

It happened at the end of two years to the day. (41:1)

On most years, *Parashas Mikeitz* coincides with *Chanukah*. The commentators explain that this is by design. In his notes to the *Mordechai*, *Meseches Shabbos*, at the end of *Perek Bameh Madlikin*, the *Shiltei GiBorim* writes that a number of allusions from the *parsha* render it a prime candidate for *Shabbos Chanukah*. At the opening words of the *parsha*, *Mikeitz shenasaim*, “At the end of two years,” the letters of the word *shenasaim*, comprise a *notreikun*, abbreviation: *shin* – *s’moel*/left (side); *nun* – *ner*, candle; *taf* – *tadlik*, you shall light; *yud* – *yemin*, right (side); *mem* – *mezuzah*. This indicates that the *Chanukah* candles shall be lit and placed at the left side of the doorpost opposite the *mezuzah*. The author suggests that the words, *v’tavoach tevach v’hachein*, referring to Yosef’s dinner for his brothers, is also an inference to *Chanukah*. The *ches* of *tevach*, followed by the word *v’hachein* – *vov*, *hay*, *chof*, *nun* – are the letters of the word *Chanukah*. Additionally, the words *v’tavoach tevach* have a numerical value of forty-four, coinciding with forty-four candles that are lit during the entire holiday of *Chanukah*.

Horav Levi Yitzchak, zl, m’Berditchev and the *Koznitzer Maggid, zl*, both offer a different *pasuk* that alludes to the *Chanukah* experience. When the brothers returned with Binyamin, Yosef prepared a lavish meal for them. He commanded his servant to give each one a portion. The *pasuk* reads, *Va’tarev masaas Binyamin mimasaas kulam chameish yados*, “And Binyamin’s portion was five times (hands) as much as any of them” (Ibid. 43:34).

The Torah uses the word *yados*, which means “hands,” an atypical term for the portion that Binyamin received. Why is the word, *yad*/hand, used? They explain that the five *yados* are an allusion to the five *yados* connected with *Chanukah*: “You delivered *giborim b’yad chalashim*, the strong into the hands of the weak; *rabim b’yad meatim*, the many into the hands of the few, *temaim b’yad tehorim*, the ritually impure into the hands of those who are pure; *reshaim b’yad tzaddikim*, the wicked into the hands of the righteous; *zeidim b’yad oskei torasecha*, and the malicious, into the hands of the diligent students of your Torah.”

This is the underlying meaning of *v’tarev masaas Binyamin*, “and the portion of Binyamin was more.” Binyamin’s name can be broken up into the words, *Ben Yamin*, son of the right, referring to *Klal Yisrael*, who are Hashem’s children from the *yemin*, right side, signifying the stronger position, reflective of Hashem’s unstinting love for us.

We now understand why Yosef gave Binyamin five portions at the special banquet in the brothers’ honor. It was a *seudas Chanukah*, festive meal commemorating (what would become) *Chanukah*. But why Binyamin? While it is true that his name signifies the Jewish people, there must be a stronger connection.

Horav Pinchas Friedman, Shlita, quotes the *Talmud Megillah* 16a, as a source for his elucidation of this question. The *Talmud* cites the *pasuk* in *Parashas Vayigash* (45:22), “To Binyamin he gave... five changes of clothing.” *Chazal* explain that Yosef’s giving Binyamin five changes of

clothing is an indirect reference to Mordechai, a descendant of Binyamin, who would one day walk out from his session with King Achashveirosh bedecked in five royal garments.

Why would Yosef need a “gift” of “five”: first five hands; and now five changes of clothes? Applying the thesis of the *Koznitzer Maggid* and the *Berditchiver*, we now know that the first “five” was an allusion to *Chanukah* and the second “five” a reference to *Purim*. Thus, the *Talmud* questions the second “five,” since we already know about *Chanukah*. Their response fits perfectly into the equation: Yes, the first “five” is about *Chanukah*; the second “five” however, is the Torah’s allusion to *Purim*.

If one were to question the sequence of the two festivals (i.e., How do we know that the first “five” refers to *Chanukah* and the second “five” is a reference to *Purim*?), we would apply the *pesukim* at the beginning of *Parashas Mikeitz*, which indicates that this *parsha* belongs to *Chanukah*.

