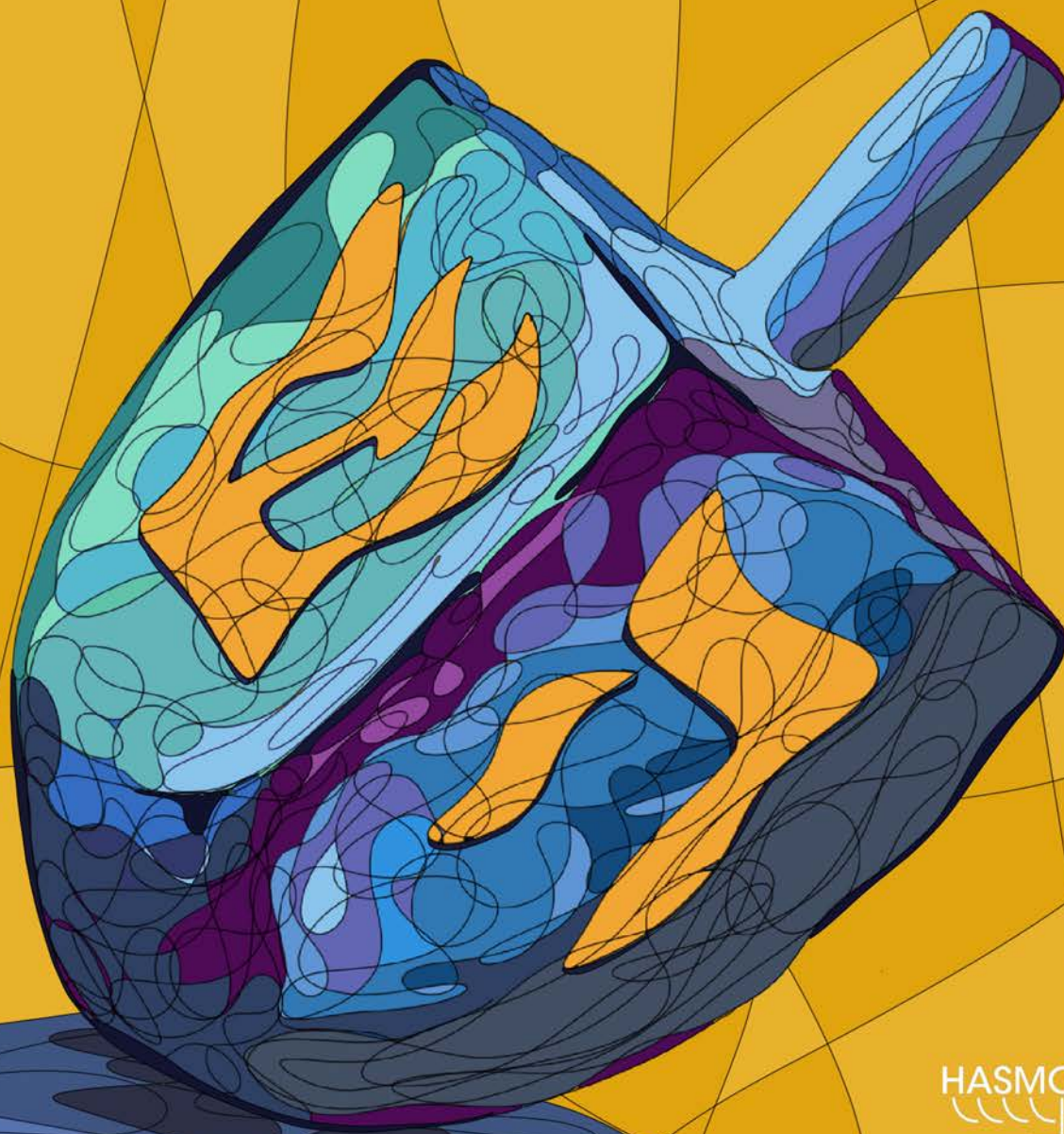


# Hipe חנוכה Booklet





# Foreword

Imagine you were invited to an inauguration ceremony. A new shul, school or even just a friend's housewarming. The invitation will call it a "Chanukas HaBayis" or similar.

