

#ShareTheLight

AN EIGHT-DAY CHANUKA JOURNEY

WITH

Rabbi *Benji*



There are certain things in life that grow the more you share. Light is one of them. My flame is not diminished when I share it with you. And then you can share it too...

Chanuka is the festival of lights. For eight nights, we light the Chanukia, each night adding one more light.

In the next few pages you will find eight thoughts, one for each night of Chanuka. Each one has an activity which corresponds to that night of Chanuka. On night one you can do one activity, on night two you do two, and so on. You can do these activities alone or with others. In addition, you will find sources and a song for each lesson should you wish to learn further.

This Chanuka let's take the opportunity to share the light. Together...

SOURCE

The commandment to kindle Chanuka lights is very dear, and one should be very careful in its observance to publicize the miracle and increase praise of God and our expression of gratitude for the miracles which He performed for us.

Mishneh Torah, Esther and Chanuka 4:12

מִצְוַת נֵר חֲנֻכָּה מְצֻוָּה חֲבִיבָה הִיא עַד מְאֹד וְצִרְיָה אָדָם לְהַזְהֵר בָּהּ כְּדֵי לְהוֹדִיעַ הַנֶּס וְלְהוֹסִיף בְּשִׁבְחָהּ הָאֵל וְהוֹדִיָּה לּוֹ עַל הַנְּסִים שֶׁעָשָׂה לָנוּ
מִשְׁנֵה תוֹרָה, הַלְכוֹת מְגִילָה וְחֻנוּכָה ד:יב

#ShareTheLight Day 1

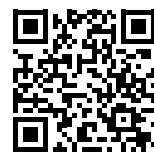


Goodness

MULTIPLIED

The more we share light, the more light there is. This is what I call the Mitzva Multiplication Effect. If I have \$10 and give someone \$5, that money is divided in a zero sum game. But when I have knowledge and teach another, I don't lose that knowledge. It multiplies.

While we only light one candle tonight, by the end of Chanuka 36 candles will be lit.



Listen to my
#ShareTheLight
Spotify playlist

Exercise #1

🔥 Commit to doing one extra good deed.

If you're with others, do this exercise as a group. If you're alone, write it down and place that note somewhere you'll see every day.

SOURCES

Exodus Rabba 36:3

For the commandment is a candle. Just as the light of a candle remains undimmed, though myriads of wicks and flames are lit from it, so too, one who gives for a worthy cause does not make a hole in his own pocket.

שמות רבה לו:ג

כי נר מצוה, מה הנר הזה כשהוא דולק אפלו אלף אלפים קרוינין וסבקיין מדליקין הימנו אור במקומו, כך כל מי שיתן למצוה, אינו מחסר את נכסיו

Pirkei Avot 4:2

For one commandment leads to another commandment.

אבות ד:ב

מצוה גוררת מצוה

#ShareTheLight Day 2



Embrace HOPE

The word tragedy is derived from the Greek tragōidia. Greek tragedy is an entire genre representing an inexorable fate that humans cannot transcend. It is the belief that our future was decided in the past. That we cannot change our circumstances which will end in suffering. Biblical Hebrew, on the other hand, contains no word for tragedy. While acknowledging difficulty, it celebrates the triumph of responsibility and hope of the human spirit.

Hope is the belief that we can create a future that is better than our past – that we have the power to change our circumstances. Hope is where action begins. A prerequisite for positive change.

Below the surface of the physical battle of Chanuka was an existential war. The spiritual victory of Chanuka represents the triumph of destiny in the face of fate, and ambition in the face of tragedy. The hope of courage and the courage of hope!



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Exercise #2

Bathe yourself in the light of hope.

- 🔥 Share one story where someone has turned tragedy into hope.
 - 🔥 Think of one thing you hope for yourself, family, or the world.
-

SOURCES

Genesis 5:1

This is the account of the generations of Adam. On the day that God created Adam, He made him in the likeness of God.

בראשית ה:א

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בְּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ

Israeli national anthem (adapted from Ezekiel 37:11)

We have not yet lost our hope.

המנון של מדינת ישראל

עוֹד לֹא אֲבָדָה תִּקְוַתִּנּוּ

#ShareTheLight Day 3



Celebrate HEROES

The story of Chanuka has several female heroines.

Yehudit risked her own life to save her people, Chana raised her children to do the same, and as Rashi states: Women brought about the miracle.

Tonight, I recognize the women who have shared so much light with me. I think of my Granny Rose, my oldest living connection and the light she has shared with our entire family. I invite you to do the same.



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Exercise #3

Remember the women who have shared their light with you.

🔥🔥🔥 Reach out to three of them. Let them know that by sharing their light, they enabled you to share your own.

SOURCES

Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 23a

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Women are obligated regarding the Chanuka candles, for they too were in the miracle.

תלמוד בבלי, שבת כג

דאמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: נשים תיביות בנר חנוכה שאף הן היו באותו הנס

Rashi ad loc.

The miracle was by the hand of a woman.

רש"י (שם)

ועל יד אשה נעשה הנס

#ShareTheLight Day 4



Give

THANKS

We don't fast on Chanuka. It is a time of giving thanks.

Gratitude is both an emotion (feeling thankful for the goodness in our lives) and an action (expressing gratitude).



