

THE LIGHTING OF THE MENORAH (CHANUKIAH)



Menorah is the Hebrew word meaning "candelabrum." A Chanukah Menorah is a special nine-branched lamp in which the Chanukah candles are placed and then blessed. To "announce the miracle," the chanukiah should be placed near a window for all to view. The candles should be tall enough to burn for half an hour, and should be lit as soon as possible after the stars come out each evening. The kindling of the lights is a most joyous and beautiful ritual.

On the first night, place one candle in the chanukiah at the extreme right. Light the "Shamash," the "helper" candle that stands apart from the other eight and is used to light each candle, then recite the blessings. On each subsequent evening, the candles are placed from right to left as you face the Menorah. But you light the candles from left to right so that on each night the newest candle is lit first.

The Chanukah candles should be kindled "immediately at the appearance of the stars" if possible. Later in the evening, if necessary, but always before any member of the household - child or adult - goes to sleep.

On Friday night, the Chanukah candles are lit before nightfall and **before** the Sabbath candles. On Saturday night, they are lit **after** the conclusion of Shabbat.

(Suggested reading before lighting candles. Recited after the Shamash is lit but before the other candles are kindled.)

"The lights of Chanukah are a symbol of our joy. In time of darkness, our ancestors had the courage to struggle for freedom to be themselves, freedom to worship in their own way. Theirs was the victory of the weak over the strong, the few over the many, and the righteous over the arrogant. It was a victory for all ages and all peoples. Let the lights we kindle shine forth for the world. May they illuminate our lives, even as they fill us with gratitude that our faith has been saved from extinction time and again."