

A MESSIANIC HANUKKAH GUIDE

HANUKKIAH PREPARATION, BLESSING GUIDE, AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS INCLUDED

Host and invite friends and family to your Hanukkah Party

- Include Food + Beverages + Desserts
- Provide a Hanukkiah Menorah and Candles (find on Amazon.com)
- Set aside a time to light candles, read a story, recite blessings, and have some dialogue.

Hanukkah AKA the Festival of Light

By the 1st century Hanukkah became known as the Festival of Light. This was due to several reasons, one being the 9 branched Hanukkiah menorah which had 8 candles lit to memorialize for 8 days and nights the great deliverance that God gave His people over the tyranny of lawlessness in the time of the Maccabees (Daniel 8-11 and the Books of the Maccabees). This national celebration found its home in Jerusalem and its Temple. The great Jewish Historian, Josephus, said that there was so much light from everyone's menorahs along with the 4 giant menorahs in the temple, that you could see the city of Jerusalem aglow at night for miles around. This was a primary reason for also calling Hanukkah the Festival of Light. In addition, light has always been associated with God. As the Jewish Apostle John says in his epistle, "God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all." So let's rejoice in this season of celebrating the Light of God's Presence among us!

Preparing the Hanukkiah

Candles are added to the Hanukkiah (menorah) from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. On the first night, place a candle in the space for the shamash and a candle in the space on the far-right hand side of the hanukkiah. Light the shamash, then use its flame to light the first candle before returning it to its slot. On each subsequent night, a new candle is added just to the left of the previous night's lights. On each night, begin by lighting the shamash, and then use it to light the candles on the hanukkiah. The candles may be lit from either direction.

HANUKKAH BLESSING RECITED OVER THE HANUKKIAH EVERY NIGHT

Light the Candles First

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Sovereign of all, who reveals Himself through His Son, our Messiah, Yeshua the Light of God, and the Light of the World!

Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Sovereign of all, who performed signs, wonders, and miracles for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

We bless these lights in memorial to the wondrous miracles You performed for our ancestors. During these eight days of Hanukkah, these lights are sacred. May their glow rouse us to give thanks for Your wondrous acts of deliverance that find their fulfilment in the liberation and salvation offered to all through Yeshua, the life and light of every human being!

READINGS AND DISCUSSION

Night 1: ^{TLV} **1 John 1:5** Now this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you—that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.

Questions:

- Seeing God is Light, and this is the primary symbol of Hanukkah, in what ways can this season help us and our children know God?
- What does light tell us about God, His Son, His Kingdom, and His ways?

Night 2 ^{TLV} **John 10:22-30** ²² Then came *Hanukkah*; it was winter in Jerusalem. ²³ *Yeshua* was walking in the Temple around Solomon’s Colonnade. ²⁴ Then the Judean leaders surrounded Him, saying, “How long will You hold us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us outright!” ²⁵ *Yeshua* answered them, “I told you, but you don’t believe! The works I do in My Father’s name testify concerning Me. ²⁶ But you don’t believe, because you are not My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice. I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life! They will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all. And no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

Questions

- Seeing that *Yeshua* resides in Capernaum and that it would take 4-5 days (probably more in the winter) to get to Jerusalem, do you think this celebration was important to Him?
- Seeing that The Festival of Light is also connected to spiritual illumination and revelation, do you find it intriguing that *Yeshua* has been keeping people in the “dark” concerning who He is and now, during the celebration of the Festival of Light He reveals who He really is? Share why.
- “I and the Father are One” What does that mean?

Night 3 ^{TLV} **John 1:1-18** In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ All things were made through Him, and apart from Him nothing was made that has come into being. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overpowered it. ⁶ There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the light, so that through him everyone might believe. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to bear witness concerning the light. ⁹ The true light, coming into the world, gives light to every man.

Questions

- What does it mean that Jesus is “The Light”?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the “True Light”?
- How does He give “light” to every person?

Night 4 ^{TLV} **John 8:12** *Yeshua* spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” ^{TLV} **John 12:35-36** ³⁵ Therefore *Yeshua* said to them, “The light is with you for a little longer. Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness will not overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn’t know where he is going. ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become sons of light.” *Yeshua* spoke these things, then left and hid Himself from them. ^{TLV} **John 12:46** As light I have come into the world, so that everyone who trusts in Me should not remain in darkness.

Questions

- How does Yeshua use the term “light”?
- How does He light our path in life?
- What does it mean to live in the light?

Night 5 ^{NAS} **Isaiah 9:1-2** But there will be no *more* gloom for her who was in anguish; in earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He shall make *it* glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. ² The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them. ^{TLV} **Matt. 4:12-17** ¹² Now when *Yeshua* heard that John had been handed over, He withdrew to the Galilee. ¹³ Leaving *Natzeret*, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴ This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, ¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations—¹⁶ the people sitting in darkness have seen a great light, and those sitting in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” ¹⁷ From then on, *Yeshua* began to proclaim, “Turn away from your sins, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”

Questions:

- What or who is the “great light”?
- In what way is Yeshua “The Great Light”?

Night 6 ^{TLV} **Matthew 17:1-5** After six days, *Yeshua* takes with Him Peter and Jacob and John his brother, and brings them up a high mountain by themselves. ² Now He was transfigured before them; His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

Questions:

- What does it mean that he became white as light?
- How does this passage relate to Yeshua as the Light of the World?

Night 7 ^{TLV} **John 3:19-21** ¹⁹ “Now this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world and men loved the darkness instead of the light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light, so that their deeds will not be exposed. ²¹ But whoever practices the truth comes to the light, so that it may be made known that his deeds have been accomplished in God.”

Questions:

- Why do some people hate Yeshua?
- Why would some people also hate you?
- How does “truth” relate to “light”?

Night 8 ^{TLV} **Matthew 5:14-15** ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on a lampstand so it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men so they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Questions

- Yeshua is in heaven, so who now is the Light of the World?
- How can we let our light shine? Give examples.