusalem and massacred the righteous group. He banned Judaism and the study of Torah and decreed that everyone must worship his idols or die. The Temple was taken and defiled, idols were forced into the Temple, and the sacrificial services were terminated. The call for an uprising spread around the country. In the village of Modin, an old priest named Mattathias and his five sons (some say 12) began to organize the people into a rebellion, waging a guerrilla war and destroying pagan altars. When Mattathias died, his son Judah took command, and his small army--the famous Maccabees--repeatedly defeated the organized army led by the regional governor Apollonius. Then the Maccabees retook the Temple mount, thus ending the terrible reign

of Antiochus. On the 25th of Kislev, the Jews cleansed and rededicated the Temple. As the story goes, the Maccabees could not find more than a day's worth of pure oil for the ceremonial lighting of the menorah. Miraculously, this oil lasted for eight days, a clear sign of Hashem's approval. One can only imagine the inspiring joy that the Jews must have felt at that time. Thus the festival of Hannukah was born.

The military victory of the Maccabees is not separate from the miracle of the oil, but is actually represented in it. The dancing light of the menorah symbolizes the spiritual inner light of a Jewish soul that can never be extinguished. Even after falling so low, the Jewish people unified and threw off the oppressive yoke of the Greeks, who were steeped in worship of the physical. This victory shows that spirituality and devotion to Hashem is infinitely stronger than the physical--that the internal is stronger than the external. Despite all their fancy weapons and trained soldiers, the Greeks were still defeated by those few Jews armed with little more than faith and determination. On Chanukah, when we light our chanukiot and place them in our windows, we reaffirm our knowledge that Hashem gave our nation the strength and spirituality to survive and flourish even while surrounded by foreign cultures in exile. The spiritual fire of Torah can not be extinguished as long as we strive to contain it within ourselves.

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**Raphael Shorser**  
**Torat Shraga**

### **Little actions lead to big results**

Rashi, on the pasuk (בראשית לב:כה) "וַיִּזְכֹּר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדּוֹ וַיֵּאבֶק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר" (בראשית לב:כה) comments that the reason יעקב went back over the river was because he forgot "פכים" - little vessels. The תורה then continues to tell us that the מלאך fought with יעקב and then "וַיִּגַע בְּכַף יָרְכוֹ". The של"ה points out that the words כף and פך have the same letters with the only difference being that in one case, the 'פ' is big and the 'כ' is small, and vice versa in the other one. R' Gedalya Shorr says that the 'פ' symbolizes speech – the פ from פה and the 'כ' symbolizes action – the כ from כף (palm). יעקב was a man of little speech and many actions and therefore he found value in the little actions, like going back for some small worthless vessels. The reason the מלאך hit יעקב in the כף (big פ), was because the way the יצר הרע gets us is with words – he occupies us with words and distracts us from acting. The מלאך was trying to disrupt יעקב, but was unsuccessful. This is exactly what the mishna in אבות tells us: (אבות א:ט"ו) - "אמור מעט ועשה הרבה" - Speak a little, but do a lot. The יצר הרע will always try to distract you with lots of words.

The הנוכח of ניסים are very much related to this idea. The small פך of שמן lasted eight days. The small and weak Jewish army, consisting of a few השמונאים, defeated the large and mighty Greek army. Size and strength are not the deciding factors. The גמרא says that "בא לטהר - מסייעין אותו" (יומא לה:) - that if we attempt something, and put in the effort to start it, Hashem will help us finish it. So long as you have the right intentions, and you take the first step, no matter how small it might be, Hashem will help you finish it. Words are not enough. No matter how much you talk, you need some sort of action, no matter how small. This is what the השמונאים understood- that they needed to take the first step. Did they know in advance that they would win the war? Did they know that the oil would last seven extra days? We know that you can't rely on miracles, however they knew that once they took the first step, Hashem would help them the rest of the way. Sometimes little actions lead to big things.

One of the many possible messages that we can take out of the story of הנוכח is this. Don't think to yourself whether you have the ability to do it or not. That's the יצר הרע talking to you, distracting you from doing what needs to be done with words. Just do it. If you start it and take that small first step, Hashem will help you with the rest. The

Alter from Novardak used to say, "I never ask whether I can or can't do it. I ask whether it needs to get done."