When the Mishkan was inaugurated in the Midbar, we refer to it as the Chanukas HaMishkan.

And, of course, there is Chanukah – the festival that is upon us, where we commemorate the defeat of the mighty Greek army by a small band of faithful Jews and the re-dedication of the Beis HaMikdash.

All of these terms are based on the word "chinuch" meaning to dedicate or inaugurate.

Interestingly, here at Hasmonean, not only do we carry the name of this small band of faithful Jews, but our very *raison d'être* is chinuch – education. The same word.

What is the connection between inaugurating a new building and education?

Rabbi Malcolm Herman, in his wonderful book "Everyday Parenting for Everyday Parents" gives an insightful answer.

An inauguration ceremony marks when a building has been brought to the point where it is ready for the purpose for which it has been constructed. To inaugurate a building means to develop it to the point where it is completely ready and able to fulfil its designated purpose.

That is exactly what chinuch is. To raise a child so that they are completely ready and able to fulfil the lifelong purpose for which they were created.

That is really our goal at Hasmonean: to help every child achieve their potential. To make sure they are proud, practising and passionate Jews where Torah is central to their lives and at the same time, are equipped to make their way in this world and contribute to the society in which they live.

HIPE play a critical role in this goal. In the short time they have been at Hasmonean, HIPE have made a major and immediate impact, touching the lives of hundreds of boys and girls in a real and meaningful way.

This booklet is just the latest of their ongoing initiatives and I am indebted to the fabulous boys' HIPE team, Rabbi Avrumi Lichtig, Rabbi Danny Fisher, Jonti Aremband and Ari Richman, all brilliantly led by the director of boys' HIPE, Benji Shebson.

I hope that all their efforts to inject excitement and passion for Yiddishkeit in the corridors of Hasmonean bear much fruit and help us achieve our goal to give outstanding chinuch to every child, so that in time they will be ready and able to fulfil the lifelong purpose for which they were created.

With warm Chanukah wishes,

**RABBI GOLKER  
MENAHEL**



# THE REAL CHANUKAH MIRACLE

The Chanukah story is one of our most famous stories. This unbelievable warrior, Yehuda HaMaccabi, fought when no one else would. One tiny jar of oil that lasted 8 days when lasting for one day was a miracle in itself.

The Greeks' main objective was not to physically kill us but rather to prevent us from learning Torah and keeping Mitzvos. The attack was on a spiritual level, which can be much worse than a physical threat. We can learn so much from the miracles of the Chanukah story including resilience and Emunah. However, drowning in doughnuts and latkes, we often forget the real miracle of Chanukah.

The miracle we commemorate is the achievement that we succeeded spiritually and did not lose our way - we did not divert from our path. By celebrating these 8 days, we demonstrate to Hashem the gratitude we have for the ability to learn Torah, perform Mitzvos and achieve our potential as proud Jews.

It is because of this that The HIPE Team (Hasmonean Informal Programme and Education) have created a booklet focusing on the power of Chanukah.

HIPE was created to focus on our students' connection to Judaism in whichever way that may be. To be able to care and help every student in Hasmonean find their paths and achieve success in all aspects of life including their spiritual journey. The Passuk in Mishlei states

"חנך לנער על-פי דרכו גם בן-יחיקין לא-יסור ממנה"

"Teach a child to their way, because when they get older they will not deviate from that way." HIPE, alongside the Rebbeim at Hasmonean, are constantly trying to help guide our students to find **their** 'derech'.

Having launched at the boys' site in September 2020, HIPE immediately started new sessions at the school - Jewish Informal Education lessons built into the timetable for boys in Years 7-10 to work alongside the already impressive formal Jewish Studies in Hasmonean - a revolutionary change for the school. Additionally, the HIPE department is responsible for all activities, sessions and trips relating to anything from Chagim, Achdus or inculcate a Jewish atmosphere in the school.

The HIPE department launched with three main objectives:

To engage with every student.

To create a positive Jewish environment around the school.

To Increase Jewish informal education - demonstrating that being a Jew is a way of life rather than just a text we study.

