

Joseph S. Jemal Synagogue
Al & Sonny Gindfi Building
83 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723

HANUKAH

KISLEV 5781
DECEMBER 2020

Edmond J. Safra Synagogue
Mourad & Sarine Kattan Building
75 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723

See Your Light Burn Bright

There is a very strong association between Hanukkah and the sense of sight, of seeing. We sing each night of Hanukkah, "These candles are sacred; we don't have permission to benefit from their light but their purpose is simply to be looked at." Moreover, we have a unique law on Hanukkah. The Gemara tells us - ha'roeh mevareich, one who can't light for himself or herself and sees the candles of someone else nevertheless makes the second blessing of "Who has wrought miracles for our forefathers." When I see someone put on tefillin, take a lulav, or blow shofar, I don't make a blessing. Only on Hanukah do I make a blessing when seeing someone else do the misvah. Why?

The Kedushat Levi, tells us that Hanukah is the holiday of seeing. The different Jewish holidays correspond with our different senses. On Purim our hearing is heightened as we listen to the Megillah. On Pesah our sense of taste is sharpened when we eat massah and marror. On Hanukah, he says, we evaluate our sense of sight, testing how well we see.

What kind of seeing are we referring to? It is not our physical sense of sight. Indeed, our eyes are a liability. We often feel that "seeing is believing." If I

can perceive and observe it, it is true. If I can't, it is not real. Following this rule, we run the risk of dismissing and disregarding the most precious truths and realities in our lives. There are ideas, feelings, thoughts and dreams that are authentic and genuine, despite the fact that they can't be seen or observed.

Our Rabbis describe the Greek empire and Hellenist influence as hoshech, darkness. In expounding on the opening verses of the creation of the world, the Midrash Rabbah says "darkness was on the face of the deep" – this refers to the Greek exile. Our Rabbis taught that darkening our eyes was the goal of our Greek oppressors.

What is the difference between a room that is filled with darkness versus one filled with light? Is there any change to the room itself? Whether the light is on or off in the room, the furniture remains the same, the layout of the room, the placement of the door, and the height of the ceiling are a constant. What, then, is the difference between the light being on or off in my room – just my perception, my ability to identify and see the reality, the truth and that which was right before me all along. Hanukah is about seeing things, people, ideas, and miracles that are really right in front of us, even though we may not be able to visibly see them.

The Hashmonaim didn't see their few numbers, weak army, and impossible task. They saw the mighty hand of G-d, they saw the obligation to fight, and they saw Divine protection that would accompany them.

Hanukah is about lighting the candles and using them to harness our sight, our deep vision of what is true, precious, and dear. When we look at our spouses and children, do we see the amazing blessing of their presence in our lives or do we hear lots of noise, see rooms that need to be cleaned up, and a messy house? When we face a challenge do we see no way out or an opportunity to further lean on our Creator? There are truths all around us; it is up to us to decide what to look at and how to see.

Happy Hanukkah to all!
Rabbi Isaac Farhi





LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF ◇ HANUKAH ◇

1

Beginning from the 25th of Kislev (this year from Thursday night, December 10th), we begin the festival of Hanukah - days of happiness and Hallel. We light oil or candles on each of the Eight Nights of Hanukah to publicize the miracle of the oil and our deliverance from the Greeks. During these days we are prohibited to fast or eulogize.

2

On Ereb Shabbat, candles must be lit before regular Shabbat candle lighting time, they must last, however until 1½ hour after dark. A total of about 1½ hours. This makes it necessary to prepare and light larger candles (such as Shabbat candles) or adding extra oil.

3

On Saturday night the custom in one's home is to recite Habdalah and then light the Menorah. Whereas in the Synagogue the Menorah is lit prior to making Habdalah, because in the Synagogue we want to extend Shabbat as long as possible. You may ask: it is no longer Shabbat if we are kindling the Menorah? The answer is that Shabbat needs to have ended only for the one lighting the Menorah and the rest of the congregation can let the sweetness of Shabbat linger just a little bit longer.

4

The proper time for lighting on all other nights is 20 minutes after sunset. The time continues until about a half-hour after nightfall (when the stars come out). If one could not light at the proper time he may still light throughout the night. After daybreak, however, he should light without the blessing. On all days there should be sufficient oil or a large enough candle to burn at least one half hour.

5

On the first night of Hanukah three blessings are recited "lehadlik ner Hanukah", "she'asah nisim", and "shehehiyanu". On the other nights the last beracha is not recited. One should not begin lighting until he has completed all necessary blessings.

6

One should not pull his hand away from the wick until he has kindled the majority of the wick coming out of the candle. If the candles were lit in a place where they would not normally be extinguished by the wind, even if they are extinguished by the opening of the window, etc. he need not light again. There is also no need to change the wicks each night.

