

Epistemology of Tefila(Class 34) - 12/10/2020 — TOPIC: Chanukah - is The Festival of lights, instead of one day of presents we have 8 crazy nights —Part 2

Recap

1.

PRAYERS FOR CHANUKAH		
PAGE NUMBERS IN SIDDUR	RCAARTSCROLL	THE KOREN
Ma'ariv/Evening Service		
Al HaNissim/For the miracles	274 - 276	273
Had'lakat Ner Chanukah/Candle Lighting		
Brachot/Blessings	782	897
Hanerot Halalu/These lights	782	899
Maoz Tzur/Oh mighty Rock	782 - 784	899 - 901
Shacharit/Morning Service		
Al HaNissim/For the miracles	112 - 114	131
Hallel	632 - 642	733 - 743
Kriyat HaTorah/Torah Reading	948 - 952	1116 - 1121
Lam'natzeach/For the conductor	152 - OMIT	173 - OMIT
Mincha/Afternoon Service		
Al HaNissim/For the miracles	244 - 246	227
Birkat Hamazon/Grace After Meals		
Al HaNissim/For the miracles	186	981

2. Main addition is Al HaNissim/For the miracles in our Amidah for Ma'ariv, Shacharit, Mincha, and Birkat Hamazon.
3. We light candles every night, from left to right with a bracha starting with one and adding one additional candle each night until we have 8.
4. We sing the hymn Haneirot halalu while we light the candles and remember that the candles remind us of the miracle and are holy.
5. During the time of lighting candles we take the time to off from our work, to rest, sing songs, play dreidel, and educate our children about the miracle.

Class Strategy

1. ***Maoz Tzur/O mighty Rock*** — (RCA Artscroll page 782 -784, The Koren page 899 - 901) Rav Munk(page 409) after all the lights are burning it is customary to sing Maoz Tzur/O mighty Rock which was written Mordechai Ben Yitchak before 1250 but mor than that no exact details of the author are known. The first five verses begin with the acrostic letters Mem-Reish-Daled-Chaf-Yud of the authors name and the last verse starting with the acrostic Chazak/Be Strong is accepted to be a later addition by a different author later(RCA page 783/4).
 - (1) The first verse requests the the rededication of the Temple, restoration the altar, so that we can again fulfill our offerings and services there(Rabbi Sacks page 898). The next verses describe each of four of our crises and exiles in sequence and how HaShem delivered us through the course of Jewish History(Rabbi Sacks page 901).
 - (2) The second verse therefore covers our bondage in Egypt and how HaShem's strong and saved us and Pharaoh's army was drowned.
 - (3) The third verse refers to the Babylonian Exile when the first Temple was destroyed and we were dispersed from our land for 70 years.
 - (4) The fourth verse refers to Purim and Haman at the time who goes against Mordechai the Cypress and is hanged and all his progeny and possessions are destroyed by HaShem.

- (5) The fifth verse refers to the Syrian Greeks led by their King Antiochus IV who tried to Hellenize the Jews and defiled the oils but HaShem made a miracle for the oils to burn for eight days to our great joy
- (6) The last verse refers to a plea for Divine vengeance against all Israel's evil foes such as Esau's descendants, D'chei Admon/Red One and the seven Shepherds who according to Michah(5:4) will come in the final redemption from the enemies of Israel. The Talmud in Sukkah(52b) says King David will be in the middle, Adam, Seth, and Methuselah on his right and Abraham, Jacob, and Moses on his left.

