



8 DAYS OF INSPIRATION

CHANUKAH @ OU



8 Days of Inspiration for the Whole Family!

Enjoy this concise, meaningful daily digest of Halacha, Hashkafa and a Family Activity!

Halacha HighLight

The Gerald & Karin Feldhamer OU Kosher Halacha Yomis Program

Q. I work in the city and return home late. My children wait for me to light the Chanukah candles. Should they light at the prescribed time, or should they wait for me so that we can light Chanukah candles as a family?

A. In a previous Halacha Yomis we learned that the optimal time to light candles is when the sun disappears from view. This is because the miracle will be publicized (pirsuma nisa) for the people who pass by and see the candles. The Rama (OC 672:2) writes that this was true when candles were lit outside the house. Nowadays, candles are generally lit indoors and the main pirsuma nisa is for the members of the family, and candles may be lit any time at night. Nonetheless, the Rama writes that even so, it is preferable to light early in the evening, so that passersby will see the candles in the window. As such, one can light the Menorah when returning home from work late in the evening. However, there is no reason for the children who are home to refrain from lighting on time. The children should light at the optimal time, and the father should light later when he comes home (Emes L'Yaakov OC 682.1, footnote #586).

Hashkafa HighLight

8 Short Thoughts for 8 Chanukah Nights

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z"l [Excerpt]

INSPIRED BY FAITH, WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Twenty-two centuries ago, when Israel was under the rule of the empire of Alexander the Great, one particular leader, Antiochus IV, decided to force the pace of Hellenisation, forbidding Jews to practice their religion and setting up in the Temple in Jerusalem a statue of Zeus Olympus. This was too much to bear, and a group of Jews, the Maccabees, fought for their religious freedom, winning a stunning victory against the most powerful army of the ancient world. After three years they reconquered Jerusalem, rededicated the Temple and relit the menorah with the one cruse of undefiled oil they found among the wreckage. It was one of the most stunning military achievements of the ancient world. It was, as we say in our prayers, a victory of the few over the many, the weak over the strong. It's summed up in a wonderful line from the prophet Zechariah: "Not by might nor by strength, but by my spirit says the Lord". The Maccabees had neither might nor strength, neither weapons nor numbers. But they had a double portion of the Jewish spirit that longs for freedom and is prepared to fight for it. Never believe that a handful of dedicated people can't change the world. Inspired by faith, they can. The Maccabees did then. So can we today.

Meaningful Activities for the Whole Family: 8 Nights and 8 Lights

Rachel Olson, NCSY

It's time to go around the table!
Let's put our beliefs, values, goals and passions front and center. In what area can you improve this year? Pick one that will improve your character.

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REDEDICATION: RENEWED COMMITMENT

"Chanukah" literally means "dedication" in Hebrew, and commemorates the Jews' rededication of the Second Temple when the Maccabees regained control of Jerusalem from the Greeks. Chanukah is a time to rededicate ourselves to our beliefs, values, goals, and passions.



What were your New Years' resolutions for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur? Take a moment to reflect on how your resolutions are going - why or why not your plans have been successful. Then either come up with a new plan or rededicate yourself to your commitments.

A project of the OU's Department of Synagogue and Community Services.

For more information, contact Rabbi Phil Karesh at kareshp@ou.org.