



have been a *Chillul Hashem* because it might have seemed as if Avraham did not accept the justice in what God had done.

But why the letter *Chof*? This helps to answer that question:

Rav Kahana said: Rav Nachman *bar* Munyumi elucidated in the name of Rebi Tanchum: A *Chanukah* light placed higher than twenty *amos* is unfit... (*Shabbos* 22a)

Why? Because the eye doesn't see clearly from twenty, or *Chof amos* (about forty feet) away, and the lights of the *Menorah* must be seen for *pirsumei nissa*, to publicize the miracle.

If it is only a *physical* thing, then it can be *physically* remedied without lowering the *Menorah*. For instance, a person can use a larger *Menorah* visible from a great distance, as some do anyhow. If it is a *spiritual* thing, then the remedy has to be *spiritual* as well, and keeping the *Menorah* within twenty *amos* is more instructive than physically necessary.

In fact, the *Chof* alludes to the basis of the *Neis Chanukah* which, tied to the *Chof* of *livkosah*, is summed up by the following verse, and really its corollary:

*This is from God, that which is wondrous in our eyes. (Tehillim 118:23)*

*Hasbkofab* 101 is that *everything* is from God, not just the wondrous things and, if anyone knew that, it was Dovid *HaMelech*. Then what important idea was he trying to convey to us, and why not state it outright?

He was telling us that when we stop seeing everything as being from God, or are even just slow to realize it, then we have stopped seeing the wonder in life. We have become overly accustomed to the miracle of life and all that it entails and taken too much for granted. In short, we have allowed the world to become unGodly in our minds.

It is a natural part of life that certain things should be very exciting at first. It is a natural part of being human that they should become less so with each passing day. If we can do that with God we can certainly do it with the things He created.

That makes our *avodah* to work on keeping special things *special* by never losing sight of their good and always seeing them as the gifts they are. It's not that their specialness wanes. It is that our vision of it does, thanks to our *yetzer bara*.

This is why when we take the time and make the effort to re-establish the wonder of what was once wondrous, it usually works. This is the message of the *Chof*: to maintain an appreciation of the good in life, and to regain that appreciation if it happens to drop off over time.

This is the deeper meaning of the following from the *Gemora* which just happens to be on *Daf Chof* (Page 20):

Rav Papa said to Abaye: “What is different about the earlier [generations], for whom miracles occurred and what is different about us, for whom miracles do not occur? If it is because of [Torah] learning, in the years of Rav Yehudah all of their learning was [con-fined] to the order of *Nezikin*, while we learn [all] six orders. . . Yet, [regarding miracles, after declaring a fast to pray for a drought to end,] when Rav Yehudah would remove one of his shoes the rain would [im-mediately] fall, whereas we torment ourselves and cry out and no one notices us!”

Abaye answered Rav Papa: “The previous genera-tions were self-sacrificing to sanctify the Name of God, and we are not self-sacrificing to sanctify God’s name.” (*Brochos* 20a)

The key to miracles: don’t just be *self-sacrificing*, but be self-sacrificing *for the sake of sanctifying the Name of God*. And the starting point for that is what the *Rambam* says here:

What is the way to love and fear God? When one con-templates His actions and His wondrous and great creations and sees in them His wisdom, that it has no limit and no end, immediately he will love and praise Him, and desire tremendously to know His Great Name. (*Yad Chazakah, Yesodei HaTorah*, Ch. 2:2)

This brings us full circle to what Dovid *HaMelech* taught, and why through a corollary. As the *Rambam* explains, true love and fear of God are not surface things, but levels that are achieved by increasing personal spiritual sensitivity. Then life becomes more wondrous because the reality of God becomes more apparent. The miracles follow from that.