2. ***Kriyat HaTorah/Reading the Torah*** — (RCA Arts scroll page 948 - 952, The Koren page 1116 - 1121, Stone Chumash page 764 - 774) There are allusions in the Torah about the festival of Chanukah:

- (1) In Parshat Emor where it recounts all the special days Shabbat, Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and the followed immediately by the lighting of the Eternal Light in the sanctuary. Eliyahu Kitov(Volume I page 267 - 268) says the juxtaposition of this subject with the Holidays alludes to a future time when after Sukkot a holiday will be celebrated to remember the miracle of this Eternal Light.
- (2) Another place is the juxtaposition of the offerings in Parshat Naso (Bamidbar/Numbers 7:12) with the obligation to light the Menorah in the next Parsha Beha'alot'cha(Bamidbar/Numbers 8:2). Furthermore offerings were not brought by the Tribe of Levi as the Ramban says Hashem promised Aaron that his descendants will one day consecrate another Chanukah hence hinting to the Chanukah of the House of Chashmonaim" Hasmoneans.
- (3) Other allusions occur in Breishit/Genesis(1:1) when counting from the first word the 25th word is Ohr/Light An indication to the lights of Chanukah being lit on the 25th day
- (4) Also if you count all the encampments of the Jewish people when they rest in the desert the name of the 25th one is Chashmonah which alludes to the Chashmonaim/Hasmoneans who also rested on the 25th day when they lit the menorah

In the end Chazal/Our sages in the Mishnah(Megillah3:6) laid down we are to read the section from Naso on Chanukah. On each day we read one of the tribes sacrifices starting with Judah until the eighth day where

we read the remaining 8 -12 and the first four verses about the Menorah from Beha'alot'cha(Bamidbar/Numbers 8:1-4)

- Hallel** — (RCA Artscroll page 632 - 642, The Koren page 733 - 743)
The ordinance that Hallel should be recited on Chanukah is mentioned in the Talmud(Shabbat 21b) and this must be the full, unabridged version of Hallel. On Chanukah we are saying Hallel for two reasons (RCA page 632) for our complete military victory and the miracle of the lights which began the renewal of the Temple. Rav Munk(page 414) explains that the reason Hallel should be said on every one of the 8 days is because every day was a renewed miracle that the oil continue to burn furthermore each of the 8 days is distinguished from the other by the number of candles we light each night. Hallel is regarded as part of Shacharit therefore there is no Kaddish after the Amidah and we proceed straight into Hallel. As discussed in the Pesukei D'zimrah Hallel begins and ends with a bracha to group together these Tehillim/ Psalms. The opening bracha reflects on the injunction in the Talmud Pesachim(117a) where the Chazal/Our sages specified that Hallel would consist of the 6 Psalms 113 -118 based on Yeshayahu/ Isaiah(30:29) and in Hilchot Chanukah(3:6) the Rambam includes Chanukah as one of the Festivals. Rav Munk(page 132) says Hallel is primarily a hymn praising HaShem's marvelous power of salvation and is reserved for days that commemorate specific miraculous events(RCA page 32). In fact Rabbi Sacks from this discussion in Pesachim(117a) says we must say it today on two of the most formative events in Modern Jewish History Yom HaAtzmaut and Yom Yerushlayim. Many commentators(Rav Munk page 132) say that the verses have Hallel were known and sung before the time of David, by Moshe and Bnei Yisreal at the Sea of Reeds, by Yehoshua after defeating the Canaanite Kings , by Devorah and Barak after defeating Sisera to mention some. These refer to various historic events in our history were praise would be given using these verses and many years later King David assembled these hymns and set them down in their final form.Rav Munk (page 133)suggests that the basic thought underlying the entire Hallel is expressed by the declaration stated at the very outset of Psalm 113 by saying "May the name of Hashem be blessed from now and forever". As Rabbi Sacks(page 733) sums up a choral symphony of faith in the presence of Hashem in history. As we go through the Psalms individually next week we will see how this group of Psalms each represent one of the 5 main themes of Jewish faith:

1. The Exodus
2. The Splitting of the Sea
3. The Giving of the Torah
4. The Resuscitation of the dead
5. The Coming of Mashiach

So next week we will study each Psalm and discuss the important parts. In the meanwhile as you will say Hallel everyday starting tomorrow try find sometime to read it through in English before next weeks class. Wishing you a Happy Chanukah!