



## SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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As we look ahead to the coming week with excitement and anticipation of celebrating *Chanukah*, it is important to consider not only the historical significance of this joyous and festive time of year, but also the eternal relevance and meaning inherent in these days of joy.

**The Amshinover Rebbe, zy'a** explained that *Chanukah* is really a window that allows us to gaze at the lights of eternity, the light which permeates our homes throughout *Chanukah* via the *neirot* we kindle each night, is a glimpse of the lights of eternity. The world was created in seven days, so the eight days of *Chanukah*, represent moving beyond the world of nature and creation, and opening ourselves up to miracles, to events which can change us for all eternity.

The **Ohalei Yaakov, Rabbi Yaakov Friedman, zy'a of Husiyatin**, was a great Chasidic Rebbe who made *aliya* to *Tel Aviv* in 1938, narrowly escaping the Nazi onslaught, to live the last nineteen years of his life in *Artzeinu HaKedosha*. The Rebbe *zt'l*, lived during those difficult years of the *Shoah*, the early struggles to build the State of Israel, and the very challenging early years of *Medinat Yisrael*. His powerful teachings often give us not only incredibly deep and insightful messages of *chizuk* and hope, but also a glimpse of life in *Tel Aviv* during this important period in Jewish history. One particularly beautiful teaching was shared by

the Rebbe during *Chanukah* of 1951.

*Chasidim have the tradition to greet one another on Chanukah with the greeting of Gmar Chatima Tova (which of course means may we be sealed for good, and is most commonly associated with Yom Kippur), as Chanukah represents the finalization of the sealing of that which was inscribed during the Yamim Noraim. Now, this Chanukah, this greeting of Gmar Chatima Tova, takes on a dual meaning. Men from Yerushalyim recently visited to ask how we should view the new State which has taken hold here in Artzeinu HaKedosha, and I answered that it represents the Atchalta DeGeula, the beginning stage of our redemption. If indeed we have merited to see the beginning of our redemption, than as we wish one another Gmar chatima tova, this Chanukah, may we merit to see the gmar, the completion of our redemption, may we merit to greet Mashiach Tzidkaynu this Chanukah! As our Master, Rebbe Pinchas of Koritz, zy'a taught, each Chanukah, as we kindle our lights, we are given a glimpse of the light of Mashiach. From the Chanukah lights, will come forth the light of Mashiach Tzidkaynu...*

*Yehi Ratzon, as we light our Neirot this Chanukah, may we merit to witness the proliferation of the light of eternity, to experience miracles, and to greet Mashiach Tzidkaynu as he shines his great light upon the entire world.*

*Gmar Chatima Tova!* ■