

# THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT BEHA'ALOTECHA

21-22 JUNE | 16 SIVAN

## Light up your Life!



**SIOBHAN  
DANSKY**

Assistant Head of JFS  
Informal Education  
Department (JIEP)

*"God spoke to Moshe saying, 'When you kindle the lamps (of the Menorah)...'" (Bemidbar 8:1).*

At the beginning of this week's parasha, God gives the instruction that Aharon is to light the menorah in the holy Temple. The word used here for 'to kindle' is also the name of the parasha - *Beha'alotcha*. Strange choice of word - why not use the more familiar word *lehadlik*, just as we say every Friday night in the *beracha* for lighting the Shabbat candles? What is the difference between *lehadlik* and *beha'alotcha*?

*Lehadlik* means to ignite; to give an initial spark. Sometimes when we light a candle, the flame

continues to burn. Sometimes we remove the match too quickly and the candle goes out. To ignite means to provide a spark, but it has no intrinsic follow-through. Hopefully the flame will last, but it may not.

*Beha'alotcha* means to 'cause to go up'. It implies a greater responsibility in transferring the light from the match to the wick. It teaches us that we have to hold the match there until we can see that the flame of the candle is able to stay alight on its own. It requires more patience, time and commitment than *'lehadlik'*.

Several commentators suggest that this commandment is also hinting towards the annual lighting of the Chanukah menorah, or *chanukjah*, that we still light every year. Chanukah has two meanings - to educate and to dedicate. If we want to educate someone, or

persuade them to be dedicated to something important to us, we can't use the *'lehadlik'* model. That would mean that we give over our message once and then walk away and hope that it sinks in, and that the person we are trying to educate will continue to 'burn' on their own. They might, but they might not - we left them too quickly to find out.

To really educate and create dedication to values that we hold dear, we need to stick around and take responsibility until we can see that the transfer has actually happened. We need to hold our ignition flames there long enough until we can see that those students are radiating the same light of their own accord. We need to be willing to take the time, patience and commitment to explain fully, possibly more than once and in more than one way, and help them find the same source of light within themselves so that they can shine proudly on their own.

## Candle Conundrums

In our parasha we read about lighting the menorah. Can you unscramble these words that are all about lighting candles in Judaism?

1. btabash
2. dahalhav
3. nuchakah
4. razihety
5. moy vot
6. ren madit