We are passionate about the personal progress of each student. Their progress is our delight. In the last 18 months, we have run a multitude of programmes, sessions and trips to work towards our objectives ranging from mentorship programmes, classes on Jewish topical interest, Pesach activities, Lag B'Omer trips, Mincha sessions and Bar Mitzvah events to name just a few.

To see the latest updates about HIPE including some of our amazing highlights videos, photos and event write ups feel free to visit [hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys](https://hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys)

Wishing you a Chanukah Sameach – please help us continue to help our students on their path to being a proud Jew

**BENJI SHEBSON**  
DIRECTOR OF HIPE BOYS



*In professional football, only 1% of all attacking plays and approximately 10% of all shots taken end up in a goal. This means that 90% of all shots taken do not end up scoring. What drives a footballer to keep on performing knowing that 90% of the time he will miss?*

*Rav Elya Svei (Rosh Yeshiva in Philadelphia) explains that Aharon HaKohen's performance of the Mitzva in lighting the Menorah was something remarkable. We would expect that if Aharon was lighting the menorah day in day out, his enthusiasm towards this Mitzva would start to diminish, and he would start doing it by rote. However, Aharon combatted this expectation and ensured that he was enthusiastic every day lighting the Menorah, like he was the very first time he lit it. This fight that Aharon fought had a huge impact on his descendants, the Chashmonayim, enabling them to pluck up the courage and fight a war – where all odds were against them. Aharon's going above and beyond resulted in his descendants going above and beyond.*

*By the same token, Rav Elya zt"l points out, the manner in which we perform Mitzvos has an effect and an impact on our children and grandchildren. They see how we daven, and our seriousness and kavana when we recite brachos. And, in turn, they daven beautifully and recite brachos with intensity. This lasts for many, many generations. But how do we do this? How do we keep the flame burning and the enthusiasm to continue?*

*Observing the analogy of the footballer, his enthusiasm is retained by focusing on the 10% of the time he scores, and that infuses him with energy to persevere. One way to do this is by considering what you are naturally passionate and enthusiastic about. Then think about these enthusiastic moments whenever you need a boost. This will keep the momentum going.*

# *Rabbi Avrumi Lichtig*

**Hipe Educator**

# The Dreidel

## RELEVANCE AND MEANING BEHIND IT

After the Greeks banned Torah study, they came to check on the Jews to make sure that they were complying with this decree. When the Greeks arrived, the Jews took out their dreidels and began playing with them. In truth though, the Greeks allowed Torah study for the purpose of an intellectual exercise, so instead of playing with a dreidel, why did the Jews not continue learning and just pretend they were merely learning the Torah intellectually rather than for spiritual fulfilment? Furthermore, the Greeks knew that the Jews were a spiritual people – and if so, surely, they did not believe that the Jews would genuinely be playing meaningless games like spinning a dreidel?

When the communists began to gain power, they attempted to close the yeshivas. There was a yeshiva directly opposite the communists' building – becoming an obvious target but the Rosh Yeshiva nevertheless instructed his students to continue learning, with even more enthusiasm than usual. One day the communists burst into the yeshiva and discovered students learning with intensity, the way only a yeshiva student does: some were standing; others were sitting deep in thought; others in group discussions; others in heated debates; others waving their thumbs; others shouting; others singing; others pacing back and forth – quite an exhibit for a person who has never witnessed such a thing before! The communists took one look and concluded that there was no learning going on at the yeshiva, and on the contrary: it must have been a mad house – and so they left!

Unfortunately, two of the students were afraid to learn in the study hall, and instead hid in their room. They were caught by the communists and suspected of learning Torah and were subsequently killed.

To an outsider, when two people are studying Torah with their whole being, it looks just like a very involved game of spinning the dreidel, or in other words like a mad house!

Perhaps it is not just from an outsider's perspective – as we have been taught: if a person experiences the sweetness of the Torah, he would go crazy after it!

This explains why the Jews chose to play dreidel rather than study Torah intellectually: they were concerned that it might significantly increase their appetite for the sweetness of the Torah and that they might subsequently get carried away and not be able to resist learning with a spiritual motivation!

