



Perceptions • Kislev 2, 5786 • November 22, 2025 • Issue #2123

LAST year I wrote a book called “Twenty-Four Days,” based upon a statement from the Zohar. The Zohar says that the first twenty-four days correspond to the twenty-four letters of “*Boruch Shem kevod malchuso l’olam va’ed* —*Blessed be the Name of His glorious kingdom forever,*” the second verse of the *Shema*. The *sefer* uses each of the Hebrew letters to teach a daily lesson in preparation for *Chanukah*, which corresponds to the *Shema* itself.

You can purchase the paperback and hardcover versions through Amazon, and the PDF file through my site, Thirtysix.org. I’m also doing a daily podcast, *b”H*, to the same effect on my YouTube channel, Shaarnun Productions.

When you think of Chanukah, you think of the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, and not the twenty-four days prior to it. You think of the Chashmonaim and the Maccabees and the war they fought against the Greeks, not of Ya’akov, his sons, and their “war” against Eisav. Chanukah is a rabbinic holiday that just happened to occur in the *thirty-sixth* century, long after the Torah was closed with the death of Moshe Rabbeinu in the *twenty-fifth* century, *eleven* hundred years earlier.

Assumptions, assumptions, assumptions. We make them all the

time. The trouble is that many of our assumptions are incorrect, which wouldn't be so bad if they didn't result in mistaken perceptions, which then result in mistaken actions. Reality might be absolute, but our perception of it is so *not* absolute, and in a world of over 8.2 billion people! that makes for very precious history.

And a lot of *zilzul*. People do not treat Chanukah on the level it should be treated. Purim, either, and for the same reasons. But Purim has so much going on that it is easier to take it more seriously and get out of Purim some of what it has to offer. But Chanukah? How many people even know what to think about when lighting their menorahs?

You know what it's like? It's like the evolution of Moshiach Ben Dovid. His soul started off on a very high level within the soul of Adam HaRishon prior to the sin, while every soul destined to come into the world before *Yemos Moshiach* was still part of Adam's soul. The sin caused all of the souls, less Adam's personal soul (and those of Kayin and Hevel), to "fall off" and into the *Klipos*, the realm of spiritual impurity. This is discussed in detail in *Sha'ar HaGilgulim*.

The higher the soul, the deeper it fell into the *Klipos*. The deeper a soul fell into the *Klipos*, the harder it is for it to leave and come into this world in a body, and the trickier the means necessary to "rescue" it from the *Klipos*.

In real time, this put the spark of Dovid HaMelech and Moshiach Ben Dovid in Sdom, the physical manifestation of the worst *klipos* in history at that time. This required Lot to go down there, marry a woman from Sdom in whom the spark was hidden, have daughters with whom he was forced to flee Sdom when it was destroyed, lose his wife to salt on the way, hide out in a cave with his two surviving daughters, and drunkenly have

children through them.

Apparently the spark that was in Lot's wife had been passed to the eldest daughter, who named her son "Moav," openly proclaiming the incestuous source of her child. But that child received and carried that very holy spark, which the Klipos had assumed still belonged to it, at least until Rus "crossed the floor" to the other side and converted with the spark of Moshiach in her. There is an entire *megillah* that documents the rest.

Chanukah didn't just show up in history when it did. It was a spark of Divine light buried within the *Klipos* since Creation, awaiting its time to emerge, a moment only God knows and makes happen to the second. The events of history that just seem to occur are arranged by Him to move the pieces around to get that spark out from the side of impurity (the Greeks and Hellenists) to the side of *kedushah* (Chashmonaim). The establishment of Chanukah as an official holiday was just to make a note in history for what had been accomplished to date.

The process, called "*birrur*—separation," began before Creation and has continued since. We all do *birrur*, separating good from evil, and we are all subject to it. Avraham fathered Yishmael, and then Yitzchak. Yitzchak fathered Eisav, and then Ya'akov. Ya'akov thought he too may have been the source of both sides, which is why he questioned his son about their faith.

Ya'akov's sons, the ten tribes, answered their father with the twenty-five letters of the "*Shema*," but he answered them with the twenty-four letters of "*Boruch Shem...*" The difference of one letter makes all the difference in the world, the difference between Yitzchak and Yishmael, the difference between Ya'akov and Eisav, and ultimately the difference between who makes it to the final redemption, and who doesn't.

The missing letter? In English, it is the simple word “and.” But in Hebrew, it is the letter *Vav*, and it is the key to everything.

Good Shabbos (for now), and Happy Kislev,

Pinchas Winston