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Chanukat Habayit 5781

Daily thoughts for Chanukah from Bogrim and Madrichim

WHY THE NUMBER 8?

MADDY ASSOR | SHEVET AVICHAJ



We learn in the Chanukah story that there was enough oil for the Menorah to burn for one day, yet miraculously it burned for an additional seven. If this is so, why do we celebrate eight days of Chanukah and light eight candles instead of seven? Would lighting seven not accurately represent the miracle that we are celebrating?

The Maharal teaches that the entire miracle of Chanukah was only to reveal the connection of both us, and the Menorah to the higher concept of eight. Therefore, the Menorah didn't burn for an additional seven days, it burnt one-eighth every day for eight days. So what is this deep concept of eight?

As we know, the number seven in Judaism represents physical completion, for instance, Shabbat being the seventh day of the week. Therefore, if this is physical completion, then one up, eight, will be beyond physical, i.e. the spiritual realm and what is above nature. So what is it that is so spiritual about Chanukah that it needs to be associated with the number eight?

The Sharey Orah derives that the number eight is an allusion to the Neshama because they have the same letters: שמנה (eight) and נשמה (soul). These two concepts come from the spiritual realm of Bina (understanding), which is the 8th attribute of Hashem's ten attributes. This is evident from the melody that we sing every night of Chanukah, 'Maoz Tzur', in which we say 'Bnei Bina, Yemei Shmonah'. It therefore seems clear that Chazal, who composed this piyyut and were obviously

connected to Bina through their Neshamot, were aware of the significance of eight days.

Now that we understand the relation between the number eight and the festival of Chanukah, what is the connection between the eight-day miracle and the seven-branched Menorah that was lit in the Temple, which we base our whole festival around. The SheLah states that the Menorah in fact has an eighth part called the 'face of the Menorah' which we learn from Bamidbar 8:2, 'Pnei HaMenorah'. The purpose of the Menorah is to bring the light of Hashem into our world and this is done through the 'face'. We can see a direct connection here between the Menorah and us. Just as the face of a human has seven parts (2 eyes, 2 ears, 2 nostrils, and a mouth in the centre), so too, a Menorah has 7 branches (3 on either side and one in centre).

To add to this, a menorah should be three amot high, which, according to the depth of a Mikveh, is also the height of a human. In my opinion, this shows that the role of us as Jews on Chanukah, and every day for that matter, is to be the vessel that Hashem has placed in this world, which through its deeds and speech (with the mouth as the centrepiece) can bring Hashem's divine light and presence into this world. Chanukah is a time to reflect on ourselves, understand what it means to be a good servant of Hashem and utilise the concept of the number eight to see the world on a spiritual level, allowing our Neshamot in, and being the best versions of ourselves that we can be.



BAANU CHOSHECH LEGARESH

GILA SCHAJER | SHEVET OROT



At this time of year there is only one playlist that I listen to when I'm out for a run and that is the 'Chanukah

Top Tunes'. There are all the classic songs that you expect such as Maoz Tzur, and HaNerot Hallalu as well as the popular ones such as Kad Katan and Ner Li. There's also my grandma's favourites 'One Little Candle' and 'I'm a little diredel'. However my favourite song of all is Ba'anu Choshech LeGaresh - באנו חושך לגרש.

The title of this song tells us to banish darkness. How do we banish darkness? The next line tells us 'in our hands we have light and fire' but that's not enough, the song goes on 'together we are a solid/strong/united light'. Together we will banish darkness.

It's funny that this song doesn't actually mention the word 'Chanukah', the Macabees, the Temple nor the struggle against the Greeks. It is not surprising though that this song became a Chanukah favourite - the obvious similarities of the light and the Menorah, how the Macabees tried to banish the Greeks from the Temple, to replace their darkness, that of Greek culture with the light of Torah. I also believe there is a message for us in the 21st century that makes it one of the most pertinent and urgent songs we have.

