



# The Poile Zedek Bulletin

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Rabbi: Abraham J. Mykoff • President: Mr. Danny Ravitz

December 2008/January 2009

Kislev/Tevet 5769

WE KINDLE THESE LIGHTS  
FOR THE MIRACLES  
AND THE WONDERS...



הנרות הללו אנהנו מדליקים  
על הנסים ועל הנפלאות...

## THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

Historically, Chanukah is the youngest holiday on the Jewish Calendar and the laws of Chanukah have a unique format. Instead of starting with the fundamental laws as all other holidays do, the laws of Chanukah begin with an historical synopsis of the events leading up to Chanukah. The source for the laws of Chanukah can be found in the second chapter of the Tractate Shabbos (21A) (במה) מדליקין which we read every Friday evening. The Talmud discusses the laws regarding the lighting of the Sabbath candles and then makes the transition to the subject of lighting Chanukah candles.

The Gemara asks an odd question - "מאי הנוכה?" - What is Chanukah? A seemingly elementary question that even a pre-schooler could answer. The great commentator Rashi clarifies the question to mean "על איזה נס קבעוה?" - Based on which miracle did our sages establish the holiday of Chanukah? Was it merely to commemorate the miracle of the physical victories the Almighty wrought, giving the large and powerful Syrian-Greek forces into the hands of the few, weak, and untrained forces of the Jews? Or, rather, was the holiday of Chanukah primarily established to commemorate the miracle of the cruse of oil which symbolized the spiritual triumph and reestablishment of Torah Judaism, which had been dangerously threatened by the Greek culture of their overlords?

The commentator Ba"ch justifies the question as to "What is Chanukah?" and the subsequent historical introduction to the laws, based on the fact that all other holidays have their authoritative sources in the Torah. Even Purim which, like Chanukah, is a Rabbinical holiday, has its authoritative source in Megilat Esther (the Scroll of Esther) which is part of the holy writings (תנ"ך). However, Chanukah has no officially sanctioned source for its origin or observances, Thus, the Talmud's question "מאי הנוכה?" - What is Chanukah? is a most fitting question.

Interestingly, Maimonides (Rambam) groups the laws

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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This current year has been quite memorable for our congregation. Unfortunately, the year began on a rather grim note, with the desecration of the Poile Zedek Cemetery during the first week of January, when about 500 stones were overturned, a number of which were destroyed in the process. The magnitude of the destruction was quite difficult for us to cope with both emotionally and financially. However, we were heartened by the outpouring of warmth and concern from Jews and Gentiles across the country who offered their support and solidarity. The Jewish Federation of Middlesex County was also a strong partner with us. We are very fortunate that the New Brunswick Police Department apprehended the four vandals very quickly and are grateful to the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office for bringing them to justice and bringing much needed closure and relief to the families of the deceased and the Jewish Community at large.

On a much lighter note, we recently held our 107<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner "From Generation to Generation." The dinner was held on November 2, 2008 at the Radisson Hotel in Piscataway, with about 125 guests attending. The dinner was very enjoyable and quite successful. The honorees were:

### FOUNDERS AWARD

Marvin & Myra Marantz

Norman Mironov

### KETER SHEM TOV AWARD

Marty & Elisha Klein

### LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD

Miriam Goldman

Helen S. Solomon

### LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD – IN MEMORIAM

Seymour Kamp, ז"ל,

Audrey Mironov, ז"ל

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## WEEKLY SHACHARIT (MORNING) SERVICES

Monday—Friday..... 7:30 AM  
followed by a light Breakfast and class

Sunday ..... 8:00 AM  
followed by a light Breakfast and class

Shabbat ..... 9:00 AM  
followed by a hot Kiddush



## LAWS AND CUSTOMS

Starting Sunday evening, December 21, the 25th day of Kislev, through Monday, December 29, we will celebrate the eight-day holiday of Chanukah.

