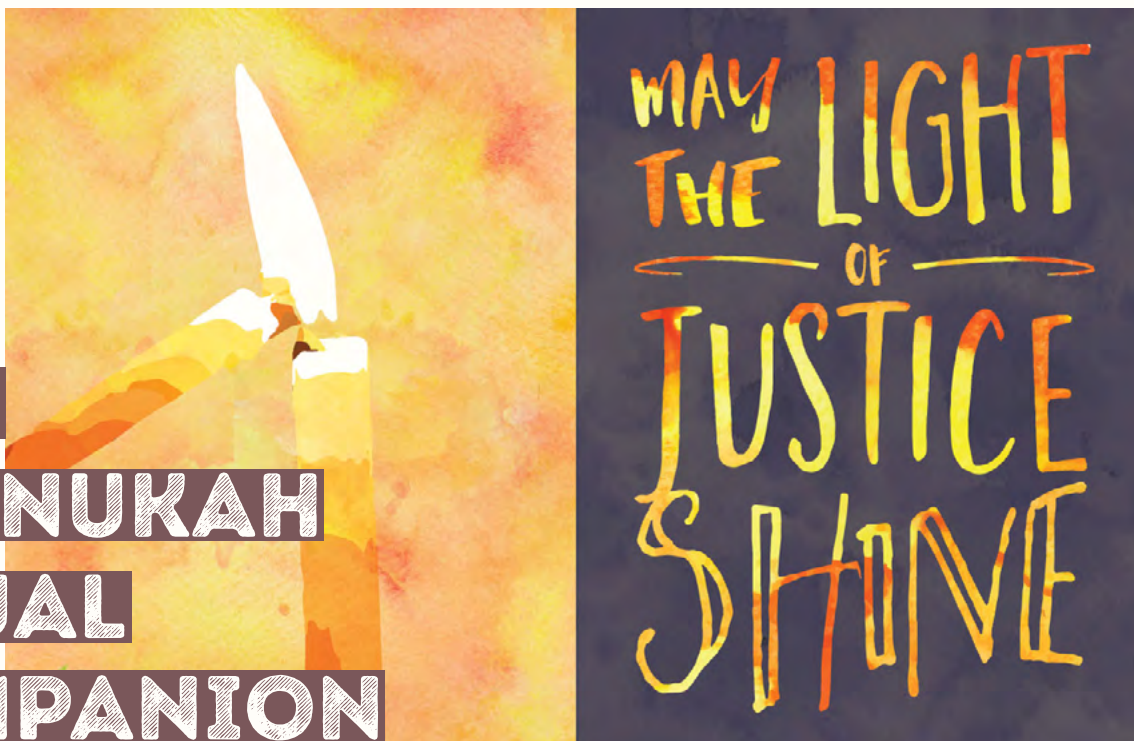


5776

CHANUKAH

RITUAL

COMPANION



Jewish Voice
for Peace

Justice • Equality • Dignity

CHANUKAH MEANS REDEDICATION. This year we rededicate ourselves to the deepest values of our tradition in the context of rampant racism and Islamophobia.

It is tradition that each night, candles are placed in the menorah, also called the hanukiah (a nine-branched candelabra), from right to left.

The shamash (taller helper) candle is lit first each night. Then the blessings are recited, after which the shamash is used to light the other candles, moving from left to right so that the newest candles is lit first each night. According to the Talmud, the hanukiah should be placed in front of the house or a window for all to see and share in its message (Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 21b).

THE CHANUKAH BLESSINGS

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

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai, E-lo-he-nu Me-lech ha-olam, a-sher ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav,
ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner Cha-nu-kah.

Blessed are You, Source of All Light, who makes us holy through your mitzvot,
and who instructs us to kindle the Chanukah light.

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

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai, E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam,
she-a-sa ni-sim la-avo-te-nu ba-ya-mim ha-hem ba-zman ha-zeh.

Blessed are You, Source of All Light, who performed miracles for our ancestors in their days at this time.

ON THE FIRST NIGHT, we say the shehechyanu as a special prayer to commemorate firsts, or special moments of
being together (some might want to say it any night because it is special that we are together):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁחַיָּנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה

Baruch A-tah Ado-nai, E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam, she-he-chiyanu ve-kiyy'manu ve-hig-gi-anu lazman ha-zeh.
Blessed are You, Source of All Light, who grants us life, who sustains us, and who brings us to this very moment.

HERE ARE EIGHT CHANUKAH GIFTS, one for each night – eight little sparks of renewal to help sustain us for the long road. We might wish to reflect on these, either in our own hearts, with our family and friends, or in actions in the streets - while our faces are reflecting the lights of the Hanukkiah.