We live in dark times - unfortunately there is no shortage of examples, everyday when you look in the newspaper or on the news there's another reason. Not only that but even more so when we are all in our homes, locked down and isolated from each other, it can feel dark

and disconnected. But as we light the chanukiah, our own little flame, our own little light - we're all trying to banish darkness by replacing it with light. Our little lights aren't on their own though. When we look out of our windows we can see the chanukiah in our neighbour's window, we know we are not alone. The light from our chanukiah that lights up our homes, it joins with our neighbours to light up our streets and together our neighbourhoods, combining into a strong and united light.

This could be a good place to end this but I think there is a greater, universal message. At this time of year, especially for us living in the galut, we look out of our windows and we see other lights twinkling away on trees, flashing on the outside of houses or as fireworks exploding in the night skies. Every religion and culture seems to have a festival of light at this time of year. Each one, in their own way, trying to banish the darkness.

The wonderful thing about light is that together you cannot tell who's light is who's. You cannot tell who's flame is contributing the most to the light. We need to still maintain our own special light and the qualities that it brings, holding firm to our principles and beliefs. But at this particular time we need the comfort and strength that light brings knowing that there's another person across the road who is in this with us. That there is hope and together we can banish this darkness.



THE SEVEN-DAY MIRACLE

ELIANA OZIN | SHEVET TZION



We all know the story of Chanukah. Back in the 2nd century BCE the Greek empire was ruling over Jerusalem. In their rule, King Antiochus outlawed Jewish practises, forcing Jews to either give up their religion or practise in hiding, and defiled the Beit HaMikdash. Then, in rebellion, a small Jewish army known as the Maccabees broke free of the Greeks and reclaimed the Beit HaMikdash.

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To celebrate the Maccabees wanted to light the Menorah, an ancient tradition started by Aaron, but they could only find enough oil for one day.

So G-d performed a miracle and kept the oil burning and the Menorah lit for seven extra days, allowing the Jews to find a new supply of oil and keep the Menorah alit as it always was.

So now, over two thousand years later, we still celebrate this miracle that G-d sent to the Maccabees in celebration of the wonder of those seven extra days.

But we are left with the question, if we celebrate Chanukah in honour of the miracle that lasted only seven days, why do we celebrate eight in total? What is the point of celebrating the first day where nothing extra ordinary happened?

The Beit Yosef, a commentator on the Tur Shulchan Aruch asks the same question and offers three possible answers.

First there is the answer of hindsight. He poses that the Jews arrived at the Beit HaMikdash, took inventory and realised that it would take them eight days till they would be able to get a new supply of oil. Deciding it would be better to have the Menorah burning for part of each day, rather than one whole one, the Jews split the one oil into eight parts and Hashem performed a miracle to allow that eighth of a one day to burn for an entire twenty four hours. So we are celebrating a miracle for eight days in total.

Second is the miracle of the flask. As the Jews

lifted the flask of oil on the first day and poured the entire days oil into the Menorah, they witnessed a miracle to find when they lowered the flask again there was still a full days' worth of oil left, which repeated for eight days total. So a miracle did occur every day.

Finally, Beit Yosef suggests that the entirety of the oil was poured into the Menorah on the first day and although the flame burned all day and night, the next morning the oil was still full to the very top, allowing the flame to burn even though it was not eating up any oil. This lasted for eight full days. So during Chanukah we celebrate eight days where the miracle was that the oil never lowered or died.

Beis Yosef was not the only one to pose an answer, P'ri Chodesh says we celebrate the Maccabees miraculous victory on day one and the oil on days two through eight. The Shulchan Aruch says that the day the Greeks were defeated was the first time in years that the mitzvah of Avraham, of Bris Milah could occur, so we celebrate eight days like the wait till Bris Milah is eight days.

But the answer I like best is in the actual name of Chanukah. Chanukah is the combination of the words "Chanu" and "K'h", which means "they rested on the 25th", the first day of Chanukah. Just as Hashem created the world and took a rest, the Jews too fought their way through the Greeks, reclaimed their lands, sanctified the Beit HaMikdash and finally relaxed. We celebrate the first day of Chanukah in honour of the Maccabees who reclaimed our temple and fought for Hashem and rested in their victory.

I hope everyone has an amazing Chanukah and enjoys themselves. And if you don't like any of the answers I've given here...

