

Messianic Jewish Candle Lighting Ceremony For Hanukah

In seeking a practical expression for this holy day, believers in Messiah Yeshua can incorporate many beautiful traditions. The observance is centered on the hanukiyah (9 candle menorah) and what it represents. Each evening during Hanukah family and friends gather to light the hanukiyah with the appropriate number of candles. The branches of the hanukiyah represent the eight days of Hanukah, plus one shamash candle used to light the others.

Note: the appropriate numbers of candles are placed in the hanukiyah from right to left, yet they are kindled by the shamash from left to right.

On the first night of Hanukah, after sundown, the shamash (servant) candle is lit, which in turn is used to kindle the first candle in the Menorah. The second night, we light the shamash again and use it to light the two right candles. This continues through the eight nights of the Hanukah.

During the lighting of the shamash and the appropriate number of candles, the following blessings are chanted:

(Traditional)

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and commanded us to light Hanukah lights.

Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam, ah-sheer kid-shah-nu b'mitz-voh-tayv v'tzee-vah-nu l'had-leek ner shel Hanukah.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our fathers in those days at this season.

Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam, she-ah-sah ni-seem la-ah-vo-tay-nu ba-ya-meem ha-hem baz-man ha-zeh.

(Messianic version)

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us in Yeshua,
in whose name we light the Chanukah lights.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam,
asher kidushanu b'Yeshua, asher bismo madlikim
anachnu ner shell chanukah.

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our fathers in those days at this season.

Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam, she-ah-sah ni-seem la-ah-vo-tay-nu ba-ya-meem ha-hem baz-man ha-zeh.

(On the first night you can add)

Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the universe, who granted us life, sustained us and permitted us to reach this season.

Baruch Ata Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha-olam, she-he-che-yanu v'kee-ma-nu v'hi-gee-ah-nu laz-man ha-zeh.

Note: Traditionally, the candles are lit from right to left. The first candle is placed on the right side of the Menorah, and the

second one placed directly to the left. But lighting them starts from the left and moves to the right. Thus the first candle that is lit is the new candle added for that day. The Shammash candle (the tallest) is used to light the others.

Messianic thoughts on lighting the candles.

Shamash (Servant) Candle

Messiah Yeshua stated in Mark 10:44-45:

Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be the servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

First Candle

Genesis 1:3-4 describes the creation of the first light:

God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

Second Candle

Exodus 13:21-22 reveals that God is the source of Israel's light:

And the Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

Third Candle

King David reminds us that God Himself is the source of our own individual light:

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread (Psalm 27:1)? For You light my lamp; the Lord my God illumines my darkness (Psalm 18:28).

Fourth Candle

Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 119:130 describe the light that comes from God's Word:

Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Fifth Candle

Messiah Yeshua is the greatest light of all:

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (John 1:4-5).

As Messiah Yeshua was in the Temple in Jerusalem watching the illuminating lights, He declared: "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Aged Simeon was promised by the Lord that he would not die until he saw Israel's Messiah. When he saw Yeshua as an infant in the Temple, he knew that this One was the light of Israel and the Nations. Simeon declared: "My eye have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel" (Luke 2:30-32).

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Messiah (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Sixth Candle

After we come to know Messiah, we are to be a source of light for the world. King Messiah tells us in Matthew 5:14-16:

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Seventh Candle

The prophet Isaiah speaks of the future glory of a restored Israel in Isaiah 60:1-3:

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you... And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Eighth Candle

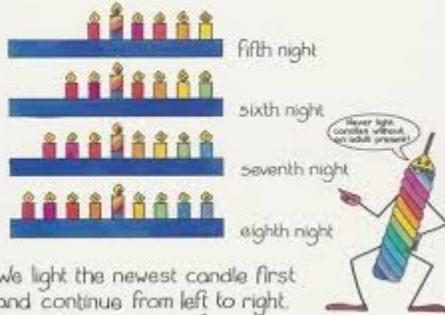
Revelation 21:22-27 give us a description of our glorious eternal dwelling place in the New Jerusalem:

And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.



Place right to left; *Kindle* left to right

First we light the Shamash and use it to light the other candles.



We light the newest candle first and continue from left to right.

How to light the Candles

first night

second night

third night

fourth night

The candles are put in the Hanukkiyah from right to left. Each night we add one more candle.