



Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

NOVEMBER 24, 1972

Chanukah Is Here!

Light First Candle Thursday Night, Nov. 30

Adult Chanukah Concert Friday, Dec. 8, 8:30 P.M.

The annual Chanukah Concert by the Adult Choir, under the direction of Selma Baumgard, will be presented on Friday night, December 8, at 8:30 p.m. Traditional and seldom-heard Chanukah music will be presented at that time.

The Choir will perform from the podium and will sing a variety of Chanukah music from Mi Yimaleil, Al Hannisim, and Chanukah, O Chanukah to the traditional Rock of Ages. They will also offer some modern Israeli songs on work and freedom and a magnificent piece of music entitled "Creation" by Willie Richter--The Beginning of Light.

The choir is made up of the following people (some Temple members and some non-members): Bernice Anapol, Judy Fitzpatrick, Ann Aibel, Ann Dickhaus, Sylvia Weinberg, Iris Rosen, Harriet Potlock, Robert Wright, Curtis Rayam, Harley Smith, and Kevin Beaird.

Chanukah Service Friday December 1 At 7:30 P.M.

Bring Candles For Candle Light Ceremony

Chanukah is very early this year. It begins Thursday night, November 30, at sundown. Candles should be lit at that time with the recitation of the blessings and the singing of the Chanukah songs. It is recommended that fathers be present at this time and the first gifts be distributed then. (Rabbi Baumgard suggests that for younger children a different gift be given each of the eight nights with the significant gifts being given on the first and last nights.)

Elsewhere in the COMMENTATOR (Page 2) the appropriate blessings, songs, and history are described. The Judaica Shop at the Temple has supplies of candles, menorahs, and gifts.

Candle Light Service

The annual candle light service will be held on Friday night, December 1, at 7:30 p.m. Bring a Chanukah candle (preferably dripless) for each person in your family, wrapped in aluminum foil at the service. These candles will be lit, so parents should be seated in such a way as to observe their children best. The Youth Choir, under the direction of Harriet Potlock, will sing.

Brotherhood Books Speakers

Brotherhood has booked an imposing group of speakers for the 1972-73 Congregational Breakfasts. They are:

December 10, 1972--Lee Ruwich, Economist and Publisher of the "Miami and Broward County Reviews."

January 21, 1973--Fred Schoket, Publisher of the "Jewish Floridian."

February 18, 1973--Pat Tornillo, Executive Director of the Dade County Classroom Teachers Association.

March 11, 1973--Dean Jack Vaughn, Dean of the Department of International Affairs, Florida International Univ.

**NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ON
Saturday, November 25, and
Sunday, November 26**

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**Monday Night Classes
Will Be Held On November 27**

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 8:30 p.m.

Rabbi Herbert Baumgard will review
"9½ Mystics" by Herbert Weiner

In honor of Jewish Book Month

TORAH SERVICE - Saturday, 11:15 a.m.





FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Let's Celebrate Chanukah

The word Chanukah means "Dedication." At this season of the year (the 25th day of Kislev), the Temple in Jerusalem was rededicated to the service of God after years of desecration at the hands of Hellenized Syrians (and some Hellenized Jews). About 167 BCE, a group of Jews, long oppressed by the Jewish aristocracy which had allied itself with the occupying power, revolted not only against the alien power in its midst, but also against their own quizzling priests and leaders. The revolt was led by an aged priest, Mattathias, and his sons, the Maccabees. The most famous of the sons is Judah, who seemed particularly successful in arousing the people.

The Syrians, who held a great empire to the northeast, were ruled by Antiochus IV, who chose for himself the name Epiphanes ("God made manifest"). Antiochus wished all his vassal peoples to worship him. He decreed that the Jews should not be permitted to study their Torah or to use their forms of Jewish worship. The new restrictions brought about the revolt.

The military battle is of interest. The Syrians had a well-trained army with modern weapons. The Judeans were few in number with almost no weapons. The Syrians divided their camp in the hope of surrounding the Judeans, but the Judeans, who had heard of the plan, attacked first one section of the Syrians, and, then, the other, defeating both of them. The victory was complete enough to permit the capture of the Temple by the Maccabees, although independence actually did not come for many years.