The pasuk says that בני ישראל attacked עמלק when they were בדרך. The way of עמלק is to distract you when you are on the way— with a destination in mind. When you want to start something, יצר הרע will distract you when you are on the way to start it. However once you start, he has no effect. He can't touch you. There is a time to think and a time to act. We can't get confused. When its time to act, don't hesitate; don't listen to the יצר הרע. If you act in the right time, this will ultimately lead to success.

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**Adam Offman**  
**Reishit Yerushalayim**

When looking at the גמרא in מסכת שבת that discusses חנוכה, one must ask the obvious question of why does the גמרא only discuss the miracle of the פך השמן, seemingly ignoring the miracle of victory over the יוונים ?

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz offers an answer in Sichos Mussar through a משל: There was a family who owned an expensive diamond that had been passed down from generation to generation. Suddenly, the diamond went missing, causing the entire family tremendous grief and leading to an expansive search. After a long search, the youngest child came home with the diamond. As a result, his father showered him with admiration and gratitude. The child was elated that he found the diamond and helped his family but was even happier with special attention he received from his father. The same is true by Chanukah. The עיקר miracle was the military triumph over the יוונים, but the miracle of the פך השמן, which allowed the מנורה's ethereal glow to continue for eight days, illustrated the special attention we received from הקב"ה.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe expands on this idea by noting that even if the oil had been טמא it still would have been permissible to light due to the strenuous conditions. The miracle, however, ensured that we would be able to fulfill the מהדרין מן המהדרין, with pure oil possessing the seal of the כהן גדול. Hashem wanted to show us how much he loves us; he wanted to perform the miracle with the best מצוה הידור possible. So too, we have to serve Hashem with our best מצוה הידור, our best efforts.

The הלוי, while discussing how to perform the מהדרין מן המהדרין, says that even with such a small amount of oil, the כהן גדול still could have proportioned the oil or made thinner wicks, in order to be יוצא the מצוה. But the עיקר miracle could only be performed with the full מצוה הידור-המהדרין. That is why we try to perform the מהדרין מן המהדרין, as well. Likewise, this חנוכה should be a time when we celebrate with as much מצוה הידור as possible and put forth our best efforts in our עבודת ה'.

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**Eliezer Seidenfeld**  
**Ohr Yerushalayim**

How do the Menorahs in our windows today connect to the Menorah in the Mishkan?

The portion of the *Torah* that we read on the days of *Chanukah* is called *Parshat HaNissiyim*, which talks about the *Korbanot* that all the *Shvatim* (except one) gave in honor of the *Mishkan*. *Rashi* (*Bamidbar* 8:2) asks: why is *Parshat Hannisiyim* written next to where *Hashem* tells *Moshe* to delegate to *Aharon* the duty of lighting the *Menorah* in the *Mishkan*?

*Rashi* explains the reason these two separate events were placed side-by-side is because when *Aharon* saw that all the *Nissiyim* of the other *Shvatim* gave *Korbanot* in honor of the *Mishkan*, he was upset that neither he nor his *Shevet* were included in

bringing the *Korbanot*. When *Hashem* saw *Aharon's* anguish, He said to *Aharon*, "Your (*Aharon's*) portion is greater than theirs (*the Nissiyim*) because you will light and prepare the candles (for the *Menorah* in the *Mishkan*)."

The *Ramban* questions *Rashi's* answer and asks - what is so special about lighting the *Menorah* in the *mishkan* when there are so many other Divine services that only *Aharon*, as the *Kohen Gadol*, was able to do, such as: bring the *Korban Mincha* everyday, carry out all the *avodas yom kippur*, and ... the *Kohen Gadol* is the only one EVER permitted to go into the *Kodesh HaKodoshim*!? So it seems strange that of all the prestigious jobs that *Aharon* is required to carry out, *Hashem* chose to console *Aharon* here by telling him, "Don't be upset, you got the *Menorah*!"