Hey! It's an extra day of presents!



ELIANA WAS A MADRICHAN ON GIMMEL/IM 5781.

BUILDING WITH LIGHT



RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH

35 years ago, a Jewish prisoner in the Soviet Union was brought into court for the day of his sentencing. For three months prior to that day

he had been in solitary confinement, and even now, only his mother and his wife were allowed to be present. As the judge called out the sentence – three years of hard labour in Siberia – the Soviet officers surrounded the prisoner and began escorting him back to his prison cell. On his way out only one thought crossed the prisoner's mind. He lifted his head above the guards and shouted out to his wife – his last words to her for years – “which candle is it tonight?”

At first, his wife thought that her husband's sentencing had tipped him over the edge. It was only after he called out a second, and then a third time, “which candle is it tonight?” that she finally realised what he meant. “Tonight is ner sheni,” she replied – the second night of Chanukah. Years later, Yuli Edelstein, today the speaker of Israel's Knesset, recounted how that night in his cell he scraped together two matches, recited the brachot and held the lights for a few seconds until his fingers began to burn. “It may have been the shortest candle lighting in the history of Chanukah,” he said, “I don't even know if I fulfilled the mitzvah, but I know that for me that little light dispelled a great darkness”.

This story can help us shed light on a strange argument that takes place in the Gemara regarding how many candles we are to light throughout Chanukah. According to Beit Hillel, the principle is מוסיף והולך. We begin with one and as the nights go on, we increase until we end up with eight candles. Beit Shammai say just the opposite – פוחת והולך. According to their opinion we begin with eight and decrease the number of candles each night, until on the final night we light just one. What is behind this machloket?

Rav Shlomo Yosef Zevin explained that the candles we light on Chanukah have two different aspects to them, reflected in the words we use

to describe them. On the one hand, a candle has a flame which contains אש – fire. It burns. It consumes. Fire is a destructive element. But a candle also provides light – אור. Not only do candles burn up fuel, but they also spread light amongst the darkness. As the pasuk in Mishlei says, נר מצווה ותורה אור – the Torah is compared to a candle, not as a destructive force but as the glow which illuminates the world.

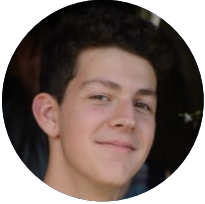
The battle that took place on Chanukah contained both of those elements. When the Chashmonaim launched their revolt against the Greeks they had a twofold job. One was to remove the defilement in the Beit Hamikdash – to eliminate a foreign culture and its influence which put Jewish life and Judaism itself at risk. But there was also a positive message that needed to be seen and heard. They needed to rekindle the lights of the menorah, as we say in Al Hanisim “והדליקו נרות בחצרות קודשך” – to spread the light and warmth and beauty of Torah amongst those who may have forgotten.

In those days, both methods were necessary. The question is which one do we commemorate for eternity? Beit Shammai emphasised the need to destroy that which is impure. Thus, they begin with the greatest fire on the first night. As the nights go on and the danger dissipates, so too do the number of lights decrease. But Beit Hillel said the focus needs to be not on אש but on אור, not on destroying but on building. We begin with one candle and day by day the light that we shine increases until it culminates on the eighth night.

The world, at times, can seem very dark. Sometimes it may seem easier to give up and despair. But throughout Chanukah we increase the light one candle at a time. Those candles are there to remind us of the light that shone in the Beit Hamikdash, to remind us of the lights that were bright enough to light up a Soviet prison. And to remind us that those lights, the lights of Torah, are bright enough to light up any darkness that we may encounter.

INDIVIDUALISM WITHIN THE COLLECTIVE: A LESSON IN REPETITION

SAM KUNIN | SHEVET MORASHA



Each morning of Chanukah we read a brief section from Parashat Nasso (which happens to be my barmitzvah portion!) detailing the

offerings of each tribe's prince to the Mishkan for its sanctification. The parallels of this process with the festival of Chanukah, which in fact even translates to "sanctification", are many. After all, what better way to count through the eight days of festivity with the revival of the Beit Hamikdash than to read a record of the successive days sanctifying its prototype? However, what is interesting to note about these readings, (and what really gave me a helping hand in my barmitzvah!) is that on each day the Torah records the exact same gifts being given by each prince - a silver bowl, a silver basin, a gold incense ladle, and 21 animals of various species.