Talmudic legend has it that when the Maccabees came to rededicate the Temple, there was no oil for the "Ner Tamid," the Eternal Light; yet, it burned for eight days while additional oil was being obtained. For that reason, we kindle eight candles at this season, one on the first day, two on the second, etc. The "Shamash" is the candle which "attends" the lighting of the others. It is lit first every night. (Teachers should observe this ceremony in the class for several weeks reciting the prayers and teaching them to the children. All children should learn the Hebrew prayer and translation for kindling the lights).

Had there been no Chanukah, there would have been no Christmas! Christianity arose out of the Jewish community. That community would not have been in existence if the Maccabees had not defeated the Syrian attempt to crush Judaism. It is interesting to note that the Christians imitated Chanukah in selecting the 25th day of the month as the day of their holiday, and they also made their holiday into a holiday of lights. The two holidays are opposed in that Chanukah teaches that the Jews should not worship any man who presumes to be God (Jesus may not have so regarded himself).

In the Book of the Prophet Zechariah, there is a reference to the Menorah and to the teaching "not by might nor by military might, but by My spirit, saith the Lord." This quote is inscribed on the face of the Ark in Temple Beth Am. It is part of the teaching of Chanukah.

Further, the Menorahs in our Temple are based on the second Chanukah legend which tells us that when the Maccabees recaptured the Temple from the Syrians, they had no menorahs, so they took the spears of their enemy and put candles on their ends. The spear is the military symbol. The candle is the spiritual symbol, giving light even while it is self-consumed. Our menorahs are spears with holes in them through which the light shines, overcoming the spear. They are, therefore, peace symbols.

CHANUKAH BEGINS AT SUNDOWN, THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 30, AND CONTINUES FOR EIGHT DAYS.

Observance

There are five ways in which Chanukah is observed in the home. First, lighting of the Candles. Second, gifts. Many Jewish families give the children a gift on each night of Chanukah, after the candles are lit. Third, food. Chanukah has its own favorite foods, such as potato latkes and nuts. Fourth, songs. There are many extremely beautiful Chanukah songs which should be sung after the candle lighting. These are obtainable on records at the Temple Judaica Shop. Fifth, stories and games. The game, Dreidle (spin the top), is an essential feature of the Chanukah observance. There are many beautiful stories published in special Chanukah Story Books, which may be purchased at the gift shop. Make certain to come with your family to the Adult Chanukah Service, Friday evening, December 8, at 8:30 p.m.

Chanukah Blessings

1. Bah-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai, Eh-loh-hay-noo Meh-lech Hah-oh-lam; Ah-sheer kid'-shah-noo b'mitz-voh-tahv, V'-tzi-vah-noo l'-hahd-leek nair Shel Chah-noo-kah.

We thank You, O Lord, King of the Universe, Who has asked us to make ourselves better people by lighting the Chanukah lights.

2. Bah-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai, Eh-loh-hay-noo Meh-lech Hah-oh-lahm; Sheh-ah-sah nih-seem lah-voh-tay-noo; Bah-yah-meem hah-haym, Bah-z'-mahn hah-zeh.

We thank You, O Lord, our God, for helping us to perform miracles at this season long ago.

3. (First night only)

Bah-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai, Eh-loh-hay-noo Meh-lech Hah-oh-lahm; Sheh-heh-cheh-yah-noo v'-kih-y'-mah-noo, V'-hih-gih-yah-noo lah-z'-mahn hah-zeh. Ah-men.

We thank you for health and life and for the privilege of celebrating this Holiday. Amen.

Chanukah Songs

Rock Of Ages

Rock of Ages, let our song
Praise Thy saving power;
Thou, amidst the raging
foes,
Wast our shelt'ring tower.
Furious, they assailed us,
But thine arm availed us,
And Thy word
Broke their sword
When our own strength failed
us.

Children of the martyr race,
Whether free or fettered,
Wake the echoes of the songs
Where ye may be scattered.
Yours the message cheering,
That the time is nearing
Which will see
All men free
Tyrants disappearing.

O Chanukah, O Chanukah

O Chanukah, O Chanukah, a
festival of joy;
A holiday, a jolly day for
ev'ry girl and boy.
Spin the whirling dreidel
all week long;
Eat the sizzling latkes, sing
a happy song.

(Cont'd. on Page 3)