



Nesiya Thoughts on Chanukah 5775/2014

There is an interesting *makhloklet* (argument) in the Talmud regarding lighting the Chanukah lights. The discussion is concerned with determining which specific action actually accomplishes the mitzvah, lighting the lights or placing the lights in the proper place? This might seem like an entirely inconsequential argument, but the Kedushat Levi, in his Chassidic commentary (Ukraine, 18th. c) teaches us that they are actually arguing about something very deep and spiritually significant.

One opinion is claiming that the most important thing is the spark and the initial enthusiasm with which we approach the tasks and projects that lie before us (lighting). The other opinion is claiming that the most important thing is creating a vessel and grounding that flame in the world so that it can have a lasting impact (placing).

The Talmud goes back and forth suggesting why one or the other may be the essential aspect of the mitzvah of Chanukah lights. The Talmud concludes that the lighting is the essential part, yet adds that without 'placing' the mitzvah has also not yet been fulfilled. Therefore, at the end of the discussion, we see that it is really a combination of the two. It is technically the lighting that accomplishes the mitzvah, but it must also be placed in the proper place. In other words--or on the spiritual dimension--without the initial enthusiasm, nothing can be accomplished, but without the proper receptacle for that enthusiasm, it cannot accomplish much more than just spark and fade away.

Last year, at this time, we witnessed an amazing spark of inspiration brought about by our Nesiya family. The potential to renew the Summer Program that has had a profound impact on over 3000 young people since 1985, inspired many to give and support the re-establishment of the summer program after a one-year hiatus.

Today, one year later, after a very successful summer, we are in the phase of building the vessel to contain that light. Without it, that spark will dissipate. When we succeed to build a strong container, it will actually strengthen and channel that great flash of inspiration from last year.

Pledge today towards our \$245,000 goal (of which we have raised \$87,000 in gifts and pledges), and we will only collect your pledge once we have secured sufficient funding to conduct the 2015 Summer Program.

As we light the Chanukah candles, and place them in their proper location this year, please take part in strengthening the vessel that enables Nesiya to run its unique and transformational programming for Israeli and North American young people. **Pledge your support today to make a difference and to ensure Nesiya's continued programming in 2015, our 30th year!**