In commentaries to the Torah a key idea is often put forward - in a Divine text nothing is superfluous; every sentence, word or letter is there for a purpose. How then do we explain our readings for Chanukah with each day identical to the preceding, save for the name and tribe of each prince? The Midrash provides several beautiful explanations. To begin with, as in anywhere in Tanach where there's an abundance of numbers, the sages suggest deeper meanings. In this case, the same gift is given a variety of justifications. For example, though the weight of each donated basin was 70 shekalim, for Nachshon ben Aminadav (whose donation we read on day one of Chanukah) perhaps the reason for the gift was the idea of "The 70 Faces of Torah" whilst another prince, like Netanel ben Tsuar (from day two), perhaps thought of the 70 nations said to descend from Adam HaRishon or the years the Egyptians

mourned over Yaakov etc. This explanation provides an incredible message - though we may all act in similar ways it is not our actions that define our importance but rather our intentions that give what we do in this world its purpose.

The Midrash goes on to state that these offerings to the Mishkan are "as beloved as the song sung by the Jewish People at the Red Sea." This connection is justified using a linguistic similarity in the use of the word נֶזֶק ("zeh"); however the point, I believe, is much more profound. The Song of the Sea represents the collective outpouring of the Israelite people to God finally united as a nation leaving oppression. The sages describe a scene of the entire people joining together in spontaneous song - how much more united does it get than that? And yet what phraseology do we see?

עָזַי וְזַמְרַת יְהוָה לִישׁוּעָה זָה אֵלֵי וְאֲנֹהוּ אֶלְקֵי אָבִי וְאַרְמְתָנָהוּ

Hashem here is described not as **our** God ("Eleinu") but rather as "Eli" - **my** God. Though the Israelites are singing together and are united, it is the individual experience that is expressed. So too in Nasso and our daily readings this Chanukah. Though around the country, from our homes to Machane, people are engaging collectively in lighting candles, for each individual we are allowed and truly encouraged to relate to our Judaism on a personal level as well, with our own experiences, lives and prayers.



THE SONG OF MANY MYSTERIES

MIA GRAY | SHEVET NE'EMAN



One of my earliest memories is of standing around a chanukiah at my grandmother's house on the first night of Chanukah, singing

Maoz Tzur with my family. The candles flickered as we sang, and although I never really knew the words past the second verse, I mumbled along happily. However, thinking back, I don't remember ever being taught what Maoz Tzur actually meant. Even now, I would struggle to translate it accurately. This is perhaps due to its complex nature: It skips centuries between verses, changes tense twice, and the pronouns are constantly changing. All in all, it's a hard narrative to follow.

But some of the greatest mysteries of Maoz Tzur can be accredited to their historical context. Written, most probably, in the 13th century, Jews were under a time of immense stress. Christianity in Europe was widespread, and amongst other factors, caused many problems for Jews at the time. In that period of fear and uncertainty, the Jewish people needed something to give them hope: A modern-day Vehi Sheamda. In fact, in the first letters of the opening words of the final stanza, you can find an acrostic containing the word "chazak", or "strength". This message was clear: be strong because one day redemption will come.

Of course, the whole story of Maoz Tzur is about Hashem helping the Jewish people to rise up against their enemies and prevail in the face of terror, but the hidden meanings perhaps portrayed that message in a more relatable way. While the final verse of Maoz Tzur refers to "Admon" or "the Red Ones", this is commonly read to be a pseudonym for Christianity at the time of writing. Christianity was born in Rome which in Biblical Hebrew is called "Edom", so it's likely that when the final verse calls for the

destruction of Admon, this refers to Christian persecution during the Middle Ages. Although this could not be written in a more straightforward way due to fear of further persecution, it hints at a time when Christianity no longer oppresses Jews, and Jews will prevail against their subjugation.