**JONTI AREMBAND**  
**HIPE EDUCATOR**



# על הנסים

There are two parts to על הנסים. The first part is a general introduction, and is appropriate for both חנוכה and פורים. It reflects on the national gratitude that כלל ישראל has to Hashem for performing נסים for us. These miracles occurred at key points in our history, enabling us, literally, to survive.

These נסים were both, "open miracles," like the victory of the חשמונאים over the Greeks, and "hidden miracles," like the נס of פורים - when Hashem's involvement was not apparent (on the surface, anyway) but rather operated in the background.

As a תפילה of gratitude, "על הנסים" finds its place in the section of the עשרה שמונה that is reserved for thanking Hashem. Similarly, in ברכת המזון, when gratitude is extended for the physical sustenance we receive and the inheritance of ארץ ישראל; we also slip in our thanks for the נסים performed on our behalf by Hashem.

We should take the time over חנוכה to thank Hashem, not just for the נסים that took place to our ancestor's, but also to thank Hashem for our own ongoing personal נסים.

רב אלימלך בידרמן relates the following story that illustrates how essential it is to thank Hashem for all that we have: Many years ago, a man in southern Israel called Chaim, had 6 children, 5 of whom were of marriageable age - and no shidduch in sight for any of them. On top of that, Chaim's chavrusa was making a wedding for a child of his and needed to borrow money. He took out a loan using the Chaim's house as collateral. Over time, Chaim's chavrusa stopped paying off the loan to the bank and Chaim was cautioned by the bank, "If the stream of payments does not continue, we will have to take possession of your apartment". Chaim was depressed. Not only were there no shidduch prospects for his children but he might soon lose his apartment!

A few days later, on Chanukah, Chaim was in Yerushalayim for a wedding, and met a cousin of his. "Chaim, why do you look so sad?" He told him how difficult it is proving to find shidduchim for his children and that the bank may take hold of his house. His cousin encouraged him to go visit the Gerrer Rebbe, the Beis Yisrael, for advice. Chaim agreed. He shared his difficulties with the Rebbe, and when he finished, the Rebbe asked him, "Have you thanked Hashem? In hallel today, we said 'הודו לה' - 'Thank you Hashem' 6 times and 'אנא ה' - 'Please Hashem' 4 times. Hoda'ah (thanking Hashem) is 60% and Bakasha (asking Hashem for what we need) is 40%".

With that the meeting ended.

Chaim returned to his cousin, and shared the perplexing statement that the Rebbe said. His cousin said, "Chaim, you have a lot to be thankful for! You have food, you have a job, and you have a family. Rather than focusing on what you DON'T have, thank Hashem for what you DO have." Chaim, internalized the Rebbe's message, and began to thank Hashem wholeheartedly for all the good he had in his life. 2 months later, his eldest daughter got married and during the following few months, 3 other children got married and the last 2 were engaged!

**RABBI DANNY FISHER**  
**HIPE EDUCATOR**

# על הניסים

We find that there is a massive distinction between the על הניסים that we say on חנוכה and that which we say on פורים. On חנוכה, we mention the momentous battle between the Greeks and the Jews. Immediately afterwards, we speak about the Jewish nation's response to this victory:

**ואחר-כן באו בניך לדביר ביתך ופנו את-היכלך...  
...וטהרו את-מקדשך והדליקו נרות בחצרות קדשך**

Afterwards, your sons entered the Holy of Holies of Your House, cleaned Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, and kindled lights in the Courtyards of Your Sanctuary.

However, in the פורים story, we don't see nor mention the reaction of the Jews after the downfall of המן.

The בני ושכר explains this difference. On פורים we use a greggor (a noise-making rattle) to celebrate, whereas on חנוכה we play with a dreidel. The rattle is manipulated by the hand at the bottom which, in turn, rotates the part at the top. The dreidel, however, works in the opposite way - one twirls the top which causes the bottom part to swivel around.

