

FOREWORD

The Eternal Celebration

B*ayamim ha'heim ba'zman ha'zeh* — in those days and today. The holiday of Chanukah manages to straddle different historical eras. On the one hand, it is a celebration of the past, of our victory over the Greeks and the miracle of the oil in the Beis Hamikdash. Yet simultaneously, it is a celebration of the present, and is relevant to the challenges we face today. This historical dichotomy is evident from the Gemara (*Rosh Hashanah* 18b), which teaches that although *Megillas Ta'anis* has been annulled and other Beis Hamikdash-era celebrations are no longer commemorated, we still celebrate Chanukah.

While Chanukah has a component that is a Beis Hamikdash celebration, it also has an additional component that remains relevant. The Ramban, Bamidbar 8:2, also highlights this duality of Chanukah in the context of a conversation between Hashem and Aharon HaKohen. Following the korbanos of the *nesiim* during the dedication of the Mishkan (*Chanukas Hamishkan*), Aharon was despondent. After all, as the leader of Shevet Levi, he was disheartened that all the other *shevatim* had the opportunity to bring a korban during the *Chanukas Hamishkan*, while Shevet Levi seemed to be neglected. Hashem comforted Aharon by assuring him that Shevet Levi would have a greater contribution than the other *shevatim*. The Chanukah lights, which would be kindled by the kohanim, will be everlasting, as opposed to the korbanos at the *Chanukas Hamishkan*.



Rabbi Joshua Kahn

Head of School, YU High School for Boys

What is it about Chanukah that enables it to exist in the past and present simultaneously?

The Chanukah celebration focuses on the spiritual struggle against the Greeks. The danger to the Jewish people during the time of the Chashmonaim was a spiritual annihilation. The Greeks were not interested in harming us physically, if only we were willing to assimilate and sacrifice our core religious values. With this background, Rav Soloveitchik zt"l develops an approach to the everlasting nature of Chanukah. The celebration of our spiritual triumph and commitment to clinging to the Torah and its values is eternal. While there was a Beis Hamikdash celebration, recognizing the victory against the Greeks, our commitment to Torah is one we celebrate each year. The victory of today is just as relevant and timely as the victory over 2,000 years ago, since the challenges continually reinvent themselves in each generation.

As Yeshiva University High School for Boys celebrates our centennial and dreams about the next hundred years, we do so with this theme. When YUHSB was founded, it was a time of great challenge religiously for American Jewry. The high school was created with a vision of nurturing the next generation of bnei Torah whose

education would have talmud Torah at its foundation. Yet these bnei Torah would be able to synthesize talmud Torah with a commitment to strong general studies and a well-rounded experience that would prepare them to grow up to be successful in everything they did. *L'havdil*, this year is our celebration of the Chanukah miracle. We are reflecting on the way in which our educational vision changed the landscape of American Jewry, serving as the model for yeshiva high schools across the country and the world. We are marveling at how the flame of YUHSB has lit up Jewish communities throughout the world, as our alumni serve in leadership capacities, as school leaders, shul rabbis, and lay leaders. We are dreaming about how to continue to lead in the field of Jewish education to ensure that our students are well-rounded Bnei Torah — appreciating the primacy of talmud Torah and a Torah-observant lifestyle, while continuing to synthesize this with a commitment to being a lifelong learner in all disciplines. We focus on developing the whole student so that each of our graduates is prepared to be a contributing member of Klal Yisrael. We welcome you to get in touch with us and help us shape this dream, and in doing so continue to celebrate the Chanukah miracle!