This verse also brought hope to Russian Jews living under communism in the early 1990s. Red being the colour associated with the communists persecuting Jews in the Soviet Union, the final verse of Maoz Tzur was usually removed during that time so as not to cause trouble with the communists. However, the idea that it carried, that Jews will always prevail against our enemies, was one that lived on in the minds of Russian Jews and gave them strength.

Today, in the UK we are faced with another group of "the red ones". UK Jewry is again facing the Admon. By now, I'm sure that everyone is aware of the statistics and reports: the Jews considering emigrating, the convincing articles written by the Chief Rabbi and the Jewish Chronicle, the opinion pieces and surveys published in every Jewish media outlet, and Facebook feeds full of Jews who took to social media to call out antisemitism. Yet again it seems as if the final stanza of Maoz Tzur is relevant to many of us.

But my message is ultimately one of hope. This Chanukah, loudly sing the five verses depicting how Jews have survived persecution after persecution to only rise up stronger. And as you do, know that this time again, we will prevail. Let hope overcome fear, because after all, that's what the festival of light is all about.



MIA WAS A MADRICHA ON GIMMEL SUMMER MACHANE 5778

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CHANUKAH AND MIKETZ

DAVID SHAHAR | SHEVET OROT



On most years, the calendar works out so that Shabbat Chanukah usually falls on Shabbat Miketz. This cannot just be a coincidence. There must be some links between Miketz and the themes of Chanukah.

On Chanukah we insert an additional prayer to the Amidah and to benching, this is of course that of על הנסים. The wording of על הנסים describes in depth the miraculous military victory of the Maccabees. The prayer finishes by saying that we light candles for eight nights. However, this falls short of actually talking about the miracle of the oil! Nowhere does על הנסים mention the miracle of one bottle lasting eight nights, which is the story we all grew up with from primary school or cheder. So, where do we find the miracle of the oil? There is a well-known Gemara (שבת נא) which discusses the miracle of the oil. The Gemara describes how there was one bottle of oil with the munach b'chutmo (seal) of the Kohen Gadol; the bottle only contained enough oil to last one day but miraculously it lasted for eight. So the obvious question is: why does על הנסים not discuss the miracle of the oil and why does the Gemara not discuss the miracle of the military victory?

Perhaps one answer could be that miracles can only be categorised into two categories; natural and supernatural. An example of a supernatural miracle would be the splitting of the Reed Sea (Kriyat Yam Suf), this is an undeniable and blatant miracle. A natural miracle is something that we see or experience every day, such as waking up, going to the toilet, being able to walk, being able to breathe – the list goes on and on. These are all miracles but we are so acclimatised to them we don't really see them as miracles. On Chanukah, the miracle of the oil is obviously supernatural due to divine intervention, whereas the miracle of the military victory was natural. Unfortunately, it is very easy to negate the

presence of Hashem when it comes to natural miracles such as rain and food etc. Therefore we have to mention the military victory of the Maccabees in על הנסים otherwise one may chashv'shalom forget or refuse to recognise that Hashem was behind that miracle. על הנסים is inserted between רצא and מודים in the Amidah and after נודה in Benching because in מודים and נודה we are thanking Hashem for the daily natural miracles so the miracle of the military battle fits in perfectly here!

Parashat Miketz starts off where Parashat Vayigash ended, with Yosef in Pharaoh's prison after Yosef told the butler to remember him when he sees Pharaoh. The butler forgot Yosef, which caused him to remain in prison for another two years, until Pharaoh had a dream and Yosef was released in order to interpret it. As we know, everything has a cause and effect. In this case, Pharaoh had a dream and was told the interpretation two years earlier. Rashi writes that he forgot the interpretation and then eventually Yosef interprets the dream. However, the Beis Halevi disagrees with this explanation and goes on to explain the cause and effect differently. He explains that everything is orchestrated by Hashem. Hashem needed Yosef to stay those extra two years in prison and at the end of the two years, Hashem made Pharaoh all of a sudden remember this dream and need it to be interpreted there and then. This is obvious from the wording of the first pasuk of the sedra: וַיְהִי מִקֶּץ שְׁנָתַיִם יָמִים וַיִּרְעַה חֶלֶם וְהָנָה עַמְדַּי עַל-הַיָּאֵר: - "After two years' time, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile" (Bereishit 41:1). The pasuk doesn't make sense in the simple understanding, the Beis Halevi would learn it as: "it was after two years (Yosef had to come out now), Pharaoh dreamed he was standing by the Nile".



