

THE LIGHTS OF THE BONFIRES

A COLLECTION OF SAYINGS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTIVITIES

A collection of lights of the bonfires – sayings on the subject of lights and candles from various periods of time throughout Jewish history.

You may use the sections for cultural–study activities on the subject of light. Such an activity can be in preparation for Chanukah and contribute to the personal connection of the participants to the central symbol of the festival, by way of ancient and new Jewish texts.

- We will disperse the verses in the room. Each collection of verses pursuant to the time period will be placed in a separate corner. You may light up each corner with Chanukah candles and dim the lights in the room. We will ask the participants to wander around between the verses and choose from each corner a statement that speaks to them, which expresses the values that are important to them, or that they would like to adopt, that have a meaning in their lives, or verses that they do not agree with...(that they do and don't agree with....).
- After choosing the verses you may instruct the participants to express the verses on a sheet with the help of artwork and/or writing to create a personal homiletic interpretation of the verses: Why did I choose these verses? How do they connect for me? And perhaps I would want to add my own personal statement...





Lights in the Bible

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was empty, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God was hovering over the waters: And God said, Let there be light and there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day ,and the darkness he called night. And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Genesis 1, 1-5

Light shines on the righteous and joy on the upright in heart.

Psalms, 97:11

I saw that wisdom is better than folly, just as light is better than darkness. The wise have eyes in their heads, while the fool walks in the darkness

Ecclesiastes 2:13

Light is sweet and it pleases the eyes to see the sun :However many years someone may live, let them enjoy them all. But let them remember the days of darkness, for there will be many.

Ecclesiastes 11: 7-8





Lights from the Sages

As a man who lights candle from candle, the candle is alight and his friend shall not be absent

Bamidbar Rabbah, Chapter 13, 4-5, 20.

Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

Psalms 115, 105

The wicked are similar to a man walking in the dark who reaches a stone and falls over it, he reaches a pit and falls into it, he who wrote "But the way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what makes them stumble" (Proverbs 4:19) however the good are similar to a man who walks with a candle before him, he reaches a pit, he walks around it so that he shall not fall into it, he reaches a stone and safeguards himself so he shall not stumble.

Psikata Rabbati, Chapter 8

All those who are in the dark see all those who are in the light

Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael, Chapter 4

Rabbi Yehuda says: The light was created first, a fable to a king who wished to build a palatine and it was dark there, what did he do - he lit candles and lamps to know how to place the foundation stones, the light was created first, and Rabbi Nehemya said the world was created first, a fable to a king who built Palatine and crowned it with candles and lights.

Genesis Rabbah, Chapter 3





Lights from Hassidism

The principle of the purpose of this good deed is the lighting: the desire, the excitement, the fire burning in the soul!

Rabbi Levy Yitzhak from Berdychiv

For as long as the candle is alight we need to carry on improving
Hassidic

It is written: And God said: let there be light – if someone asks sincerely: God, let there be light! – he will receive light.

Hassidic

A young rabbi complained to the Rabbi of Marozin: “During the times that I am engrossed in my studies, I feel that I am life and light, however if I cease studying immediately it all disappears. What should I do?”

The Rabbi replied: “ A fable of one who went out at night in the dark to the forest, and for a short time a man accompanied him who was holding a torch in his hand, however when they reached a fork in the road they separated, the first must continue and and cast about, while the second who was carrying his light has nothing to fear from the dark”.

“The Hidden Light”, Martin Buber





Rabbi Nachman from Bratslav said, we were given this article by his grandfather the Ba'al Shem Tov: Oy vey, the world is full of lights and wonderful and terrible secrets, and the little hand is shading the eyes and stopping them from seeing the big lights.

“The Hidden Light”, Martin Buber

Pioneering lights

One whose face does not light up – his soul is also in darkness.

Avraham Shlonsky

There are seven days in the week
and there are seven branches of the Menorah
And one who lights the Menora with his soul
He will pour the oil for the light

Avraham Shlonsky

Every light, even if it is moved from its place – its memory remains

S Y Agnon

All the darkness cannot extinguish one candle, but one candle can light up all the darkness.

Chaim Hazaz

It is mandatory to emphasize the lights without concealing the shadows

D. Sadan





*Firstly one candle is lit, another and another and more, the darkness will
completely pass.*

Within the simple and young poor people, the light will be first cracked open, and then the others will join with them, those loving justice and truth. The freedom and human progress, the beauty, and when the candles are alight everyone will wonder and be happy at the work that has been done. You have no more important role than bringing happiness alike the role of the sun serving the light.

Herzl

Poetry lights

I didn't win light in a windfall / C.N.

Bialik

I didn't win light in a windfall,
nor by deed of my father's will.
I hewed my light from granite.
I quarried from my heart.

In the mine of my heart a spark hides –
not large, but wholly my own.
Neither borrowed, nor stolen from
anyone

but my very own.

Sorrow wields huge hammer blows,
the rock of endurance cracks my heart
blinding my eye with flashes
And from my eyes – I make my verse.

They fly from my lines to your breast
to vanish in kindled flame.
While I, with heart's blood and marrow
pay the price of the blaze.





It is the time of light / Rachel Halfi

There is a time when everything sits inside
the light

Like a precious stone within a golden adornment

It is possible to take a handful of such light

It is possible to eat such light

It is possible to swallow such light

It is possible to move along its length and breadth

It is possible to weigh it in full gold

By: Natan Yonatan

And in a stormy night, late,

when the thunder falls into the darkness

and the sky cannot be seen, no shining star

then we light the remainder of the candle

and there is hope that the world will lighten up again



Patches of light / Dalia Rabikowitz

And in this dark material patches of light were impressed
And no sound was heard from them no whisper passed
And they are like myrrh oil running off and dripping from the tin

And they are dripping like perfumes and their movement is soft and tranquil
and with this dark material they pool into a small spring
and they have beauty and grace that low and pass over their banks

And with this dark material a goldmine is formed
and this dark material discovers its depths
and there is pleasurable love between the dark and the gold

And they embrace and are serene and they have no voice and breath
And the light drips and kisses this material with its lips
And the darkness becomes its body as a well for the patches of gold

In this dark material patches of light are impressed
And no sound was heard from them no whisper passed
And they are like myrrh oil running off and dripping from the tin