1ST NIGHT NOT BY MIGHT, NOT BY POWER, BUT BY SPIRIT

The Haftarah (Prophetic portion) for Chanukah teaches: “Not by might and not by power but by My spirit, says the Lord of Hosts.” (Zechariah 4:6) The rabbis were all too aware that the military victory of the Macabees was short lived - and so they chose this Haftarah to underscore the dangers of putting our ultimate faith in military power.

We currently live in a 21st century reality in which military might impacts almost every aspect of our world. At home and abroad, we see a rise in militarism that too often targets vulnerable populations and communities of color. Our sacred task is to resist with a force more powerful. Imagine all our lights together, illuminating the future we want to see. Let each one of the eight nights be a remembrance of people whose resistance and spiritual light cast out the power of fear and militarism. What glimmers of resistance in spirit do you see around you today?

2ND NIGHT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The real history behind the story of Chanukah is painful and complex. In the days before the Maccabean Revolt, Judea was firmly under the control of the Seleucid Empire, led by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The Jewish elite of Judea had become largely Hellenized - the dominating culture of the day. In reality, the Jewish zealots led by the Maccabees fought as fiercely against assimilated Jewish Hellenists as they did against the Selucid Empire.

One lesson we learn from Chanukah, is that religious intolerance is not only something that is imposed upon us from without - it often exists and proliferates within our own communities as well. As we light the second light tonight, we ask: where does religious prejudice and persecution exist in our own communities? How is it manifest and what are its consequences? What are we willing to do to end the contemporary forms of Islamophobia, anti-Jewish oppression and all manifestations of religious persecution in our day?

3RD NIGHT SACRED JOY

On Chanukah, we offer songs and prayers of joy. We gather together to joyfully celebrate a festival of lights. We gather around festive meals of latkes, bimuelos and sufganiyot.

Joy, or simcha, is a sacred practice of cultural and spiritual resistance. Jewish tradition repeatedly teaches us to connect to joy, even in the face of destruction. Those who struggle for justice must strive for joy to sustain us even as we do the painful work of dismantling racism and xenophobia. What brings you joy on this night of Chanukah? What are the forms of joyful practice that sustain you as you continue the struggle?

4TH NIGHT CELEBRATING LIGHT AND DARK

On Chanukah we light increasing numbers of candles at the darkest time of the year in the northern hemisphere. The legacy of racism in our consciousness uses “light” and “dark” as metaphors for “good” and “bad”, or “hope” and “despair.” On Chanukah we are given the opportunity to notice and to re-frame these patterns of thought and language. On this 4th night, which echoes the 4th day of creation in which the sun and the moon were co-created to form day and night, we honor the sacred interplay between light and dark.

What do you notice about the dark night before you light the candles? What do you notice about the light in such darkness? What are the gifts that light and darkness offer you in your life right now?

5TH NIGHT ABUNDANCE

According to the Chanukah story in the Talmud, the oil for the Temple menorah was only enough for one day, but lasted for eight days. Amidst an increasing culture of scarcity, how can we rededicate ourselves to a world of plenitude? How will we recommit to a vision of economic justice - a society that stands down the hoarding of wealth and affirms there is enough to go around for everyone? To a vision of open borders where all are welcome?

6TH NIGHT BEING OPEN TO CHANGE

LITTLE DREIDL SPIN AND SPIN... ONE TURN AND WE
COME UP NISHT - NOTHING. AND THE NEXT TIME IT'S
GANTZ - EVERYTHING...

Tonight we might consider that in whatever situation we find ourselves right now, it will not be the same tomorrow. Change is constant. For those who struggle for justice in our world, this year has brought many changes: losses and gains, victories and defeats. It will change. And change again.

How do we find the wherewithal to keep up the struggle in such a dynamic and ever-changing world? When faced with so much impermanence, how do we keep our faith in an arc of history that bends toward justice?

7TH NIGHT STEADFASTNESS/SUMOUD

“IF THE OLIVE TREES KNEW THE HANDS THAT
PLANTED THEM, THEIR OIL WOULD BECOME TEARS.”
- MAHMOUD DARWISH

The centrality of oil in the Talmudic Chanukah story reminds us of importance of steadfastness. Making olive oil is itself a practice in patience and resolve. Olive trees grow for centuries, for generations. They bear witness. They are the ancestors of this struggle, bearing fruit to sustain us in the future. For Palestinians, olive oil is a symbol of both steadfastness (“sumoud”) cultural survival and resistance.

This night of Chanukah, how will you honor the sumoud of the Palestinian people? What will you do to ensure that Palestinian steadfastness will be rewarded with a bountiful harvest?