### The Menorah

As a symbol and a reminder of the miracle of the oil, we light and display a menorah each night of the holiday. It is customary to place it in the window facing the street to publicize the miracle. Using either candles or oil lamps, we begin with one light and add another light each night, lighting a total of eight lights on the eighth night of Chanukah. Since the lights of the menorah are not to be used for any other purpose, the menorah is lit by a special lighting candle called a "Shamash". It is placed a little higher in the menorah to show that it is not part of the Chanukah candles. The candle on the extreme right is put in on the first night. Each night a new candle is added from right to left. However, when lighting we light the candles from left to right; the newest candle added is lit first, followed by the second newest and so on.



The Menorah should be lit in the evening after the Ma'ariv service. The candles must burn for at least half an hour after nightfall. When lighting the menorah, it is preferable that the entire family be present to fulfill the Mitzvah. In some homes it is customary for each household member to light his/her own Menorah, except for the wife who fulfills her obligation with her husband's lighting.

On Friday evening, the Chanukah menorah must be lit before the Shabbat candles (make sure to use longer candles or extra oil so that they burn for at least half an hour after nightfall). On Saturday night the Havdalah is recited to officially end the Sabbath and then the menorah is lit.

Throughout the eight days of Chanukah, we include the complete *Hallel* prayer in the morning service and *A/ Hanisim* in all three daily services and in the Grace After Meals. A portion of the Torah is read daily in the Synagogue during morning prayers, describing the dedication of the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

### Lighting The Menorah

On the first night of Chanukah, three blessings are recited before lighting the candles. The first blessing, thanks G-d for giving us the privilege to fulfill the

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### WEEKLY CLASSES & SHIURIM

**Millionaire Club** — Lunch & Torah study with Rabbi Mykoff Tues. & Thurs. 12:00 - 1:30 P.M.

**Torah Study** in Russian — Learn the Torah with Rabbi Eli Kogan. Thursdays — 7:00 P.M. Men and women. Refreshments served.

**Poile Zedek  
Chanukah Party**

Sunday, December 21st, at 3:30 pm

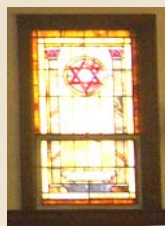
☆ FESTIVE MEAL ☆ MENORAH LIGHTING  
☆ LIVE MUSIC ☆ GAMES ☆ PRIZES

**FREE TO THE COMMUNITY**

Details on Page 8

## A Loving Tribute

### Memorial Windows



Memorialize your loved ones by dedicating a stained glass window in our beautiful sanctuary. A limited number of windows are still available for this fitting tribute to the memory of a cherished family member. Each window is \$1500.

### Memorial Plaques

Memorialize your loved ones by having their names listed on our bronze Memorial Boards in the sanctuary. A light will be illuminated on their yahrzeit dates. Each plaque is \$150.



Please call the synagogue at (732) 545-6123 to dedicate a window, order a plaque, or for more information.

Mitzvah. The second *bracha* thanks G-d for the miracle. The third, "*Shebecheyonu*," thanks G-d for enabling us to reach this holiday season and celebrate Chanukah in health and happiness. After the first night, only the first two blessings are recited.

The blessings are as follows:

1. *Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam A-sher Ki-de-sba-nu Be-mitz-vo-tav Ve-tzi-va-nu Le-had-lik Ner Shel Cha-nu-kah.*

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah light.

2. *Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-olam She-a-sa Ni-sim La-avo-te-nu Ba-ya-mim Ha-hem Ba-z'man Ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time.

3. *Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam She-beche-ya-nu Ve-ki-yi-ma-nu Ve-bigi-a-nu La-z'man Ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

After kindling the lights, the "*Hanerot Halalu*" prayer and "*Maoz Tzur*" are recited.

