

# SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



## Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 15

*Vayeshev, Sicha 5*

### The Rambam:

If a person has only enough money to fulfill one of two mitzvot — lighting Shabbos candles or lighting Chanukah candles; or, alternatively, lighting Shabbos candles or reciting kiddush — lighting Shabbos candles receives priority, since it generates peace within the home. Peace is of primary importance, as reflected by the mitzvah of sotah, requiring G-d's name to be erased in order to create peace between a husband and his wife.

Peace is great, for the entire Torah was given to bring about peace within the world, as it says (Proverbs 3:17): "Its ways are pleasant ways and all its paths are peace."

### The Questions:

- 1) How is erasing G-d's name in the sotah ritual sufficient proof that lighting Shabbos candles has precedence over Chanukah candles? In the case of the sotah, the very viability of the family is at stake. Such a serious predicament warrants the erasure of G-d's name. The same cannot be said for lighting Shabbos candles, which merely enhances marital harmony by providing light in the home on Friday evening.
- 2) This law emphasizes the importance of Shabbos candles over Chanukah candles and kiddush wine. Why, then, does Rambam record this law in the Laws of Chanukah rather than in the laws of Shabbos?

### The Explanation:

In his Laws of Shabbos (5:1), Rambam defines the lighting of candles as part of the mitzvah of delighting and honoring the Shabbos, but he makes no mention of the peace it brings. Thus, Shabbos candles do

not take precedence over Chanukah candles due to the inherent superiority of Shabbos. Rather, Shabbos candles take precedence due to the overarching importance of peace.

“The entire Torah was given to bring about peace within the world,” Rambam says, which means that any mitzvah which increases peace is in fact “fulfilling” the role of every other mitzvah. Shabbos candles contribute physical light and peace to the home, even if this is not its intended purpose. Therefore, Shabbos candles take precedence over Chanukah candles and wine for kiddush, because by lighting Shabbos candles, we literally fulfill what those other mitzvos represent — peace in the world.

Chanukah itself is a holiday that represents the triumph of peace — the defeat of the Greek oppressors allowed the Jewish people to resume their Divine service openly. This peace, however, was accomplished by overpowering the forces of evil. Shabbos candles, on the other hand, create tangible peace. Therefore, the precedence given to lighting Shabbos

candles is in fact part of the laws of Chanukah, for it fulfills and expresses the ultimate purpose of Chanukah.

This is vividly seen in the proof-case of the sotah, where we actively write G-d’s ineffable name with the intention of erasing it — all to maintain peace in the home. This illustrates how every mitzvah of the Torah is subsumed within the objective of creating peace. The creation of holiness — writing G-d’s name — is itself fulfilled when that name is erased for the sake of peace.

The truest definition of peace is when two opposing forces are revealed to be truly one — when the world is revealed to be one with G-d, and not opposed to Him. Every mitzvah brings “peace” to the world, for each mitzvah reveals that this physical world is compatible with G-dliness. Chanukah expresses this aspect of peace because the dedication and self-sacrifice of the Maccabees flows from the essence of the soul — the transcendent part of us that sees no opposition to G-dliness, but only unity and G-dliness in everything.

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