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This week's Insights is dedicated in loving memory of Aliza Freydke bas Chaim by her son Bernard Zyscovich. "May her Neshama have an Aliya." **VOLUME 13, ISSUE 10**

30 KISLEV

Based on the Torah of our Rosh HaYeshiva HaRav Yochanan Zweig

PARSHAS MIKEITZ

The Secret to Achieving **Happiness**

Behold, there came up from the river seven cows good looking cows and fat; and they fed in the reed grass (41:2).

Rashi (ad loc) makes extraordinary satiety whereupon all creations look they have. kindly at one another, no one begrudging anyone else."

meaning of the possuk. Instead of measured in quantity but rather in literally, Rashi explains that it means you're happy, examine your reaction they look kindly at each other. when you look at other people's Additionally, understood that Pharaoh's dreams or are you a little bitter? When your represented that there were going to neighbor gets a new car and you be seven years of abundance need one as well, are you happy for followed by seven years of famine. them or do you begrudge them a Yet Rashi translates the "good years" little? If the latter, then you aren't as years of satiety not years of plenty happy or satisfied with your own life. or abundance.

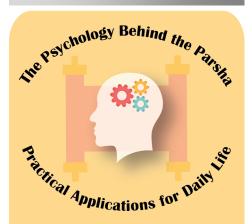
Rashi characterizes the good years as years of satiety for a simple reason; having an abundance doesn't mean that one is happy or even satisfied. In other words, abundance and famine aren't really antonyms; as having a lot doesn't necessarily mean you have enough. The Torah is promising that the seven years will be years of satiation; everyone will appreciate what they have and it will be

an enough. But this is a difficult comment on this standard to achieve. In fact, many verse; "this (the seven nice looking people don't even know if they are cows) represents the seven years of satisfied let alone happy with what

Rashi gives us a stunning life lesson for knowing if you're a happy person. Rashi seems to be changing the very The years of abundance weren't "nice looking cows" perspective. If you want to know if commonly successes. Are you happy for them For the most part, being happy has very little to do with how much you have, it has to do with how you feel about yourself. The path becoming a happy person is found totally within oneself. This is the deeper meaning to the Mishna in Pirkei Avos, "Who is a rich man? He that is joyful with his lot." Personal satisfaction leads to joy ultimately to a lasting happiness.



Miami Edition



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Wednesday Mornings at 9:30am

Meeting ID: 2765819544 Password: raz

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Friday Mornings at 11:15am Meeting ID: 78325727308 Password: ryz

Who are We Competing Against?

One of the more unique aspects of competition. In fact, the lasting it shows in many levels of our Chanukah has to do with a very legacy that Greek culture has left culture, from sports to business to unusual halacha: (Hilchos Chanukah 3:4) says that a athletic competitions. That is, the to attend ("My son is in Harvard!"). person who lights candles on the Greeks defined themselves by how The hardest part is when one loses first night of Chanukah makes three they achieved in comparison to in any of those "arenas" – coming to nissim, Incredibly, one who hasn't yet made how violent the descriptions are. failure. the blessings can recite the second This team "beat" the other. One can two blessings upon seeing another easily substitute (and probably has person lighting their own candles. on more than one occasion) the In other words, you make a blessing words on another person's act of fulfilling "destroyed," etc. for the word the mitzvah. This isn't found "beat." This kind of attitude defines anywhere else! What is it about measuring one's achievements by Chanukah that creates this not opportunity?

The holiday of Chanukah, as we know, celebrates the victory over the Greeks who tried to eradicate the study of Torah and its values. One of the greatest differences between Greek culture and Judaism is how we view our relationships highlighted by the Greek view on adopted this Greek philosophy and

Maimonides the world is the Olympics and what college one wants their child (lehadlik ner, she'aso others. The jargon of competition is terms with another person's success shehechayanu), so ubiquitous that we hardly notice means that by comparison you're a "slaughtered," "killed." only you accomplished but also in the demoralization of your opponent. Of course this is unfair as everyone was created with different strengths and weaknesses. Judaism doesn't in judging oneself believe comparison to others. The only competition is against yourself.

with others. This is very clearly Unfortunately, American society has

However, Judaism celebrates personal achievement as measured by one's own innate capabilities. By extension, it means we celebrate other people's successes as it doesn't come at our expense; we can be genuinely happy for others.

That is why on Chanukah, when we are celebrating the triumph of Judaism over Greek culture, we make a point to make a blessing when we see others fulfilling the mitzvah of lighting candles. We are internalizing the message that we are happy for another person's achievements.



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