7

We begin with the light on the right side of the Menorah (plus the Shamash) on the first night, and add one more each consecutive night until on the Eighth Night we have 8 lights (and the Shamash). Please make sure to light from left to right. Women are obligated to partake in this Misva (to be there and answer Amen at the lighting of the lights), as they, too, were part of the miracle of Hanukah.

8

One may not perform the Misva with an electric Menorah. In the case where there is absolutely no oil or candles available- he should turn on the Menorah but he may not recite any blessing at all.

9

On the eight days of Hanukah we recite the Hallel in full, while on Purim, no Hallel is said. The reason for this is that the miracle of Hanukah happened in the Holy Land of Israel, while the miracle of Purim occurred in Persia outside of Israel.

Yalkut Yosef





HANUKAH CURRENCY

There is a halacha that states: "It is forbidden to derive any benefit from the lights of the Chanukah menorah... even to use the light to count your money."

To teach the prohibition against deriving benefit from the menorah, the example used is "don't count your money." It could have said don't write a letter by the light of the menorah, or don't let your children do their homework by the light of the menorah. But of all things, it says, don't count your money by the light of the menorah.

In addition to this, Hanukah is the only holiday that has a custom of giving of money: "Hanukah gelt." What's the deeper meaning of money? And what is the relationship between Hanukah and money?

It is impossible for us to imagine a world without money, but once upon a time that's the way it was. In a moneyless world, how would you buy a shovel?

Simple. You'd take your extra hammer, and find someone with an extra shovel who just happened to need a hammer. Swap your hammer for his shovel. Everyone's happy.

A tedious, inefficient and bothersome way to execute transactions? Now you know why money was invented...

There was a time when a U.S. dollar was backed by a dollar's worth of gold. But that is no longer the case. Today our money

is a symbolic representation of value. The difference between money and actual goods is that one has intrinsic value, while the other has representative value. A lawnmower is valuable because it cuts grass. But a twenty dollar bill, a personal check or a plastic credit card can't be used for too much. But you can transform it into almost anything you desire...

One person looks at a hundred dollar bill and sees an iPod. Another sees a watch, and yet another sees a bicycle for his son's birthday. Money, in and of itself, has virtually no value, but its potential is almost limitless.

Money represents potential.

To illustrate this, Yaacob had to run away from Esav, who wanted to kill him. He stayed away until Esav caught up with him. During the night before their fateful reunion, Yaacob quietly moved his entire family across the river near where they had camped. Then, Yaacob went back to the other side of the river.

The Midrash tells us that Yaacob went back to the other side because he forgot some small jars. "Therefore," said G-d, "because you took the risk of going back for a few jars, I will repay your children with a small jar that will be found by the Maccabees."

Think about it. Yaacob goes back to retrieve some small jars and somehow that act is so significant that it enables the Maccabees, over 1,000 years later, to find the one remaining jar of oil that would be the source of the Hanukah miracle.

Additionally, we learn from this episode how much even sadikim value money.

Hanukah Money

On the surface, it was preposterous for the Jews to resist the Greeks. Their military was so powerful, that no one could stand in the Greeks' path, certainly not a band of renegade Jews.

But the Jewish people knew that they were an eternal people. A people whose message of values was destined to last forever and have a world-shaping impact. A tiny and ill-equipped people was prepared to take on the superpower of its day, all because they believed in the potential of Jewish destiny. They believed that no matter how dire things looked, there exists within the Jewish soul, the ability to vanquish the mightiest of foes and fulfill their own mission of being "A light unto the nations."

When we light our menorahs, we must look closely at those tiny flames and contemplate the world of potential. Where others see darkness, we are called to see light. We need to look at our children, look beyond the problems and the quarrels, and see potential. We need to look at one another, beyond the faults and the foibles, and see potential.

We need to look at life, beyond all the pain and struggles, and see potential. We need to look at our people, beyond the divisions and the hatred, and see potential. In everything we encounter, we need to realize our ultimate potential.

THREE DIFFERENT LIGHTS

“And G-d saw the light, that it was good” (Beresheet, 1:4).

From the beginning of creation, light has been seen as a positive, dynamic life force.

Light dispels darkness so forcefully that when you strike a match in the darkest of corners, such as in a cave, its small light overwhelms the darkness immediately. Light is that powerful. We are required to generate light through candles on three different occasions. We light candles just

before the arrival of Shabbat. We light candles throughout the eight days of Hanukkah. We light candles at the conclusion of Shabbat for Habdalah. The glow that radiates from each of these candles represents a different manifestation of light in our lives.



