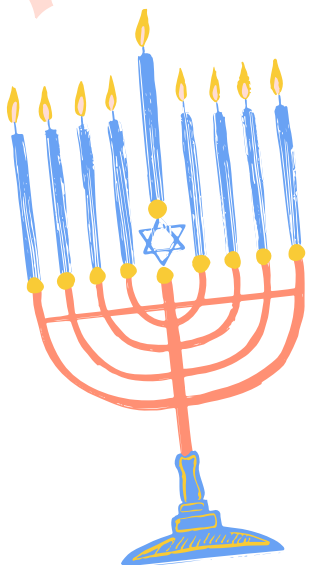




Congregation Shaare Emeth

CHANUKAH 5784/2023 HOME BLESSINGS



Significance of Light:

A Parable by Rabbi Sari Laufer

One day, a student asked the rabbi: Rabbi, I know that to be Jewish is to have a special role, a special job in the world. Rabbi, what is my job as a Jew in the world? The rabbi, never one to answer directly, looked at her students and said: Friends, what is the most important job in the world? President of the United States! Someone shouted. Prime Minister of Israel said another. Someone even said: Rabbi! Clearly, he was trying for a good grade. Firefighter! Doctor! Teacher! Artist! Teacher! Parent! The answers came from all corners of the room.

The student looked at the rabbi and said: But Rabbi—what is the right answer? What is my job as a Jew in the world? And she said: Once upon a time, long before iPads and iPhones, before TV and streaming, even before there was electricity—there was a person in every town who was responsible for lighting up the streets. On the street corners, lamps sat—ready to be lit each night as the sun began to set. And there was one person whose job it was to walk from street to street, from lamp to lamp, with a flame he carried at the end of a long pole. Each evening, the rabbi said, this person would walk their route, lighting each and every lamp—no matter how cold it was, or how hard it was to reach. But what if the lamp is in a desolate wilderness, far from everything and everyone, one of the students asked? The rabbi answered: Then, too, it must be lit. And what, asked one of the students, if the lamp is in the middle of an OCEAN!! The rabbi smiled and said: One must put on a bathing suit, jump into the water, and light it there. Without it, she said, there would be no light. The student looked again at the rabbi and said: Rabbi, I still don't know the right answer. "What is my job as a Jew in the world?" The rabbi looked at her students and said: You can be anything that you want to be. But no matter what you decide to do with your life, you must be a lamplighter on the streets of the world.

Lighting the Chanukiah:

The Chanukah Menorah

Candles are added to the Chanukiah (menorah) from right to left but kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. First, light the shamash (the helper candle, set apart from all the rest of the candles) then use it to kindle the rest of the Chanukah lights. Add a new candle for each night of Chanukah. On the Shabbat during Chanukah, light and bless the Chanukah candles first and then the Shabbat candles.

Why do we add a candle for each night of Chanukah? Rabbi Hillel said we add one candle each night to increase the sacred. Every act we perform should increase holiness in the world. We add a candle each night to bring more light into our communities and into ourselves as well.

EVERY NIGHT RECITE THE FIRST TWO BLESSINGS:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנוּכָה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ וְלְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam she-asah nisim la-avoteinu v'imoteinu bayamim hahem baz'man hazeh.

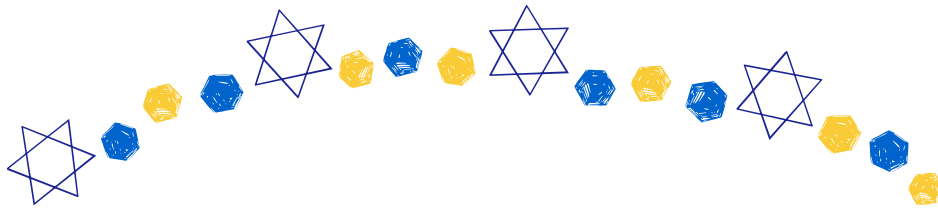
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who performed wondrous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

ON THE FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH ADD:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-hecheyanu v'kiymanu v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.



Each night's service celebrates a significant value of Judaism. These may be added either before or after reciting the blessings.

1st Night: (Peace) The first Chanukah candle of the year sparks a call for peace. Just as the world wasn't peaceful in the time of the Maccabees, it's still not peaceful today. "When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace." (Jimi Hendrix)

2nd Night (Acceptance) The second Chanukah candle sparks acceptance. Gaining acceptance of ourselves and others makes room for love. On this night, let's remember that "most people need acceptance a lot more than they need advice." (Bob Goff).

3rd Night (Repairing the World) The third Chanukah candle sparks a desire to repair the world. There is so much to do, but what if each of us really considered it our responsibility? "A person stood before God, heart breaking from the pain and injustice in the world. 'Dear God, the person cried out, look at all the suffering and the anguish in your world! Why don't you send help?' God replied, 'I did. I sent you.'" (Rabbi David Wolpe).

4th Night (Treating Others) The fourth Chanukah candle reminds us to treat others in the way we want to be treated. The Talmud tells the story of how someone came to Rabbi Hillel asking to learn all about Judaism while standing on one foot. Hillel responded, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow human; this is the entire Torah, all the rest is commentary. Now go and learn it." (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a)

5th Night (Compassion) The fifth Chanukah candle sparks compassion; compassion for ourselves, our friends and family, those we don't agree with and animals. Being compassionate can change everything. "You can either practice being right or practice being kind." (Anne Lamott)

6th Night (Diversity) The sixth Chanukah candle sparks the importance of honoring how diverse our world is. "No one is born hating another person because of the color of her skin or her background or her religion or sexual orientation. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate they can learn to love, because love comes more naturally to the human heart." (Nelson Mandela)

7th Night (Forgiveness) Forgiveness is not just for Yom Kippur. The seventh candle sparks forgiveness, which in some cases is wildly difficult to achieve but is always worth the effort. "Every act of forgiveness mends something broken in this fractured world." (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)

8th Night (Gratitude) The eighth Chanukah candle sparks gratitude. "Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other." (Randy Pausch)

