



**News at the Shabbos Table**  
**Chanukah Special**

Shimele “News” was the nickname of one of the locals who would peddle news to anyone who would care to listen. He would stand at his regular corner in Jerusalem and talk to anyone who was willing to do so. He was the one who imported news from the outer world into our Jerusalem community.

When he would see a communal dignitary he would pounce on him and follow him around. He had his own unique order of telling the news - he would first talk of the local happy events such as marriages and births, then the bad news such as deaths, and then he would give his opinion on current events.

When he got to the part where he talked about the end of the world and the arrival of the *Mashiach*, his companion knew that the news update was coming to an end and that it was permissible to walk on.



Many tried to avoid him by walking quickly past him, or by silencing him and letting him know they were on their way to pray and could not hang around. Sometimes it helped, others it did not.

My father, Rabbi Yisroel Grossman, never objected to hearing him, and sometimes heard him even twice a day. Father, who was usually careful with his time, would listen to all Shimele had to say, while showing interest in his tidbits.

When Shimele saw father approaching he would smile broadly, knowing that someone was about to hear him through. Father would act as if he had all the time in the world and enjoyed the exchange.

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The lighting of the Chanukah candles is a direct continuation of the Menorah lighting in the Temple.

Our Sages have taught us that G-d did not require the light, but rather the candelabra served as testimony to the fact the G-d dwelt among the Jewish people. G-d does not need the light, but he does desire our testimony that he is out G-d.

This begs the question - does He really need our testimony? G-d’s is omnipotent, why does he need the testimony of blood and flesh? After all, it is evident in the creation.

The answer is that part of G-d’s appearance is his kingship. A king cannot rule without subjects. When the Cohen lit the Menorah in the Temple he was giving testimony of G-d’s presence and by doing so announced his kingship to the world.

The Midrash teaches us that when the Tabernacle was consecrated and the tribal chieftains brought their special sacrifices, Aharon the Cohen Gadol was upset as he was not part of special event. G-d consoled him by telling him that

he would be honored by lighting the Menorah, “that would last forever.” The Gur Rebbe explains that this relates to the Chanukah candles, which accompanied the Jews throughout their exile, when the Temple no longer existed.

The Chanukah candles in essence are the continuation of the lighting of the Menorah in the Temple, which was testament to G-d’s presence, and to light up man’s soul.

The way to emulate G-d’s is by emulating his actions, and just as G-d is benevolent, we to must act with kindness, and when we see extinguished souls around us we must rekindle them and reignite the light of a smile.

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It was on Shabbos eve, and we were walking with father when we spotted Shimele News from afar. We boys tried to take another path and help father avoid him, but father would not hear of it and approached Shimele.

Shimele greeted my father and then began his rundown of the news, but father stopped him. We initially did not understand what father was seeking but then we understood - father told Shimele that he had important guests who would love to receive a news update and invited him for the evening Shabbat meal.

“I would be delighted if you could join us for the Shabbos meal, and so the entire family will be able to get an update on all the news in a way only you can tell,” father said.

Shimele News joined us, and when he entered the house father announced that an important guest was joining us at the table. “He is not just a guest, he is someone who knows all the news in the world, better than anyone else,” father declared, rekindling Shimele’s soul with a listening ear and a smile.