SHABBAT CANDLES

The Shabbat candles are lit indoors. They represent Judaism's inner light. This is the light that represents the sanctity of marriage, family, and the blessedness we try to strive for within our home.

The Shabbat candles remind us of how we are to conduct ourselves with our closest circle, when no one is looking. When the outside world is shut out, what kind of person are we? What is the quality of life being produced in our hearts, in our hearth?



HANUKKAH CANDLES

The Hanukkah candles used to be lit outside the front door (or at the widow). This shows that they are primarily intended to illuminate the public domain.

The Hanukkah candles remind us of how we are meant to radiate our light outward to the world, towards humanity. Are we using our talents to make an impact? Are we uplifting the principles we believe in? Are we unafraid to live as Jews and uphold the freedom for which the Maccabees and others so valiantly fought?



THE HABDALAH CANDLE

The Habdalah candle which we use at the conclusion of Shabbat is formed from a handful of intertwined wicks. This candle is reflective of what Habdalah represents – the separation of Shabbat from the rest of the week. It reminds us of the blending between the “private” light of Shabbat and the “public” light of Hanukkah. This is generated during the week when we go out of our inner cocoon and bring the light of faith and hope to our world.

On Hanukkah we go beyond ourselves and light up the world. We add light to the universe through our actions and Jewish values that uphold our unique faith. Volunteer. Teach. Inspire. Give.

INTIMATIONS OF THE SEVIVON



The simple four sided top that we play with on Hanukah is not so simple after all!

"It hints to us that there's nothing that happens in this world without it being decreed on high. Just as a person spinning the dreidel can't know on what side it will land so too he can't know where his efforts will lead him. Spinning the dreidel harder doesn't get you any closer to resolving this. Likewise in life the extra effort often just means a few more turns than necessary before getting to the result decreed on high. G-d runs our life in a similar way. A man can't change what was

decreed on him from on high and all the extra efforts are just meandering off the path G-d plotted for you."

"Just as the dreidel spins only when you spin it from above so too our world spins around by G-d spinning it from above."

A person who spins and orients himself inwards toward G-d will merit that he will spin out of and escape the troubles that envelop him."

Our Rabbis explain: "...people spin the dreidel with the letters G, S, N, and H each faces a different direction with the dreidel spinning around a

central point. These letters hint to the kingdoms of Rome, Babylon, Greece and Madai which oppose the 4 powers of man G for 'Guf' the body, S for 'Sechel' human intelligence, N for 'Nefesh' soul and H is for Hakol all of them. They all spin on a central axis which is Israel that unites all the far away extremes. All the outside extremes are subservient to the middle they all spin around and all the nations will nullify themselves to the nation of Israel and acquire a clear language (with which to come to G-d). R'E. Beiderman



Dedicated in loving memory of

EDMOND J. SAFRA

REFAEL EDMOND EZRA BEN ESTHER A"H

His Yartzait is on the 24th of Kislev,
this year December 10th 2020

He was a man who gave extensively throughout the world
to many Jewish causes and institutions.
May his memory be blessed.

Class and breakfast On Thursday will be dedicated
in loving memory of **Refael Edmond ben Esther A"H**.

SHABBAT VAYESHEV

POINT OF INTEREST

"Reuven heard, and he rescued [Yosef] from them, and he said, "Let us not murder him." (Beresheet 37:21)

Yosef's

brothers had sat in judgment and decided that he posed a mortal threat to them, and they condemned him to death. But Reuven wanted no part of it. When he heard what they

intended to do, he objected and suggested they toss Yosef into a pit instead. His intention was to come back later and spirit Yosef out of the pit and bring him back safely to Yaakov. But it did not work out that way.

The Midrash comments (Rus Rabbah 5:6), "Had Reuven known that Hashem would write in the Torah, 'Reuven heard and rescued [Yosef] from them,' he would have snatched Yosef and carried him back to his father on his shoulders."

Rabbi Frand asks, what exactly is the Midrash saying here? At first glance, Reuven seems to be concerned with publicity. If he had known how much press coverage and exposure he could receive, he would have done things differently. As it was, however, unaware that the public would scrutinize his acts so closely, Reuven did not overextend himself.

But this cannot be the intent of the Midrash, which clearly comes to praise him.

If so, why didn't he do the right thing even without the additional publicity?

The issue apparently, was not one of publicity but of clarity. He was certain he was doing the right thing. However, had he known Hashem would endorse his decision and emblazon it in the Torah for all eternity, he

would have acted in a much more decisive and resolute way.