Using the Shamash, light the candles as follows:

Sunday, Dec. 21.....after 4:45 PM	‏
Monday, Dec. 22.....after 4:45 PM	‏‏
Tuesday, Dec. 23.....after 4:45 PM	‏‏‏
Wednesday, Dec. 24.....after 4:45 PM	‏‏‏‏
Thursday, Dec. 25.....after 4:45 PM	‏‏‏‏‏
Friday, Dec. 26.....before candle	
.....lighting which is at 4:19 PM	‏‏‏‏‏‏‏
Saturday, Dec. 27.....after 5:30 PM	‏‏‏‏‏‏‏‏
Sunday, Dec. 28.....after 4:30 pm	‏‏‏‏‏‏‏‏‏

### Special Foods

It is customary to eat delicacies fried in oil, such as potato latkes and donuts, in remembrance of the miracle of the oil. It is also customary to eat delicacies of cheese in remembrance of Yehudit the daughter of Yochanan, the High Priest, who played a very important role in the victory of the Macabbees. She plied the Syrian-Greek general Holofernus with wine and cheese, making him drunk and tired. When he fell asleep she killed him, thereby saving the Jews of Bethulia, whom he was about to attack.

Because of their proactive role in the victory over the Syrians, women have an equal obligation to participate in



lighting the Menorah. Some women have the custom of not doing work while the lights burn.

### Chanuka In The Torah

Although Chanukah is not explicitly mentioned in the Torah, there are allusions to it:

- ♦ The 25th word in Bereshit (Genesis) is "ohr", meaning light. Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, begins on the 25th of Kislev.
- ♦ The 25th place of encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness was Hasmonah. The Macabee family who successfully defeated the Greek army were from the Hasmonaen family.
- ♦ Following the section in the Torah where the festivals of the year are enumerated - Shabbat, Pesach, Shavuot, and Succot - is the commandment to maintain an eternal light in the Sanctuary - hinting to the kindling of the lights which would become a yearly festival.

### What's In A Name?

- ♦ Chanukah, which begins on the 25th day of Kislev, is really comprised of two words: 'Chanu KaH' which mean: 'They rested on the 25th,' alluding to the 25th day of Kislev. (The Hebrew letters 'Kaf' and 'Hei' add up to the numerical value of 25.) It was on the 25th day of Kislev that the Jewish nation vanquished their enemies, the Syrian-Greek overlords who had imposed severe religious persecutions on the Jewish nation. Under the threat of death, they prohibited many fundamental practices of Judaism, including circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and the study of Torah. On the 25th day of Kislev, the Jewish nation regained their religious freedom.
- ♦ The word "*Chanukah*" can also be identified with the Hebrew word meaning "dedication". It was on this day, the 25th of the month of Kislev, in the year 168 B.C.E., that the Beis HaMikdash, the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, was desecrated by the Syrian-Greeks, who placed an idol in the Temple. Three years later, on that very day, the 25th day of Kislev in the year 165 B.C.E., the Temple was purified and rededicated to the service of the Almighty. Thus, "Chanukah" is the holiday of dedication.
- ♦ The root of the name "Chanukah" can also be identified with the word "*chinuch*" – Torah education. During the period of the Syrian-Greek domination, the Greek culture had infiltrated and permeated the Jewish nation. Many Jews forsook their religion for "Hellenism" and the Greek culture. The celebration of Chanukah commemorates the spiritual victory of the Hasmonaens or Maccabee forces and the

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rededication of the Jewish nation to Torah education. The revolution and reestablishment of Torah Judaism is symbolized by the lights of the Menorah, which we light on this festival, as it states in the Book of Proverbs (6:23), "for a Mitzvah is symbolized by a lamp, the Torah by light." The Torah illuminates the path we should take to achieve true fulfillment in our lives.

