



**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

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**Q.** I already lit candles at home - and said Shehechyanu. Now I'm being asked to light candles in shul before Maariv. Do I repeat it when lighting the menorah there?

**A.** Even if one recited Shehechyanu at shul, one would repeat Shehechyanu at home if one is also reciting the bracha on behalf of others. The Ben Ish Chai (Parshas VaYeishev, siman 11) is of the opinion that the same holds true in our case as well: one who already recited Shehechyanu when he lit at home should repeat Shehechyanu again in shul since there are others present in shul who have not yet lit. However, if everyone in shul already lit Chanukah candles - which would be the case if the first night of Chanukah is Friday night since one must light before going to shul - then one should not recite Shehechyanu in shul, since everyone already lit candles and recited Shehechyanu. However, Sefer Zera Emes (cited by Ben Ish Chai and Shaarei Teshuva 671:11) disagrees. He holds that even if everyone already recited Shehechyanu, one should still repeat the bracha since publicizing the miracle (pirsumei nisa) is what obligates a person to recite the bracha of Shehechyanu. The Ben Ish Chai concludes that in this situation, it is questionable if the bracha of Shehechyanu must be recited and "safek berachos l'hakel" (in cases of doubt we refrain from reciting a bracha).

## ***Hashkafa HighLight***

8 Short Thoughts for 8 Chanukah Nights

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z"l [Excerpt]

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In 1991, I lit Chanukah candles with Mikhail Gorbachev, who had been president of the Soviet Union. For seventy years, the practice of Judaism had been effectively banned in communist Russia. Then, in 1967, after Israel's victory in the Six Day War, many Soviet Jews sought to leave Russia and go to Israel. Not only was permission refused, but often the Jews concerned lost their jobs and were imprisoned. Around the world Jews campaigned for the prisoners, Refuseniks they were called, to be released and allowed to leave. Eventually Mikhail Gorbachev realised that the whole soviet system was unworkable. Communism had brought, not freedom and equality, but repression, a police state, and a new hierarchy of power. In the end it collapsed, and Jews regained the freedom to practice Judaism and to go to Israel. That day in 1991 after we had lit candles together, Mr Gorbachev asked me what we had just done. I told him that 22 centuries ago in Israel after the public practice of Judaism had been banned, Jews fought for and won their freedom, and these lights were the symbol of that victory. And I continued: Seventy years ago Jews suffered the same loss of freedom in Russia, and you have now helped them to regain it. So you have become part of the Chanukah story. Mikhail Gorbachev blushed. The Chanukah story still lives, still inspires, telling not just us but the world that though tyranny exists, freedom, with God's help, will always win the final battle.

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

Rachel Olson, NCSY

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It's time to go around the table! All of our strengths and talents come from Hashem. What strengths and talents did Hashem give you? Share the talents of the person next to you: "Hashem gave you the strength of ...". Go around the table!

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### **ALL STRENGTH IS FROM GOD**

In the Holy Temple, the menorah was shaped as 7 lights branching from one central stem. The fact that all 7 lights stem from one source represents that each of us draws our strength from One Source: God. God is the source of our strength and when we recognize this, we merit His salvation.



*What areas of your life do you take pride in? Your brains? Your talents? Your job? Your good looks? Recognize that each of these are gifts from God, and we cannot take credit for them on our own.*

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

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