8TH NIGHT HONORING OUR ANCESTORS

In the “Al Hanisim” prayer we say on Chanukah, we honor the miracles that took place “in days of old as in our own day.” Tonight as we light our final candle of the festival, we give thanks for the miracle of light that burns within, among and beyond us. We are not alone and never have been. We are part of our beautiful earth and the night sky, lives that came before our own, all that sustains us and all that we sustain.

To whom would you like to dedicate your last candle tonight? In whose memory or towards what struggle would you like to dedicate tonight’s lighting?

ONWARD

Why is it customary to light the Chanukah lights in the windows of our homes? Jewish tradition teaches that we should publicize the miracle (Aramaic: Pirsumei D’Nisa). Chanukah is not a private holiday. It reminds us that our homes are forums for cultural resistance. What other messages would you like to display in your window for all to see?

As Chanukah ends, and as we pack away our hanukiot and dreidel decorations, here is an invitation to place a new symbol in our windows- a sign of welcome.



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THIS IMAGE REPRESENTS THE
STRENGTH, HUMANITY AND
DIGNITY OF REFUGEES.

CREATED BY MICAH BAZANT IN
COLLABORATION WITH JVP’S
ARTISTS & CULTURAL WORKERS
COUNCIL, THIS POSTER DEFIES
ISLAMOPHOBIA AND PUBLICLY
DECLARES OUR SOLIDARITY WITH
REFUGEES EVERYWHERE, FROM
SYRIA TO CENTRAL AMERICA TO
PALESTINE.

ARTWORK BY MICAHBAZANT.COM

LET'S

SING!

HANEROT HALALU

Hanerot halalu, anu madlikin
Al hanisim ve'al hanifla'ot
Ve'al hateshu'ot, ve'al nechamot (hamilchamot)
She'asita la'avoteinu
Bayamim haheim bazman hazeh
Al yedei kohanecha hak'doshim.

These Chanukah lights we kindle
In honor of the miracles, the wonders
And for the transformation and the comfort
(wars) that you created for our ancestors,
In their days and in our time (x2)
By the hands of Your holy servants.

OCHO KANDELIKAS (LADINO) BY FLORY JAGODA

1. Chanukah linda sta aki,
ocho kandelas para mi (2x)

Chorus:

O --- Una kandelika, dos kandelikas,
tres kandelikas, kuatro kandelikas sintyu
kandelikas, sej kandelikas,
siete kandelikas, ocho kandelas para mi

2. Muchas fiestas vo fazer,
kon alegriyas y plazer (2x)

Chorus

3. Los pastelikos vo kumer,
kon almendrikas y la myel (2x)

Chorus

8 CANDLES

1. Beautiful Chanukah is now here
And eight candles for me appear.

Chorus:

Oh - one little, two little,
Three little, four little candles;
Five, six, seven little candles,
Eight little candles for me.

2. Lots of parties for my leisure
So much fun and so much pleasure.

Chorus

3. Dainty pastries for me to eat
With almonds and honey so sweet.

Chorus

ENGLISH

(Oh), Chanukah, Oh Chanukah
Come light the menorah
Let's have a party
We'll all dance the horah
Gather 'round the table, we'll give you a treat
Dreidels (*or Sevivon*) to play with, and latkes to eat

And while we are playing
The candles are burning bright (or low)
One for each night, they shed a sweet light
To remind us of years long ago
One for each night, they shed a sweet light
To remind us of years long ago.

YIDDISH TRANSLITERATION

(Oy), Chanukah oy Chanukah
A yontif a sheyner,
A lustiker a freylekher
Nisht do nokh azoyner
Ale nakht mit dreydlech shpilm mir,
Frishe heyse latkes, esn on a shir.

Geshvinder, tsindt kinder
Di Chanukah likhtlech on,
Zogt "Al Hanisim", loybt Got far di nisim,
Un lomir ale tantzen in kon.
Zogt "Al Hanisim", loybt Got far di nisim,
Un lomir ale tantzen in kon.

YIDDISH LITERAL TRANSLATION

(Oh), Chanukah, Oh Chanukah
A beautiful celebration.
Such a cheerful and happy one,
There is none like it.
Every night with the dreidels we will play,
Fresh, hot latkes we will eat endlessly.

Come quickly children
Light the Chanukah candles
Say "Al Hanisim", praise God for the miracles,
And we will all dance together in a circle!
Say "Al Hanisim", praise God for the miracles,
And we will all dance together in a circle!

I HAVE A LITTLE DREIDEL

I Have a Little Dreidel... I made it out of clay
and when it's dry and ready then dreidel I will play.

* I have a little dreidel, I made it out of mud,
threw it on the table, it plopped down with a thud.

* I have a little dreidel, I made it out of wood
once the point was sharpened, it spun really good

* I have a little dreidel, I made it out of...