The *Ramban* answers that the job of lighting the *Menorah* was indeed more rewarding than all of *Aharon's* other jobs because all the other *Avodot* only existed as long as the *Beit Hamikdash* still stood. However, *Hashem* giving *Aharon* the job to light the *Menorah* is a *remez* to another *Chanukat Habayit* that the Jewish people would experience at a later point in history. That, of course, is referring to the time of the *Chashmonaim*, when *Aharon's* descendents would restore the *Beit Hamikdash* and light the *Menorah* once again. Although there was only enough oil to last one night, *Hashem* caused a *Nes* to occur and the candles stayed lit for 8 days. That is why today we celebrate the holiday of *Chanuka*, and why the lighting of the *Menorah* in the *mishkan* was such a valuable gift to *Aharon*; because he was granted the *zechut* of carrying out an eternal avodah.

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**Yosi Raskas**  
**Yeshivat Sha'alvim**

In the introduction to his book, Lights of Chanukah, Rav Moshe Brown quotes a *Medrash* in *Beishis Rabbah* that comments on the second *pasuk* in the *Torah*: "V'ha'aretz Haysah Sohu Va'voihu V'chosech Al Pnei Sehom." The *Medrash* says that when the *Torah* says "Choshech" it refers to the *Greeks* who darkened the eyes of the *Jews* with their evil decrees."

Why are the *Greeks* compared to the darkness before the creation of light, the most extreme of all darkness? Surely, this was not the most extreme *galus* to befall the *Jewish People*. In fact, unlike every other *galus* where the *Jews* were shunned from society, the *Greeks* actually demanded that the *Jews* participate in *Greek culture*, by attending *Olympics* and visiting bath houses, etc. Why was this so terrible?

The answer is that the evil of the *Greeks* was that they attempted to plunge the *Jewish people* into materialistic pursuits. In the words of the *Sfas Emes*, "They thrust the material world in the *Jews' faces*" hoping the *Jews* would abandon *G-d* entirely. This is total darkness, because far worse than being in *Galus* is **not knowing** when one is in *Galus*.

Rav *Yammer*, *Ram* in *Yeshivat Sha'alvim*, said that the world has two aspects: materialism and spiritualism. A *Jew* cannot live a "double life," where in some realms he engages in materialistic pursuits, but pursues spirituality in other times. Rather, every person must be one with the *Torah*; everything he does, whether spiritual or material, must be in accordance with the *Torah*.

This idea can be further illustrated by the following two examples. The *Medrash*, in *Berishis*, says that when *Moshe* went up to receive the *Torah* on behalf of the *Bnei Yisrael*, the *Malachim* began to pelt *Moshe* with stones. The stoning became so intense that *Moshe* had to hide under the *Kisei Hakavod* for protection. When the *Malachim* did not stop, *Hashem* changed *Moshe's* face to appear like that of *Avraham Aveinu*. Only then did the *Malachim* stop and agree that the *Jews* should receive the *Torah*. What

zechus did Avraham have that his descendents merited receiving the Torah instead of the Malachim? The reason is because Avraham would serve food to his guests and would use the meal to show them the beauty of Torah and Hashem.

We humans are capable of taking that which is unholy and elevating it to a state of Kedushah. The Malachim, who are inherently holy, are incapable of this. And for that reason we received the Torah and not the Malachim.

Another example of this idea can be seen from the matzah that we are commanded to bake. The interesting aspect about matzah is that we use flour, which has the capability to become chametz. Why don't we use rice, or something that has no chance of becoming chametz? Says Rav Shlomo Haur, we can see from here, that G-d does not want us to live without the materialism. Rather, He wants us to have materialism, but to make sure it does not become chametz. In the words of the Rav, "We must endeavor to fuse them and imbue the secular with the holy."

The Greeks attempted to divide holy from unholy, thereby robbing us of all potential growth. That is why they are the darkness of the world. In the words of Rav Yammer, "we must take the Torah and take materialism, and make them one." This is the lesson of Chanukah.