On פורים, once the dreaded decree was removed, there was a tremendous spiritual awakening in כלל ישראל. The Jews fasted, prayed and strengthened their unity. As a result of this spiritual revival down below, Hashem, up above, reprieved the Jewish nation and engineered Haman's downfall. This is the pattern of the greggor - the noise that is caused from the top of the greggor is caused by the handle below.

On חנוכה, however, a different sequence of events occurred. Initially, more and more Jews fell prey to the Greek ideology. Yet despite the absence of any widespread arousal from below, Hashem came to our rescue. Subsequent to this intervention from above, כלל ישראל turned over a new leaf and restored the Beis Hamikdosh back to its pure state.

This disparity between פורים and חנוכה helps to explain the contrast of texts in the על הניסים of פורים and that of חנוכה. On פורים, the Jews had done everything they were meant to do and as a result of their conduct, they prompted Hashem's intervention. Therefore, the Purim story ends with Hashem's intervention.

However, on חנוכה, the Jews were only aroused "after" the miraculous victory on the battlefield, therefore, their response is recorded in על הניסים.

**Eli Dryer**  
YEAR 10

# The Famous Question

We know that nowadays we celebrate eight nights of Chanukah because of the miracle that one jug of oil that should have lasted for one night lasted for 8 nights. However there is a question that is screaming out from this story. If there was enough oil in that jug to last one night then only the subsequent seven nights were a miracle. If this is true, that there were only seven miraculous nights, then why are we not celebrating seven nights of Chanukah instead of eight?

This is the famous question of Bais Yosef. Since the question have been asked there has been hundreds of answers but I will provide a few of them:

1. Wanting the oil to last, they made the wicks one eighth of the normal thickness. Nevertheless the flames burned just as brightly as if the wicks had been the normal thickness.
2. The Greeks, who had an army of hundreds of thousands, ransacked the Beis Hamikdosh for multiple days in search of oil to contaminate. Despite their strength and numbers they overlooked one jug of oil yet a few Jews found that jug of oil immediately. That is the miracle we celebrate on the first night of Chanukah.
3. We celebrate eight days - Seven days to commemorate the miracle days of the burning the first day is to commemorate the miraculous victory that the Jews experienced against the Greeks.
4. They divided one night's portion into eight nights of oil, and we celebrate the miracle that they burned brightly on all eight nights.

Aaron Lyons

YEAR 9

# Shabbos Mikeitz and Chanukah

We all know the famous incident when the Shevatim were enraged with Yosef due to him disclosing their misdeeds to their father Yaakov. Yosef is then sent to go and seek after his brothers' welfare. The brothers are scheming their revenge and suggest killing him but Yehuda argues and says,

**מה בצע כי נהרג את אחינו וכסינו את דמו**

'what is the gain if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?'

Reb Zalman Sorotzkin brings from the גרא that the **בצע** of the word **ראשי תיבות** stands for **ערב** and **צהריים**, **Mincha** and **Maariv**. Yehuda is suggesting that if they proceed to kill Yosef then their tefilos would never be answered as someone who kills is undeserving of acceptance.

Interestingly we encounter this word **בצע** in the **שיר של יום** of Chanuka (according to the Gra)

**מה בצע בדמי ברדתי אל שחת היודך עפר היגיד אמתך**  
'What benefit will you have (G-D) if you take us out of this world? Can the dust sing your praises?'

If Hashem takes us out of this world then He will no longer have our **Shacharis**, **Mincha** and **Maariv** - our **בצע**.

Our function and purpose of life is not only to serve Hashem but also praise Him; to acknowledge that He is the Master of the universe, the King of all kings. And like the **שיר** for Chanukah **עפר היגיד אמתך** - Only us humans can thank Hashem, not some inanimate object like dust.

But surely if we were not alive then there are plenty of other mitzvos that we can't do, not just **Shacharis**, **Mincha** and **Maariv**!!?? What about **Shabbos**, **Tefillin**, **Succah**, **Tzedoko** etc? Why specifically thanking Hashem?

The answer is that life is about recognising the awesomeness of Hashem and showing that through praise. We say in davening

**וכל החיים יודוך סלה ויהללו את שמך באמת**

when we are alive we need to be thanking Hashem. The word **חיים** is about giving praise to Hashem.