- ◆ Chanah and her seven sons are also remembered on Chanukah. When ordered by the Syrian king, Antiochus, to bow to an idol and reject the religion of Moses or be killed, each of her sons refused and was tortured and killed before her eyes. They died sanctifying G-d's name. She died shortly after them.
- ◆ The custom of playing dreidel on Chanukah came about because of the Syrians' edict against learning Torah. The Jews would sit and learn Torah. When the Syrians came by, the Jews pretended to play with the dreidels. In this way, they were able to circumvent this edict.
- ◆ On the dreidel, the Hebrew letters Nun, Gimel, Hay

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## Good & Welfare

### Mazel Tov

To the following upon their celebrations:

#### Births

- Rabbi Eliyahu & Debbi Kaufman on the birth of a daughter to their children Chana & Dovid Gruman.
- Michael & Judi Seideman on the birth of a boy to their grandchildren Shulamis & Yossi Basker.
- Michael & Judi Seideman on the birth of a boy to their grandchildren to Shalom & Menucha Weiss.
- Marty and Elisha Klein on the birth of a boy to their children Jeff and Rena and siblings Zev and Chani.

#### Bar Mitzvahs

- Reuben Morginstin and Janet Shopowich on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Lance at Poile Zedek.

#### Engagements

- Ann and Steve Salit and Edythe Salit on the engagement of their son and grandson, Jerry, to Deborah Weinstein of Lakewood.
- Yehuda Leib Brown on his engagement in Israel.

#### Marriages

- Rabbi Dr. Bernhard & Charlene Rosenberg on marriage of their son Yaakov to Avital Kelin.
- Bonnie & Gary Schechter on the marriage of their daughter Allison to Jonathan Mell.
- Carole & David Weisfelner on the marriage of their daughter, Rachel to Kenneth Tarlowe.

#### Refuah Shelaima

- Bea Einstein, Pearl Friedkin, Miriam Goldman, Mike Gross, Marvin Mitchell, Yaakov Novichenok, Baruch & Wade Savitt, Irving Smith, Phyllis Smith, Helen S. Solomon, Boris Shualov, Vilena Strimovskiy.

#### Condolences

- We wish to express our heartfelt condolences to:  
To Mrs. Sonya Voldman and family upon the passing of her beloved husband, Meir.
  - Marty Klein and family on the loss of his father Edwin Klein, grandfather of Jeff Klein and Rachel Gottfried.
- "May the Almighty console the families among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."*

#### Yahrzeits

**Kislev 5769—Dec./Jan. 2009**

#### **4 Kislev - December 1**

Bernard Israel ..... cousin, Tamara Podair

#### **6 Kislev— December 3**

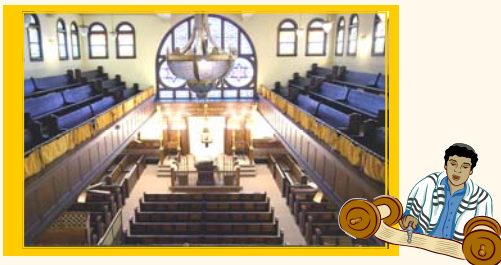
Joan Israel ..... grandmother, Hindel Schay

Bobbi Rubin ..... Grandmother Schick



## MAKING A SIMCHA? WE MAKE IT AFFORDABLE!

The magnificent sanctuary and party room of  
*Congregation Poile Zedek*  
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New Brunswick, NJ, we are just a few short blocks  
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*In the Orthodox tradition.*  
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- Harry Schick ..... Grandmother Schick
- 12 Kislev—December 9**  
Joan Sassenoff.....mother, Rose Brinstein
- 13 Kislev—December 10**  
Esther Marder..... mother, Mollie Berkow  
Norman Mironov.....wife, Audrey
- 15 Kislev—December 12**  
Harriet Kuryk Miller.....mother, Ray Kuryk
- 16 Kislev—December 13**  
Klara Skuratovskaya ..... husband, Aleksey Gulko
- 17 Kislev—December 14**  
Ivan Saiff.....brother, Seymour  
Robert Spies ..... grandfather, Jacob Grossman
- 18 Kislev—December 15**  
Mark Morrison .....grandfather, Frank  
Ruth Weinfeld..... father, Jerry Rosenberg
- 21 Kislev— December 18**  
Esther Marder.....sister, Serena Joyce Berkow
- 23 Kislev— December 20**  
Beatrice Einstein ..... brother, George  
Bernard Israel..... uncle, Barney Podair  
Marvin Marantz.....sister, Ceil  
Edith Schwartz .....sister, Ceil
- 26 Kislev—December 23**  
Bernard Israel..... grandfather, Benjamin Evansky
- 29 Kislev— December 26**  
Ira Gang..... father, Daniel Gang