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**Ben Kalish**  
**Lev Hatorah**

There is a saying that "The more things change, the more they stay the same." Throughout history, trendy fashion lines come and go; new car models drive down our streets, and technological advancements such as newer cell phones and the latest iPods become common at our local Best Buy or Circuit City. Technology can change. Fashion can change. Everything can change. However, according to Rabbi Yissocher Frand, human nature and people do not. He states, "human nature today is no different from what it was a hundred, a thousand, or five thousand years ago. Therefore sooner or later people driven by unchanging drives and ambitions of human nature will manipulate the new events, conditions, and styles into forms that help them achieve the same goals people have been pursuing since time immemorial."

During the time of the Greek conquest, Alexander the Great conquered Israel among other places in an effort to expand his kingdom. As time went on, his Greek successors sought to change the focus from Torah and Mitzvoth to human intellect and worship of the physical body. The goal was to destroy Judaism and its beliefs. Decrees were passed outlawing Jewish essentials like *Bris Milah* and *Shabbos*. Instead, the Greeks tried to popularize theaters, sports arenas, and other forms of entertainment all over Israel. This destruction of Judaism was sadly very effective. Even *Kohanim* began to give up their beliefs and turned to Greek culture. All hope seemed lost for Judaism until the time of the Chanukah story. The Chashmonaim came and fought off the Greeks and restored Jewish ideals and Torah back into society. This is what we celebrate on Chanukah every year. It is not just the oil burning for eight days, but the victory over the Greek culture which was determined to eradicate our essence.

While the Greek exile ended over 2,000 years ago, the culture they represented has been flourishing in Western civilization for decades. We must ask ourselves a serious question. Are Orthodox Jews using the word "modern" to define their use of gadgets like Shabbos clocks, Shabbos lamps, and Shabbos ovens? Or are Jews clinging to the word "modern" in explanation of modesty, respect for Torah figures, and lack of mitzvah observance altogether? Sadly, I feel many of us have defined ourselves with the latter definition. It seems people are more concerned with how their sports teams played that

week, movie premieres at the box office, and Jack Bauer's (star of Fox's T.V show 24) latest adventure.

This year, we are studying in many yeshivas across Israel. On the one hand, we are learning Gemara or Chumash, and on the other we are running to the computer, checking what is going on in the secular world of sports, movies, music, etc... Do these materialistic items make a difference in our everyday Yeshiva lives by enhancing our learning, or do they simply just serve as something we cannot survive without? Will we use our extra minutes after morning or night seder to learn Torah, or will we just sit in our dorms and "kill time" by playing cards or listening to our Ipods? It appears that the secular culture of today is trying to finish what the Greeks started. Secular society is taking over our lives, and convincing us that this is a suitable happiness. Does this life style enhance our connection to Hashem? We have to redefine our priorities and figure out our own comfort level with our *avodas Hashem*. George Santayana once said that, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." We should be blessed to always remember the sacrifices that the Chasmonaim made in the Chanukah story and always keep Judaism strong in our lives.

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**Jonathan Heller**  
**Eretz Hatzvi**

As we all know, the Chanukah story is dominated by the concept of miracles. The main mitzvah we observe on the holiday, lighting the eight lights of the Chanukiah, commemorates the miracle that occurred in 164 BCE, when the *Beit HaMikdash* was rededicated, and purified from the Greeks. On that rededication, the Kohen found but one small jug of oil, yet the oil, when put in the Menorah and lit, lasted eight miraculous days.

Chanukah also celebrates the miracle that we, in fact, won the battles against the Greeks and their elephants. Judah HaMaccabee led the Hasmoneans to victory, miraculously defeating the Greek legions with brilliant strategy and knowledge of the land.

To commemorate these events, we add "*Al HaNisim*" and "*Bimei Matityahu*" to our Benching after Meals and to our *Shmoneh Esrei* for eight days. It is fitting that we say these prayers, for it reveals the joy and happiness we possessed when we achieved these victories. However, it is stated in the *Shulchan Aruch* that if we forget these *Tefilot* when we say *Shmoneh Esrei*, we do NOT have to go back, even to *Modim*, and repeat it. Why is this? Are we not supposed to always remember the miracle that occurred? If so, why should we not be obligated to repeat it? Furthermore, on other holidays, like *Rosh Chodesh*, and the *Shalosh Regalim*, we are obligated to repeat *Ya'aleh V'Yavo*!

