



SHOSHANA JUDELMAN

TORAH TIDBITS CONTRIBUTOR



8 Lessons From the Chanukah Lights

My birthday is on Chanukah, so in lieu of being able to send out personal blessings to all of you, I want to share an idea that is giving me extra strength this year. May it be a blessing and a tefillah for all of us.

In the discussion about Chanukah candles in the Gemara (Shabbos 21b), there are differing opinions about which way to light. There are three basic ideas:

1. Light one Chanukah menorah per household
2. Light one Chanukah menorah per person
3. Light either an ascending or a descending number of lights each night (either per household or per person)

According to the House of Shammai we should light 8 candles on the first night and decrease each night for 8 nights.

According to the House of Hillel we should light 1 candle on the first night and increase up to 8.

No matter how many menorahs are lit, we all follow the House of Hillel and increase

in light. This is considered “Mehadrin min HaMehadrin”- the “best of the best” way to light the candles on Chanukah.

What I find surprising and meaningful is that NO ONE suggests that we light all 8 candles each night.

Wouldn't that be the most exciting and most light-filled? Wouldn't that bring the most energy into the world?

And yet, we don't do it that way.

There are important lessons here...

These are the 8 that I am working on internalizing:

1. **Remember that the journey is just as important as (if not more important than) the destination.** We spend far more time in it and we often forget to value and enjoy it.
2. **Constant growth as a value** - We wake up every morning with the opportunity to do something a little bit differently, to respond a bit more positively, to learn a new skill or smile at someone new, to take chances and to bring more light into the world.
3. **Set achievable goals and**
4. **Acknowledge each achievement** Each night when we light one more candle, we have achieved another goal. Recognizing and celebrating all achievements

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strengthens us to keep dreaming and trying.

5. **No one is expected to be able to do something perfectly the first time** - We don't jump straight to 8. We must have patience with ourselves and not give up. Only through time, effort and repetition can we become proficient at whatever tasks we set for ourselves.
6. **Life happens one day at a time** - Try to remember to take each day as it comes and to not make yourself afraid by stressing out over what is coming. Be here now.
7. **Keep moving forward** - Life presents us with many challenges and we just have to breathe and take the next step. Don't get stuck in what was or what "could have been"- just keep going and trying
8. **Every. Little. Bit. Counts.** All of the effort that we ever put in has an effect on us and the world around us. May we all be strengthened, energized and healed by the light of the Chanukah candles. May we all internalize the light and utilize it to look at our children, our communities and ourselves with compassion and encouragement. And may we merit the ultimate light and the ultimate healing with the coming of Moshiach very very soon.

Happy Chanukah and Shabbat Shalom! ■

Shoshana Judelman is passionate about learning and growing through Chassidus. She gives shiurim to women in many communities around Israel, including Efrat, Elazar, Raanana and Jerusalem as well as at Midreshet Rachel V'Chaya. Shoshana also guides groups at Yad Vashem and leads journeys to Poland and other countries around Europe for JRoots.



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**Be'er Tziporah a'h -
Bottled Water Gemach**



Walking down King George St. in Jerusalem and want a cold bottle of water?
Come help yourself to a bottle at
52 King George.

In loving memory of Yoni's wife
Tziporah a'h, a true Eishes Chayil, always full of chessed, kindness and laughter, and brought life and strength to so many people, that she touched!
She was like Aron, who loved peace and pursued peace.



Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

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