**Tevet 5769 - Dec. 2008/Jan. 2009**

- 2 Tevet - December 29**  
Leonard Bier ..... mother, Gloria Bier
- 3 Tevet - December 30**  
Bernard Israel...great grandmother, Tamara Mikulitsky
- 4 Tevet - December 31**  
Robert Berkowitz ..... grandfather, Dovid Berkowitz  
Ruth Grossman..... mother, Fannie Greenberg  
Bernard Israel..... uncle, Dr. Julius Israel  
Esther Marder..... husband, Max Marder
- 6 Tevet—January 2**  
Myra Schrier ..... father, Bertrand Basner
- 9 Tevet - January 5**  
Beatrice Einstein ..... father
- 11 Tevet - January 7**  
Bernard Israel..... grandfather, Morris Israel
- 12 Tevet - January 8**  
Mildred Tanzman..... father, Morris Siegel
- 16 Tevet - January 12**  
Sylvia Margolis .....brother-in-law
- 20 Tevet - January 16**  
Mark Morrison .....grandfather, Zelig
- 21 Tevet - January 17**  
Steve Salit ..... Harry Bolotin
- 22 Tevet— January 18**  
Joan Israel ..... aunt, Rosie Shilepsky
- 23 Tevet - January 19**

- Dan Becekenstein ..... uncle, Samuel Beckenstein  
Herb Gross..... father
- 24 Tevet - January 20**  
Bobbi Bruskin ..... husband, Marvin  
Richard Bruskin..... brother, Marvin  
Stanley Bruskin ..... brother, Marvin  
Mark Morrison ..... grandmother, Sarah
- 27 Tevet - January 23**  
Lawrence Brody ..... father, Leo Brody
- 28 Tevet - January 28**  
Sophia Mezhibovsky .....mother, Ruchel Kleyner

**Shevat 5769 - Jan./Feb. 2009**

- 3 Shvat— January 28**  
Sylvia Margolis ..... mother  
Phyllis Schneier..... father
- 4 Shvat — January 29**  
Esther Marder..... sister, Ruth Berkow  
Sylvia Margolis ..... sister, Rose
- 5 Shvat — January 30**  
Ted Poretz ..... mother, Inez Poretz
- 7 Shvat — February 1**  
Lillian Glasser ..... father, Himan Smith  
Lena Kogan ..... mother, Rimma Glushenkova  
Irving Smith..... father, Himan Smith
- 8 Shvat — February 2**  
Golda Bosowitch ..... stepson, Kevin Phillip Pearlman
- 9 Shvat — February 3**  
Norman Mironov ..... brother, Irving
- 10 Shvat — February 4**  
Joan Israel..... aunt, Lillian Shaffer  
Bobbi Rubin ..... Grandmother Buchbinder  
Harry Schick..... Grandmother Buchbinder
- 13 Shvat — February 7**  
Sara Parsowith..... mother, Carol Matz  
Milton Yatvin .....your father, Isaac
- 14 Shvat — February 8**  
Bruce Horowitz .....your mother
- 15 Shvat—February 10**  
Eli Bussel..... father, Max Bussel
- 16 Shvat — February 23**  
Joan Israel..... uncle, Harry  
Mark Morrison ..... aunt, Sadie  
Norman Mironov..... Sarah Mironov
- 17 Shvat — February 24**  
Harry Schick..... Grandfather Schick  
Bobbi Rubin ..... Grandfather Schick
- 18 Shvat—February 25**  
Dan Beckenstein..... brother, Yosef
- 20 Shvat — February 27**  
Sophia Mezhibovsky ..... husband, Mikhail  
Carol Weisfelner ..... mother, Channa Isser
- 27 Shvat — February 21**  
Mark Morrison ..... father