The Mishna Brurah's answer brings understanding to the reason why we do not repeat this paragraph. The Mishna Brurah says that the reason why we don't repeat is because we say *Al HaNisim* on a holiday that is not *D'Oraita*, but *D'Rabanan*. We only repeat *Ya'aleh V'Yavo* because it is a *Tefilla* that is said for days that are mentioned in the Torah. Therefore, since it is a holiday created by us, and not by G-d, we do not have to repeat *Al HaNisim*. Plus, the *Shulchan Aruch* states that if we have not said the next *Bracha*, it is recommended go back and say *Al Hanisim*, and, in Benching, if *Al Hanisim* is forgotten, then it is re-said, if remembered, as a *HaRachaman*.

The fact that we do say *Al HaNisim* on Chanukah and Purim indicates that, yes, Chanukah is an important occurrence in our history. Along with Purim, it is a historical holiday, a holiday of hidden miracles. If it wasn't for *Al HaNisim*, who knows, maybe we, as a people, would forget the great miracle that occurred in 164 BCE in the Holy

Temple. We don't have a *megilla* that we read on Chanukah, and we don't have special Torah readings referring to the holiday, like we do with the three Festivals. In that sense, we need *Al Hanisim*, to remember the miracles, hidden and open, that G-d has done to help our tradition and lifestyle survive.

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**Yoni Brander**  
**Har Etzion**

RaMbaM (Hil. Hanukah 3; 2), describing the miracle of Hannukah, writes that on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, the Jews defeated their enemies, entered the Temple, miraculously discovered a small jug of pure oil and then proceeded to use that pure oil to light the *Nerot HaMaracha* (the Menorah) which lasted for eight days. Various Achronim (among them the *Pri Chadash* and the *Birkei Yosef*, both on *O.C.* 670) challenge the RaMbaM's view that the military victory took place during the day of the 25<sup>th</sup>. The Achronim ask: based on RaMbaM's chronology, we could only have started lighting the Menorah in the Temple on the night of the twenty-sixth, and if so, why is it that we start our commemoration of the miracle on the twenty-fifth?

The Achronim answer the question in various ways. Nevertheless, I think that an examination of *shi'tat ha'RaMbaM* regarding the Mitzvah of the Menorah in the Mikdash reveals a consistency within the opinion of RaMbaM. One of the 613 Mitzvot (*Mitzvat Aseh 25* in RaMbaM's *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot* and *Sefer HaChinnuch* 98) is that of *Hata'vah* (readying) and *Hadlakah* (kindling the lights) of the Menorah. Many Rishonim spill a great deal of ink describing the nature of the mitzvah and its performance. We can divide the commentators into two camps- the first is that of the Ra'abad (on *Hil. Avodat Yom Ha'Kippurim* 2:2), RaShI (*Menachot* 86b), and the *Responso* of RaShbA (§79 and §309). In general, they maintain that the act of lighting the Menorah is performed each evening at dusk, after each of the Menorah's lamps have been filled with half a *log* of oil in order to last the entire night. In the morning, the lamps that have remained alight are extinguished (except for the Western light, which must be left as a *Ner Tamid*), cleaned, refilled with oil and outfitted with new wicks. The lamps are subsequently relit at dusk.

