

ASHREINews



Menahel's Message Thanks for the Small Things

In a well-known comment towards the end of Parashat Bo, the Ramban explains that the purpose of a *nes nigleh*- an overt, "big" miracle- is to remind us of the ever-present hand of Hashem in every facet of existence. While the Ten Plagues and the splitting of Yam Suf may have been spectacular, in truth these "big" miracles were no greater than the sun rising in the East and setting in the West, or any other phenomenon ordinarily associated with nature. Each is the product of Divine Providence and the constant handiwork of the *Manhig Olam*. Overt miracles only serve as an occasional wake up call to seek out *yad Hashem* more generally.

Perhaps the most famous question relating to Chanukah - and among the best known questions associated with any Jewish Holiday - is that of the Beis Yosef, who ponders why Chanukah was established for eight days if in fact there was enough oil found to last for the first day. Only the last seven were a miracle; the first day's kindling was completely natural and not extraordinary in any way! (A *sefer* I recently acquired, *Yemei Shemonah*, contains five hundred answers to this question- an older *sefer*, *Ner L'Meah*, presents "only" a hundred!) In light (Chanukah pun :)) of the above, the answer is very simple. Yes, only the last seven days were a supernatural *nes*; nonetheless, eight days were established to remind us that the first day was not fundamentally different in any way. Just as the *nes* was clearly produced by G-d, so too the "natural" tendency of oil to burn for even the expected duration.



Class 4G made chocolate truffles using Shemen in honor of Chanukah.

The greatest *beracha* a human being can experience is the blessing of children. We always celebrate milestones and take note of "major" events in our children's lives. Chanukah teaches us to pause long enough to appreciate even the more mundane aspects of child rearing. Savor the "small" miracles of the daily grind, aptly referred to by Chazal as *tza'ar gidul banim*, and thank Hashem for His constant gifts, *nisecha she'bechol yom imanu*.

Shabbat Shalom and a *lechtige* Chanukah!

Rabbi Ari Jacobson



5B in lashon class made special edible סביבונים in honor of Chanukah



Spotlight on Alumni

Mrs. Devora Kehati (nee Deutsch), Class of 1997, is a mother of four, living in Israel. She responded to our recent alumni mailing, telling us how she and her husband, Shachar, "live the dream" since moving to Neve Yaacov 5 1/2 years ago. Shachar is a professional drummer and Devorah runs a playgroup in the mornings. Devora looks forward to hearing good news from everyone and bumping into fellow alumni in Israel.

Attention HIROC and ASHAR Alumni and Parents of Alumni: Please visit www.ashar.org/alumni to update your and your graduates' contact information. We look forward to doing a better job staying in touch!

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*All proceeds support the security needs of our school