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Exercise #4**Surround yourself with gratitude.**

🔥🔥🔥 **Step 1:** List three things you are thankful for today.

🔥 **Step 2:** Identify one person who is a source of goodness in your life.

SOURCES**Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b**

What is Chanuka? The Sages taught: On the twenty-fifth of [the Hebrew month of] Kislev, the days of Chanuka are eight. One may not eulogize on them and one may not fast on them.

תלמוד בבלי, שבת כא

מאי חנוכה? דתנו רבנן: בכ"ה בכסליו יומי דחנוכה תמניא אינון דלא למספד בהון ודלא להתענות בהון

#ShareTheLight Day 5



Face

CHALLENGES

The word for trial in Hebrew is Nisayon - ניסיון. Nisayon starts with נס - Nes, which means miracle.

Miracles are born when we face challenges. Not those that test what we know, but who we are.



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Exercise #5

Think about the connection between miracles and challenges.

🔥 What miracle in your life began as a challenge?

🔥🔥 How did you feel when you were faced with this challenge, and how did you feel once you overcame it?

🔥🔥 Name two ways this challenge has affected you as a person.

SOURCES

Chanuka Prayer

[We thank you also] for the miracles, the redemption, the mighty deeds, and the salvation and victories which You performed for our ancestors in those days, at this time.

תפילה לחנוכה

על הנסים ועל הפרקן ועל הגבורות ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה

Malbim on Genesis 22:2

There is a difference between a Nisayon (challenge) and a Bechina (test). A test establishes if something is found within something else, within its natural state... and a challenge establishes if one's righteousness will withstand things beyond the natural state.

מלבי"ם על בראשית כב:ב

יש הבדל בין ניסיון לבחינה: הבחינה היא שבוחן אם נמצא בדבר מה, מה שיחויב שימצא בו מצד טבעו... וניסיון הוא אם יעמוד בצדקתו בדברים שהם למעלה מטבע הבשר, והניסיון אין לו שיעור... שכל ניסיון הוא למעלה מהקודם אליו

#ShareTheLight Day 6



Delve

INWARDS

If one can only afford to light the Chanukia or Shabbat candles, which should they choose? The Talmud states that the Shabbat candles take precedence.

Whereas Shabbat candles represent Shalom Bayit (peace in the home), the Chanukia represents publicizing the miracle.

As important as sharing with others is, everything starts at home. Before we can shine our light outwards, we have to spark it from within.



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Exercise #6

Look at the people around you. How can you be more present in your relationships with them?

🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥 Choose six small things you can do to be more present.

SOURCES**Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 23b**

Rava said: It is simple, [if one only has enough resources for a] Shabbat candle or Chanuka candle - the Shabbat candle takes precedence, due to Shalom Bayit (peace in the home).

תלמוד בבלי, שבת כג

אמר רבא: פשיטא לי, גר ביתו וְגַר חנוכה - גר ביתו עדיף, משום שלום ביתו

#ShareTheLight Day 7



Rise

HIGHER

A flame represents the soul of a person.

When a candle burns, the flame heats the air around it causing it to rise. As this warm air moves up, cooler air rushes in at the bottom of the flame to replace it. When that air is heated, it rises up and is replaced by cooler air again and again and again.

When you emanate warmth and give to others, they rise and raise you. Raising others raises us.



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Exercise #7

Think about how you can radiate warmth.

🔥🔥 Who are two people whose light has elevated our world at large?

🔥🔥 Think of two things they positively impacted.

🔥🔥🔥 Think of three ways you can elevate someone else's world.

SOURCES

Proverbs 20:27

The candle of God is the soul of man, revealing all his innermost parts.

משלי כ"ז:

נר ה' נשמת אדם חפש כל-חַדְרֵי-בֶטֶן

#ShareTheLight Day 8



GROW

Through Life

Chanuka (the festival) and chinuch (education) share the same root. The purpose of education is not just to impart knowledge, but to imbue values and cultivate wisdom.

True education takes time. It is an ongoing journey. And Chanuka is no different.

We don't learn a lesson and conclude. We don't light a candle on day one and stop. We keep adding.

There is a point where even the Chanukia cannot contain the light, and therefore we transcend it. While tomorrow we will have no candles, the lessons we have learnt over eight days, the education we have reignited, never ends.

Let's continue the journey together...



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Exercise #8

How will you:

- 🔥 Embrace hope by taking action.
- 🔥 Celebrate the people around you who share light.
- 🔥 Give thanks for the good in your life.
- 🔥 Delve inwards and nurture relationships.
- 🔥 Face challenges by remembering what you've overcome.
- 🔥 Rise higher by raising others.
- 🔥 Grow through life continuing this journey of learning with me at [@rabbibenji](#)

SOURCES

Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b

Beit Shammai says: The first day one lights eight, from then on, one diminishes and goes on.
And Beit Hillel says: The first day one lights one, from then on, one increases and goes on.

תלמוד בבלי, שבת כא

נבית שמאי אומר: יום ראשון מדליק שמונה, מכאן ואילך פוחת והולך. ובית הלל אומר: יום ראשון מדליק אחת, מכאן ואילך מוסיף והולך.

LET'S CONTINUE THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER

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Rabbi *Benji*