

Seventh Night

When the Greeks outlawed Jewish study, our ancestors could not study the Torah, the Five Books of Moses. Underground, they began to study the prophets and other writings such as the Book of Esther and the Book of Ruth instead of the weekly Torah portions. Once Judah Maccabee prevailed, we could once again worship in the open. Our community took the experience of studying these other biblical writings and integrated them into what we today call the Haftarah portion; the portion of the Bible which compliments the theme of the weekly Torah portion.

What are some of the experiences that you have integrated into your Jewish practice?

Eighth Night

Chanukah comes to an end. The past eight days have begun with the evening light from candles that are newly bought, saved from last year, or maybe found suddenly in a frantic search for just a few more. The word Chanukah; dedication, shares the same root as the Hebrew word for chinuch; education.

What is something new you have learned these past eight days?

©Spiritual healing text by Rabbi Eric Weiss

The Bay Area Jewish Healing Center is dedicated to providing Jewish spiritual care to those living with illness, to those caring for the ill, and to the bereaved through direct service, education and training, and information and referral.

Chanukah Reflections



Bay Area Jewish Healing Center
3330 Geary Blvd., 3rd Floor West
San Francisco, CA 94118
415-750-4197 • Fax: 415-750-4115
www.jewishhealingcenter.org

A Reflection for each night of Chanukah

First Night

The dreidel is a top that has on each of its sides a letter which symbolizes the famous Chanukah phrase: A great miracle happened here. In Israel the dreidel reads: A great miracle happened here!

What is a miracle that you hope for this Chanukah season?

Second Night

Latkes smell so good! Everybody has their favorite recipe or story about a relative who has the best one! Jewish life is filled with connections between food and ritual celebration. The scents wafting from the kitchen into the rest of the house are a part of what makes a house a Jewish home. Some say that our most vivid memories are linked to familiar scents of food.

Share tonight your favorite food memories.

Third Night

On the third night the candles seem to take on a collective glow. It is just one more candle, yet it seems to give us the sense that now a community of light is growing.

What are the ways in which you bring or would like to bring the light of your presence to the community?

Fourth Night

This is Shabbat, the day of rest. There are so many things we need to rest from. Often we think Shabbat is a day to rest only from work. But is it also a day to rest from contemplating a change, to rest from the many different processes that pre-occupy us and weigh upon us.

Name tonight the rest you need and the, this Shabbat, let yourself rest.

Fifth Night

In a few days, we will celebrate the new moon; Rosh Chodesh. The new Hebrew month will be Tevet. This year it arrives on Shabbat. Many women's groups have claimed Rosh Chodesh as a holiday in which to celebrate the miracles of life that they embody. No matter our gender or who raised us, our first original home, in this world, is the womb.

This night in the darkness of December with the sounds, smells and feel of the winter rain, what do you hope will nourish you as you continue to develop more fully into your God created self?

Sixth Night

In the creation story told in the Book of Genesis, on the 6th day God created people. The first breath of life was breathed by God into the first person. With this breath, this ruach, each of us was given a soul.

Tonight, spend a few minutes in silence listening to the sound of your own breathing. Allow your breath to calm you and remind you of the life force within you.