IN EVERY GENERATION

LAWRENCE SHENKIN | SHEVET HINEINI



People often point out the differences and similarities between Chanukah and Purim. Chanukah is observed to be a case of an attempt at a spiritual destruction, whereas Purim is observed to be a case of an attempt at a physical destruction. While these differences are interesting to point out on an individual level, it's interesting to look at the wider implications, as we say in the Haggada:

“בכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותינו”

“In every generation they are strategizing how to wipe us out.”

So one can assume that history not only repeats itself in the sense of constant attempts at wiping out the Jews, but also in how they go about it. For example, some parallels can be drawn between the Purim story and the horrors of Nazi Germany. In both cases a possible member of *עמלק* tried to absolutely annihilate us, so surely this is physical destruction.

Similarly, a more recent attempt at spiritual destruction can be seen in Soviet Russia, with state-imposed atheism drawing parallels with the Greek culture forced onto the Jews in the Chanukah story.

But what is most interesting is the response to these attacks on Judaism. In the case of Purim, a physical suppression, the Jews fight back in a spiritual way, fasting, going to shul and learning Torah. Whereas, in the case of Chanukah, a spiritual oppression, we fight back in a physical fashion. Why do we fight back in the opposite way in these cases?

Furthermore, when the other nations of the world fight on our behalf, they fight back in the same way. In the case of Nazi Germany, the Allies fought back in a physical fashion through WWII. But in the case of the Soviet Union, America destroyed them mentally, almost ‘spiritually,’ through the Cold War. So why when others fight on our behalf do they fight back in the same way?

To answer this, we need to distinguish between

the significance of a spiritual test and a physical test. Reb Elchonon Wasserman suggests that a spiritual test comes from the *יצר הרע*, but a physical test comes directly from Hashem. In the Chanukah story, Hashem was testing our will as a people, whether we would assimilate and Hellenise. We responded to this physically to destroy the physical source provoking the *יצר הרע*. In the case of Purim, Hashem was sending us a sign to tell us to stop assimilating and to unite as a people. To fight back physically would defeat the whole purpose of the sign; while sometimes physical combat is acceptable, sometimes it can take away from the unity of the Jewish people. Hashem used this to push us to be more spiritual and stop the rampant assimilation of the time.

Similarly, despite the horrors of Nazi Germany, the aftermath allowed us to come out stronger and more united as a people. The Nazis didn't care if you were Reform or Orthodox or had a Jewish grandparent that you weren't even affiliated with; if you were a Jew, you were a Jew. And although they used this as a negative, we can use this as a positive and show how we are all one.

With the communists, that was merely a spiritual test of the Jewish people to see if we would persevere and we passed with flying colours, with countless stories of the lengths Jews would go to retain their Yiddishkeit, most prominently Rabbi Yosef Mendelevich, who fought defiantly just for the right to wear a kippa, and was even imprisoned for eleven years for his expression of religion, yet he persevered and was eventually released thanks to mass waves of complaints coming from fellow Jews. This story really shows the strength of the Jewish people to get through hard times, and our unity and how we care for every single fellow Jew.

Whereas other nations of the world who fight fire with fire, only bringing more destruction to the world, the Jews rise above the challenge and show we are better than those who oppress us.