RaMbaM, in the *Mishneh Torah*, advances an alternate view regarding the nature of the commandants surrounding the Menorah. In the middle of the third chapter of *Hilchot Temidin u' Mussafin* and in various other places throughout *Mishneh Torah*, RaMbaM writes that all the lamps remain lit all day and all night; furthermore, if they remain burning in the morning we don't extinguish them but rather we ensure that they remain burning. If they are in fact found to be extinguished, they are cleaned, more oil is added, a new wick placed and, unlike the other view, the light is immediately relit. Rav Chaim Soloveitchik (the GRaCh), in his *Chiddushim* on the RaMbaM (on *Hil. Biyat HaMikdash* 7; 9), observes that the obligation to light the Menorah is entirely different in the view of RaMbaM. According to the RaMbaM, "the kindling of lights is called readying them (*hatvatam*)"—in essence, the *kiyum* (fulfillment) *ha'mitzvah* in the *Beit haMikdash* is not the lighting of the lamps but rather the lamps being lit continuously. In fact, according to Rav Chaim, the lights in the *Mikdash* could go for days without being relit (this is confirmed by the miracle of Hanukah in which the same oil and flames lasted for eight days)! Furthermore, according to RaMbaM, the lamps can be lit anytime of day and there is no need to light them at night. This renders the *Pri Chadash's* question irrelevant- the lights could very well have been lit on the 25<sup>th</sup> during the day.

Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, the Rav, is quoted in the *Har'arei Kedem* as proposing an alternate view than that of his grandfather. According to the Rav, the RaMbaM in fact held that there were two separate *kiyumim* in the Mitzvah of the Menorah. The first was that of *Hatavah* or *Ha'aracha*—that the lamps should remain

continuously lit as part of the “framework” of the day in the Temple. The second kiyum is that of *Hadlaka* at night—that each night we extinguish the flames and relight them. The Rav's proof is from the *She'iltot* (Bersheit She'ilta 26), which writes that the cruse of oil the Hasmoneans found contained a single *log* of oil. The Rav says we know that there was just enough oil for one day even though we only need a half-*log* to light each time; therefore the Rav concludes that we must light twice a day (for the *hadlaka* and the *ha'aracha*).

The Rav raises a difficulty with his own explanation; if we follow it to its logical conclusion, we should light in the afternoon of the 25<sup>th</sup> because the Hasmoneans were only able to light during the day and fulfill the kiyum of Ha'aracha. He answers that there can be no such kiyum, in the framework of Temple, when one is not in the Temple. Conversely, the kiyum in hadlakah is a kiyum that can be fulfilled in our own homes by providing light in the darkness, the same role the flames of the menorah played in the Temple.

The Rav's understanding is somewhat problematic within the *lashon* (words) of the RaMbaM and his own proofs. The RaMbaM's own words- “hadlakat of the nerot is [called] the hatavah” (Hil. *Tamidim u' Mussafin* 3; 12)- seems to echo R' Chaim's approach, that they are the same kiyum, rather than that of the Rav who sees the two as two separate kiyumim. Furthermore, one of the proofs brought by the Rav is from the *She'iltot* (Bersheit She'ilta 26), which writes that the cruse of oil the Hasmoneans found contained a single *log* of oil. The Rav says we know that there was just enough oil for one day even though we only need a half-*log* to light each time; therefore, the Rav concludes that we must light twice a day (for the *hadlaka* and the *ha'aracha*). However, the Gemara in Menachot (87b) (which is codified as law by RaMbaM himself in Hil. *Tamidim u' Mussafin* 3; 11) writes that we need a half log for each individual light! Thus, we would need much more than three *log* to light the menorah once, which means the *She'iltot* certainly does not stand as a proof to the Rav.

Even with a cursory look at the issue of Ha'aracha and Hadlakah- the message should be glaringly apparent to each and every one of us. The *chiluk* between Ha'aracha and Hadlakah is not just one by Menorah in the Mikdash, but is a message that transcends far beyond the Hanukah season. It represents a dialectical conflict that we must struggle with in our religious lives. Hadlakah is about the constant renewal of the flame- the innovations, new initiatives and new goals we create in our odyssey for spiritual fulfillment. It is the new *chavrutah*, the new *shuir* or the new *sefer*. The message of the Menorah according to RaMbaM is that one does not serve God through Hadlakah alone- for the excitement too often fades away. Rather, the Ha'aracha is integral because it teaches us the need for consistency- it is what turns the concentrated intensity of the Hadlakah into values for life. Our year in Israel is not the pinnacle of our lives spiritually or otherwise; but rather, our ability take the norms instilled in us in Yeshiva and combine them with the values imbued by our parents, will ultimately form a Ha'aracha for our lives.