

# From the desk of Rabbi Baumann



## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Erev Shabbos Parashas Mikeitz Shabbos Chanuka Rosh Chodesh Teves 5783

Dear Parents,

Children internalize the beauty of *Yiddishkeit* through the positive emotional impact of their life experiences. Parents are tasked with creating a warm, caring environment and providing uplifting experiences to help bring out the beauty for their children. Of equal importance is helping our children build a foundation of Jewish values that will remain with them as they move through the many stages of life.

“**Parents must be able to articulate basic Torah concepts and discuss them ... with their children.”**

These knowledge-based ideas and principles are not the exclusive domain of the Yeshiva’s *Rebbis* and *Moros*. Parents need to be able to point out and articulate basic Torah concepts and discuss them in a meaningful way with their children. At this time of year, during Chanukah, before running to the bookshelf or your *Rav* (not bad ideas), we can avail ourselves of the opportunity to look more deeply into the *Al Hanisim* prayer we are now reciting at least 3 times a day.

In praising *Hashem*, we enumerate:

גּוֹרְרִים בַּיָּד חֲלִשִׁים, וּרְבִים בַּיָּד מֵעַטִּים, וְתָמִאים בַּיָּד טָהוֹרִים, וּרְשָׁעִים בַּיָּד צָדִיקִים, וּזְדִים בַּיָּד עֲוֹסֶק תּוֹרַתִּיךְ.

Hashem has handed over: The strong unto the weak, the many unto the few, the impure unto the pure, the wicked unto the righteous and the scoffers unto those who engage in Torah.

Each of these phrases contain within them powerful, foundational Torah concepts and values that every Jewish person can understand and explain to their children, at their level.

Let’s briefly expand on each one:

**“We are not impressed by numbers and statistics.”** גּוֹרְרִים בַּיָּד חֲלִשִׁים - *Hashem* has the power to thwart the military might of our enemies. If He wills it, weaklings can defeat mighty warriors. We need not be frightened by those who appear to be stronger than us, for we have *Hashem* on our side and He is more powerful than anything in the universe.

וְתָמִאים בַּיָּד טָהוֹרִים - We are not impressed by numbers and statistics. The Jewish people are less than 2% of the world’s population, most of whom would like to see us eradicated, and yet we are still here and thriving. When doctors give a slim chance for surviving a disease we don’t let up in trying to find a cure, we intensify our *Tefillos* and strengthen our *Bitachon* that if Hashem wills it, we can beat any odds.

וּרְשָׁעִים בַּיָּד צָדִיקִים - the power of *Kedusha*, sanctity and purity will always overpower the impure. There is a saying: *A small amount of light pushes away a great amount of darkness*. So too – when we live a life of *Kedusha*, that brings down the ‘light’ of *Hashem* and the darkness of idolatry and iniquity disappears. Living a life of *Kedusha* brings incredible *Bracha* and success.

וּרְבִים בַּיָּד צָדִיקִים - The wicked appear to be triumphant and to be enjoying the bounty of life. We may see the righteous suffering and the wicked flourishing. Know that this is only temporary – for in the end, as happened at *Chanuka*, righteousness will prevail over sinfulness. Evil flourishes and then vanishes.

וּזְדִים בַּיָּד עֲוֹסֶק תּוֹרַתִּיךְ. - People, especially scoffers and cynics, deride Torah scholars for being non-productive, אין לה. In the end, the scoffers are destroyed by the power of those they thought useless.

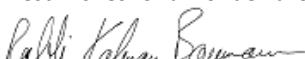
We need to appreciate the incredible value of Torah learning and the respect owed to *Talmidei Chachomim*.

“**We need to appreciate the incredible value of Torah learning and ... Talmidei Chachomim.”**

These snippets are fundamental truths we need to teach, model and share with our children. Our children need to feel good about living in a Torah home and community, to be inspired by uplifting experiences – and knowledgeable about our core, bed-rock beliefs and concepts.

May this *Chanuka* bring a deeper understanding of who we are and what values have helped keep us alive through thousands of years of *Galus*.

Best wishes for a wonderful *Shabbos*, elevating *Rosh Chodesh* and illuminating *Chanuka*,



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Principal