LAWRENCE WAS A PARTICIPANT ON ISRAEL MACHANE 5779

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUMBER EIGHT

NATALIE EZRA | SHEVET MORASHA



The number eight is central to the festival of Chanukah, and yet typically in Judaism it is the number seven that we think of as especially significant. So what is the meaning of the number eight? There is no doubt that the number eight permeates this chag, both in its celebration and its origin. When we think about why we celebrate for eight days, the fact that this is how long the oil found in the Mikdash lasted for (when in fact there was only enough for one) comes straight to mind. Yet, the importance of this number goes beyond this physical miracle of light. For Jews, the numbers six, seven and eight symbolise progression. The number 6 represents the physical world: north, east, south, west, as well as both upwards and downwards (as demonstrated on Succot with the shaking of the lulav). The number seven combines this physicality with spirituality, as on the seventh day God rested from creating all our material world and so gave us Shabbat. The number eight, bigger than both six and seven, goes beyond this, and thus, transcends the natural world and order. Eight symbolises the supernatural, the incomprehensible.

The Greeks were a people of physicality and the sciences, who believed that the human brain surpassed all. There was no belief in God as the creator as God was unable to be understood fully by the human mind, and thus for them could not be believed in. The philosophy of the Jews is the antithesis to this: Na'aseh V'Nishmah (Shemot 24:7) is central in Judaism – we will do, THEN we will understand. We may not necessarily un-

derstand all the mitzvot or the Torah, yet we still act in accordance with them, only to truly understand later. For the Greeks, this ideology went beyond the natural order and any human understanding. Ironically, those mitzvot not fully understood were seen to make man 'submissive' rather than the dominant character they saw man to be, whilst for the Jews, mitzvot are empowering as they elevate our neshama. The mitzvot the Jews were not allowed to keep were those unreasonable and incomprehensible to the Greeks. For example, crucially, they were unable to perform a Brit Mila, a mitzvah linked to the number eight in terms of when performed (on the eighth day) and the supernatural, and thus 'beyond human intelligence'.

Not only is the number eight central to the chag, but it is what Chanukah is all about. The duality that the number symbolises was the true conflict of values between the Maccabees and the Greeks: the physical world vs. connection and belief in the beyond. Subservience vs. elevation. Understanding vs. belief. It was a battle of the number eight, a battle over the supernatural. The victory of the Jews was not just a physical win, but also a spiritual win. And so, the miracle of the oil lasting eight days was deeper than merely giving physical light, but marked the triumph of spirituality in a physical world.



NATALIE IS A PARTICIPANT ON HACHSHARAT KIVUN 5780

BEFORE LIGHTING RECITE:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנכה

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה

ON THE FIRST NIGHT ADD:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

AFTER LIGHTING RECITE:

הנרות הללו אנחנו מדליקין, על הנסים ועל הנפלאות ועל התשועות, שעשית לאבותינו על ידי כהניך הקדושים. וכל שמונת ימי החנכה, הנרות הללו קדש הם. ואין לנו רשות להשתמש בהם, אלא לראותם בלבד, כדי להודות לשמך על נסיד ועל נפלאותיך ועל ישועתך

מעוז צור

כרות קומת ברוש בקש אגגי בן המדתא
ונהיתה לו למוקש וגאנתו נשבתה
ראש ימיני נשאת ואויב שמו מחית
רב בניו וקניניו על העץ תלית

יונים נקבצו עלי אזי בימי חשמנים
ופרצו חומות מגדלי וטמאו כל השמנים
ומנותר קנקנים נעשה גס לשושנים
בגני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים

חשוף זרוע קדשך וקרב קץ הישועה
נקם נקמת דם עבדיך מאמה הרשעה
כי ארכה לנו השעה ואין קץ לימי הרעה
דחה אדמון בצל צלמון הקם לנו רועים שבעה

מעוז צור ישועתי לך נאה לשבח
תכון בית תפלתי ושם תודה נזבח
לעת תכין מטבח מצר המנבח
אז אגמור בשיר מזמור חנכת המזבח

רעות שבעה נפשי בגון פחי כלה
חיי מררו בקושי בשעבוד מלכות עגלה
ובידו הגדולה הוציא את הסגלה
חיל פרעה וכל זרעו ירדו כאבן מצולה

דביר קדשו הביאני וגם שם לא שקטתי
ובא נוגש והגלני כי זרים עבדתי
ויין רעל מסכתי כמעט שעברתי
קץ בבל, זרבבל לקץ שבעים נושעתי