Many Seforim teach us that Chanukah is the final seal to Hashem's judgement as to how our year should be. The final seal to the **ימים נוראים**. The Gemorah discusses why Chanukah was instituted and brings the Pasuk from **על הניסים**:

**וקבעו שמונת ימי חנוכה אלו להודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול.**

If we really want our year to be full of good health and happiness, we need to utilise the last 8 days of judgment to give praise to Hashem, to acknowledge his power and might, which we can do through lighting the menorah and singing his praises. Chanukah is not all about having doughnuts or winning the dreidel game. We do need to celebrate and enjoy but we also need to realise the tremendous impact our simple songs of praises can have on our forthcoming year.

(Heard from Rabbi Glatstein)

Happy Chanukah

## ALEXANDER WEISZ

### YEAR 11

# Chanukah Stories

## Chanukah in Bergen-Belsen

*The winter in Bergen Belsen was extremely harsh. It was bitter cold and the Jews, within the camp, endured horrific losses amongst their friends and families due to the brutal Nazis.*

*But then Chanuka came along – days where the flame of hope is very much ignited. The sun had just set and it was now time to kindle the Chanukah lights. A jug of oil was not to be found, no candle was in sight, and a Menorah was the last object that would be seen in such a camp. Instead, a wooden clog, the shoe of one of the inmates, became a Menorah; strings pulled from a concentration-camp uniform, a wick; and the black camp shoe polish, pure oil.*

*Now, everyone congregated together for the lighting of the Menorah. The Bluzhover Rebbe lit the first light and chanted the first two brochos in his pleasant voice, and the festive melody was filled with sorrow and pain. When he was about to recite the third blessing, he stopped and turned around.*

*After pausing for a short while, the Rebbe turned his head towards the Menorah, stared into the flames and in a strong, reassuring, comforting voice, chanted the third Brocho:*

**ברוך אתה... שהחינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה**

*Blessed are you... who has kept us alive, and preserved us and enabled us to reach this time.*

*As soon as the Bluzhover Rebbe had finished the lighting ceremony, a survivor elbowed his way to the Rebbe and said, "Rabbi, you are a clever and honest person. I can understand your need to light Chanukah candles in these wretched times. But the fact that you recited the third brocho is beyond me. How could you thank G-d and say '...who has kept us alive, and preserved us, and enabled us to reach this time'? How could you say it when millions of Jews have been murdered? For this you are thankful to G-d? This is what you called 'keeping us alive'?"*

*"You are one hundred percent right," answered the rabbi. "When I reached the third brocho, I also hesitated and asked myself, what should I do with this brocho? I turned my head to ask other rabbis who were standing near me, if indeed I should recite this Brocho. But just as I was turning my head, I noticed that behind me was a huge crowd of living Jews, whose faces expressed faith, devotion, and concentration as they were focusing on the kindling of the Chanukah lights. I said to myself, 'If G-d, has such a nation that at times like these, when the Jewish nation is being horrifically persecuted, they are LIVING AND BREATHING Judaism and faith, then I am under a special obligation to recite the third Brocho.'"*

# Why I became a Religious Jew?

## A True Story of a Baal Teshuva (Brian Silvey)

We know that the Greeks sought to uproot the study of Torah, observance of mitzvos, and our distinct Jewish identity.

Brian could relate to this dynamic in his own life. The Jewish school he attended at a young age taught him how to read Hebrew, say Shema, and that a mezuzah is placed on the doorways of Jewish homes. In fact, one Hebrew school project was to make a mezuzah by writing the Shema onto a rolled up piece of paper and placing it into a decorative case. But with no deeper explanation, that was the extent of Brian's education regarding mezuzos.

Many years later, Brian was a university student and rented a house with other students. None of the other students were Jewish, but they were aware that Brian was Jewish. Religious Jews owned many of these houses, as evident by the mezuzos affixed on the doorposts. Brian recognized those little boxes, but paid them little attention.

One night, he noticed two students intentionally pry a mezuzah off the doorpost. Brian followed them around the house and realized they were collecting the mezuzos as they moved from doorpost to doorpost. He followed them into a room and watched them remove the scrolls from the decorative casings. They opened the scrolls, tried to read the writing, and then crumpled the scrolls up in their hands, and tore some in half.