*(Rabbi's Message continued from page 1)*

of Chanukah and Purim under one heading. Instead of a separate section entitled "The Laws of Chanukah" and a separate section entitled "The Laws of Purim," he merges the two holidays together under one heading: "The Laws of Purim and Chanukah." Chapters I & II deal with Purim and Chapters III & IV deal with Chanukah. Maimonides in the laws of Chanukah points out many laws which are common to both Chanukah and Purim. A further linkage between the two holidays can be seen in the prayer *Al Hanisim* which we read on both Chanukah and Purim. First we recite a common introductory paragraph of *Al Hanisim* with a subsequent separate synopsis for Chanukah and for Purim.

In truth, the holidays of Chanukah and Purim were both among a series of holidays established during the era of the Second Commonwealth in appreciation of G-d's saving the Jewish nation from some impending danger. They were all recorded in a book entitled "*Megilat Taanit*" which contains a litany of rabbinical holidays celebrated each month with a synopsis of their origin. Although the title *Megilat Taanit*—the Scroll of Fasting— seems to imply the reverse, it is actually a list of those dates when fasting is forbidden because they are rabbinical holidays. When the Second Temple was destroyed our sages nullified all those holidays listed in *Megilat Taanit* with the exception of Chanukah and Purim for they were the prototypes of all the other holidays. Purim represents the physical saving of the Jewish nation from annihilation while Chanukah represents the spiritual salvation of the Jewish people from assimilation and heresy. So it has been throughout the generations to this very day, we are attacked either physically, as in the case of Hitler, or spiritually as by Stalin during the Communist regime in Russia.

May Hashem once again come to Israel's aid and provide us with both physical and spiritual salvation and ultimately the coming of the Moshiach.

### Eruv Information

In order to utilize the New Brunswick eruv, you must check weekly on its status (whether it is functioning for that Shabbat) by calling the Eruv hotline: (732) 247-ERUV before Shabbat.

For notification by weekly e-mail of the status, please call the Hillel Foundation: (732) 545-2407 and request to be placed on the Eruv e-mail list. For a map showing the boundaries of the Highland Park/Edison and New Brunswick Eruvim go to [www.hperuv.org](http://www.hperuv.org)

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and Shin are inscribed. These letters are an abbreviation for the words "Nes Gadol Haya Sham" - "A great miracle happened there". In Israel, however, the fourth letter is a Peh rather than a Shin - this letter stands for Po (here), "A great miracle happened here!"

### Asarah B'Tevet

This year, Asarah B'Tevet, the fast of the Tenth of Tevet, falls on Tuesday, January 6. The fast begins at 5:45 AM and ends at 5:30 PM.

This fast commemorates the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia which ultimately led to the destruction of the First Temple and the 70-year Babylonian Exile. On the very day of the siege, the 10th of Tevet, the Prophet Ezekiel (יחזקאל) who lived in Babylonia, 1000 miles away had a prophecy in which he was instructed by G-d to record this date — the 10th of Tevet, for on this very day the city of Jerusalem came under siege. )



*(President's message continued from page 1)*

### GEMILAT CHESED AWARD

*Kivi Neuman*

*Moshe Heideman*

On their own initiative, Kivi and Moshe spearheaded a bowl-a-thon for their fellow high school students at the Jewish Educational Center in Elizabeth, NJ. They raised a much needed \$12,000 for the restoration of the cemetery, in contrast to the juveniles who destroyed it. See insert, pp, 9 & 10 for photos of the dinner.

Please join us for our annual Chanukah party which will be held on Sunday, December 21st, at 3:30 pm. It will be sponsored this year by Dr. Ira Gang and Gail Alterman, in memory of his father, Daniel Gang, whose second *yahrzeit* falls at this time. As those of you who have attended in prior years know, the Festival of Lights takes on even greater significance when celebrated with family and friends.

My best wishes to all for a Happy Chanukah, a healthy winter, and peace in Israel and throughout the world.

*Danny*