



Yahadut Zmaneinu, Moreshet Ha'am

YOZMA

AN ISRAELI JEWISH INITIATIVE IN MODI'IN



From our Rabbis:

We welcomed the month of *Kislev* at YOZMA with an intensive study weekend in the northern part of Israel focused on the subject of “Understanding the different approaches to Faith and Belief in Judaism” *Kislev* is the month dedicated to the celebration of light! It comes at a time when the days are the shortest and the nights are the longest in the calendar year. The lighting of the Chanukah candles reminds us of the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem and the amazing victory of the Jewish people over the tyranny of the Syrian - Greek rule. Light brings a sense of clarity, joy and warmth into our lives. Light is a universal symbol of hope and faith.

At one of the workshops we participated in an exercise in painting. The exercise demanded of us to work with the concepts of light and darkness. It was a fascinating experience for all of us. We learned that darkness descends from the margins into the center and that light radiates out from the center towards the margins. When we think about the movement of light in this way and apply it to the spiritual and emotional realms of our lives we can begin to understand our potential for rekindling light into our darkest moments. When we observe the margins carefully we can try to recognize what outside influences cause the darkness to descend upon us and respond appropriately. And then once we realize that we have the ability to spark light from our inner self - from our own center - we can illuminate brand new regions of our daily lives.

In chapter 2 of the Midrash *Pesikta Rabbati*, (a collection of stories and explanations of the festivals and other special occasions) we learn that:

“There are seven dedications that have been achieved by light : The creation of the world by moonlight, the Tabernacle and two Temples by the seven-branched menorah, the festival of the Maccabees by the eight-branched menorah, the walls of Jerusalem by torches, and the millennium by the sevenfold light of the sun”.

Let us suggest an additional dedication making the grand total of eight to parallel the eight days we celebrate Chanukah:

As we the members of YOZMA light our *chanukiot* this year – with the awareness that our many friends and supporters will also be lighting their *chanukiot* across the

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sea – together, let us all dedicate ourselves to finding that inner light that shines in our centers and bring it forth into the world.

How so very bright our days will be...

Chag Urim Sameach – Happy Chanukah!

Rabbi Kinneret Shiryon and Rabbi Nir Barkin

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