



THE MEANING OF HANUKKAH:
A Kabbalistic Interpretation
By
Chief Rabbi Levi Ben Levy

Hanukkah is eight days of meditation, concentration, contemplation and thinking of an incident that took place in our history that has affected our lives today. We recall the struggle, the despair and the hopeless condition which gave courage to a people who stood up and fought for life. If you fight for life, salvation is won. It is in the victory of life that we find joy. This was the realization of the Maccabees in their message to you and me at the season of Hanukkah. In the eight days of rededication, evaluation and introspection of our being, we recall the past in a way that transforms who we are in the present, which in turn, affects what we may do in the future.

We don't just count, we evolve each day by brings the following things to mind:

On the 1st day

Calls our attention to the knowledge of our G-d "THE LORD IS ONE".

שמע ישראל, יי, אלהינו, יי אהד.

On the 2nd day

Our duty to study the written and Oral law. [2]

(א) ש בכתב (ב) ש בעל פה.

On the 3rd day

We acknowledge that we are the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and that our spiritual being is dependent on Nefesh (life force, physical soul) Ruach (spirit) and Neshmah (living soul).

On the 4th day

Reminds us of the four sections of the law where it declares God's absolute unity. We must love God with all of our Heart, Soul, Might and Strength.

On the 5th day

Represents the Five Books of Moses. In studying them we find 613 commandments. There are 365 positive commands that equal the 365 days in the calendar year. There are 248 negative commands (thou shall nots) that equal the 248 bodily organs. The divine harmony of the positive and negative commandments is expressed in the Torah through the command to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Thus proving that inner peace cannot be achieved without making peace with ones fellows.

On the 6th day

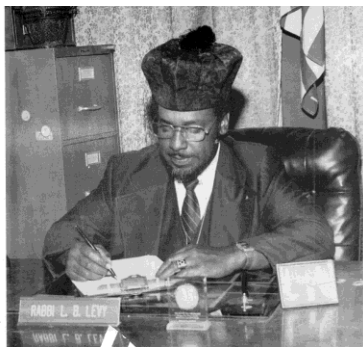
Symbolizes the six days in which G-d made the heavens and earth. It was on this day man was created and was given the responsibility to maintain God's creation. To choose good or evil. Ultimately, we must either be our brother's keeper or we will be his murderer; killing him and ourselves in numerous ways.

On the 7th day

Seven represents completeness, perfection. It represents the seven gates in man: (2) eyes, (2) ears, (2) nasal cavities in our nose. (1) mouth. There are seven days in the week. Rosh Hashanah occurs in the seventh month of the year. These examples teach us to be more aware of the patterns that exist in the universe because these patterns can instruct us.

On the 8th day

Gives us eight complete days of retrospection, rejuvenation, refortification and thereby, giving us a rededicated mind.



Chief Rabbi Levy Ben Levi, ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.

* For further reading consult the *Shulkan Aruk* and *Guide to Jewish Holy Days: History and Observance* by Hayyim Schauss.