Rav Friedman takes this thesis to the next level. Five changes of clothes clearly has a stronger affiliation with the *Purim* miracle, since it was Mordechai’s royal clothes that catch our attention. Additionally, Mordechai was from the tribe of Binyamin. That all seems to fit, but what compelled Yosef to give Binyamin specifically five *yados*, hands/portions, corresponding with the miracle of *Chanukah*. What relationship exists between Binyamin and *Chanukah*?

As usual, there is no dearth of esoteric explanation for their interrelation. The **Arizal** writes that the twelve months of the year correspond with the twelve tribes in sequence, coinciding with their positions of travel and encampment according to their *degolim*, banners. Thus, as is posited by the *Bnei Yissachar*, the ninth month of the year, *Kislev*, corresponds with Binyamin, who was the ninth tribe in the order of travel. *Kislev* is the month of *Chanukah* – but that is not all.

The **Zera Kodesh** writes that the ninth month of the year is *Kislev*. Corresponding with this month, *Shevet Binyamin* offered its sacrifice in honor of the *chanukas*, inauguration, of the *Mishkan* on the ninth day of *Nissan*. This is because the Torah writes concerning Binyamin, *Yedid Hashem yishkon lavetach alav kol hayom*, “Beloved of Hashem, he rests securely with Him. He caused His covering to rest upon him at all times and takes up His abode between his high places” (*Devarim* 33:12). This is a reference to the fact that the *Bais Hamikdash* was built in Binyamin’s portion of *Eretz Yisrael*.

To take this idea even further, Rav Friedman quotes the *Talmud Yoma* 12a, that distinguishes between the parts of the *Bais Hamikdash* complex that were contained in *Shevet Yehudah*’s portion and those which were included in *Shevet Binyamin*’s portion. The *Har HaBayis* (Temple Mount), the *Lishkos* (Chambers), and *Azaros*, (the Courtyard), were in Yehudah’s portion. The *Ulam*, (antechamber), *Heichal*, (Sanctuary), and *Kodoshei HaKodoshim* (Holy of Holies) were included in Binyamin’s portion. The *Talmud Shabbos* 21b teaches that when the Greeks entered into the *Bais Hamikdash*, they came through the *Heichal* and contaminated the oils that were there. This was situated in Binyamin’s portion. Through their defilement of the oils stored in the *Heichal*,

the Greeks created a blemish within Binyamin's portion. Thus, when the miracle of *Chanukah* occurred and the Jews emerged victorious from the battle with the Greeks, they cleansed the *Bais Hamikdash*, thus repairing the spiritual taint that existed within Binyamin's portion. This was foreshadowed by Yosef when he gave Binyamin five portions.

Yosef instructed Pharaoh to appoint overseers on the land, *Yaase Pharaoh v'yafkeid pekidim al haaretz, v'chimeish es eretz Mitzrayim b'sheva shnei ha'sova*, "Let Pharaoh proceed and appoint overseers on the land, and he shall prepare the land of Egypt during the seven years of plenty" (41:34). The **Bnei Yissachar** writes that the word *v'chimeish*, "and he shall prepare," is an inference to *Chanukah*. In their diabolical plan to destroy the Jewish nation, the Greeks focused on three essential *mitzvos*: *Chodesh*, the sanctification of the New Moon, which essentially grants the Jewish Rabbinical court license to determine the calendar and decide when the various Festivals are to be celebrated; *Milah*, circumcision, which bonds the Jew with Hashem; and *Shabbos*, the day of rest, whereby the Jew attests to the Almighty's creation of the world. He is accorded a day during which he reflects on his mission in life and is able to commune with Hashem, unencumbered by mundane restraints. Exactly why these three specific *mitzvos* were selected by the Greeks is a separate thesis. For our purpose, however, we may take note of the *chameish*, the first letter of each of these *mitzvos* – *ches* – *Chodesh*; *mem* – *Milah*; *shin* – *Shabbos*, which collectively spell out *chameish*, which is the number five. Having discussed earlier the significance of the number five, we now have a further allusion from this *parsha* to *Chanukah*.