The small spark of Judaism inside Brian made him feel obligated to stop them.

"Why did you take those off the doorposts?" Brian asked.

"I dunno," one of them answered, "we just want to see what's inside."

"You should have left them where they were. You're not supposed to take them down."

"Well, what are they?"

"It's called a mezuzah and they go on the doorposts of Jewish houses."

"Why?" he asked.

Brian was stunned into silence and then admitted, "I don't know."

As these words slipped from my mouth, he could feel the strength of his position weakening.

"Well, what's written inside them?"

Again Brian responded, "I don't know."

They continued with a stronger tone of expectation, "Well, why are they on every door?"

"I don't know."

They looked at Brian with scorn, and finally one of them said, "Well, if you're the Jew and you don't know, then why should we care?!"

This question was shocking and painful. Brian continued arguing with them and demanded they give him the mezuzos.

Finally, one of them walked out of the room, and returned with a handful of mezuzah cases and scrolls. He looked at Brian, grinned maliciously and said, "You want them so badly? Come and get them!" -- and he threw the handful of mezuzos into a burning fireplace.

Brian was shocked. It took but a few seconds for the mezuzos to be consumed in the flames.

Brian walked out of the house, dejected and heartbroken. He sat down in the cold night and replayed the incident over and over in his mind, each time coming back to the same painful question: "If you're the Jew and you don't know, then why should we care?"

This incident ignited his curiosity and became the catalyst for his road back to Torah and Judaism. Today he now realises:

"Every word of Torah we learn and every mitzvah we perform is an extension of our victory over the Greeks. They tried to destroy our connection to G-d and His Torah. But instead, they ignited a deeper flame inside us. As we light the Chanukah menorah, may the flames inspire us to carry on the victory of the Maccabees - the victory of Jewish survival, Jewish education, and Jewish pride."

*Ari Richman*

**HIPE EDUCATOR**

# HiPE Updates

*The HIPE Team have been working tirelessly to engage students in many ways. We have organised:*

- Drive-Thru events during lockdown
- Week of Reflection during the Aseres Yemei Teshuva,
- Online activities,
- The Big HIPE Quiz of the Year
- Pizza Making
- The Week of Giving in the lead up to Purim
- Bar Mitzvah Seudas
- NHS Wrap-a-Thon
- Tu B'Shevat Golden Ticket Initiative
- Chanukah Sessions

*And more... the list is endless!*

*A key focus for the HIPE team is to ensure that we impact the whole school community in a positive manner.*

*If you are interested in sponsoring an event, a project, sessions or even an entire month of HIPE activities please contact [b.shebson@hasmonean.co.uk](mailto:b.shebson@hasmonean.co.uk)*

*If you wish to make a donation directly to Hasmonean please reference "HIPE BOYS" to ensure we receive the funds.*

*Hasmonean Charitable Trust*

*Lloyds Bank*

*A/C 02847744*

*Sort Code 30 98 07*



# Achdus Trip

## 2021

*In October, Year 7 students were taken on a day out for teamwork and team building activities. The Achdus Trip is a time for the boys to develop friendships and bonds that will carry them through their Hasmonean journey. For amazing video highlights please visit [hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys](https://hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys)*



# Bar Mitzvah Mania

After another tough year in lockdown, the HIPE team organised one big day to celebrate all the boys and their Bar Mitzvahs! As you can see from the pictures we had an amazing day which was all tied together with words of chizuk from Rabbi Golker about the importance of becoming Bar Mitzvah and the responsibilities they now have. To see full video highlights, please visit [hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys](https://hasmoneanboys.org.uk/hipeboys)



**IN MEMORY OF**

**מרים חיה רבקה בת מאיר הכהן**

**נפטרה כ"ג כסלו תשע"ח**

**A WOMAN WHO EMBODIED  
פיה פתחה בחכמה ותורת חסד על לשונה  
AND WAS A SHINING LIGHT TO ALL  
WHO KNEW HER.**