Reuven had to contend with his brothers, the future tribal patriarchs of the Jewish people, men of great scholarship, righteousness and character. They had sat in judgment and condemned Yosef to death. As much as Reuven objected to the decision of the majority, could he be absolutely certain that he was right and they were wrong? And so Reuven acted tentatively. He persuaded them to toss Yosef into the pit, hoping to sneak back later and pull him out to safety. Had he known Hashem would write in the Torah, "And Reuven heard, and he rescued Yosef," had he known Hashem would endorse his view rather than that of his brothers, he would have acted more decisively. He would have hoisted Yosef onto his shoulders and carried him back to his father.

The problem of hesitation in the face of criticism and scorn plagues us in every generation. The prophet Malachi foretells a time, just prior to the Messianic era, when people will ridicule those who do misvot, but Eliyahu Hanavi, Mashiach and Hashem Himself will give the seal of approval to those with the courage to do what is right. The prophet encourages us not to hesitate, not to act tentatively when others accuse us of not being "with it" enough or "progressive" enough. We need not worry that we are in the minority and our detractors are in the majority. We need to act according to the conviction of our beliefs, and in the end, we will surely be vindicated.

This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of

*Mr. William Erdos
Shemuel Ber ben Chava AHC*

*By his son
Jacques & Lynne Erdos & Family*

1. *The Hanukah menorah is placed in a window facing the street in order to publicize the miracle. These tiny flames flicker proudly and proclaim our Jewish identity to our families inside the home as well as to the world outside. These candles proclaim that Am Yisrael Hai, the Jewish people live. We as individuals and as a community can be a shining example to those around us.*

2. *The custom is to add one more candle each night. This is because the longer the oil in the Temple burned, the greater the miracle became. Our Rabbis say, "One who does not increase decreases" (Perkei Abot 1:13). Our connection with Torah should be something dynamic and growing. Each new candle introduces a fresh and hopefully deeper appreciation of the Hanukah story and by extension the miracle of Jewish survival.*

3. *A unique property of a flame is that one can use it to light many more, and when it does so its own light is not diminished. The Gemara similarly says "A lamp for one illuminates like a lamp for a hundred" (Shabbat 122a). We never lose by sharing; in fact, we gain more from giving than from taking. Giving to others helps make the world a better place and in doing so everyone gains.*

4. *The word Hanukah means dedication, as we commemorate the process of the rededication of the Temple. Hanukah is also related to the Hebrew word for education, chinuch. Jewish education is not just about imparting information; rather, we are educating our children to play their*



Thoughts to Brighten Each Night

unique role within our community and the world at large. The lights in the Temple were kindled until they were able to burn by themselves. Judaism sees fostering independence as a primary goal of education. When people are empowered to make informed choices, their decisions are much more meaningful..

5. *The pasuk in Mishlei 20:27 likens man's soul to G-d's candle. Judaism views mankind as being created in the image of G-d. We possess earthly bodies; however, our souls are a spark of the Divine. While the body is nourished by food, the soul draws its sustenance from good deeds. Like the flicker of a flame, the soul strives to reach higher and higher and is a source*

of light, warmth and comfort to all who draw close to it.

6. *A mitzvah is to a candle as Torah to a light. Misvot are opportunities of infinite value. Each misvah is an act that can connect us to G-d and enrich our lives forever, regardless of what else we do or don't do. Rather than being all or nothing, Judaism is a journey where every step counts.*

7. *The Maccabees who rose to the challenge through their strong determination and faith in G-d were able to bring the Jewish people back from the brink of oblivion. We can never choose what happens to us in life; that is out of our control. What we can do is choose how to respond to those events. What we go through in life is not as important as who we become as a result. In a challenging situation there is a fine line between a response and a reaction.*

8. *On the last night of Hanukah we reflect on the lessons of the past week. We have learned how a small band of committed people were unwilling to resign themselves to defeat even when all seemed lost. They placed their faith in G-d and took action even though it seemed futile. This is symbolized by the miracle of the oil - they lit the candles even though they did not have enough fuel. Their trust in G-d meant that they realized although they had to try their best, ultimately all success is in the hands of Heaven.*

Think about the darkest times in Jewish history and draw courage, strength and inspiration from their acts of bravery and determination.



Shabbat Vayeshev & Hanukah Prayer & Class Schedule

Friday December 11h

Shir Hashirim & Minha	4:00 pm
Candle Lighting	4:13 pm

Shabbat December 12th

Shahrit	7:30 & 8:30 am
Minha	
followed by Seuda Shelisheet	3:55 pm
Arbit	4:55 pm
Shabbat Ends	5:13 pm
Rabbi's Class	After Habdalah



Rosh Hodesh Tebet Will be celebrated on Wednesday December 16Th the sixth day of hanukah.

Edmond J. Safra Synagogue
Joseph S. Jemal Synagogue
75 Hathaway Avenue
Deal NJ 07723

