And it was at Jerusalem the feast of Chanukah, and it was winter.  
- John 10:22

The Hebrew word chanukah means "dedication" and marks an eight-day winter celebration (from Kislev 25 - Tevet 2) that commemorates the victory of faith over the ways of speculative reason, and demonstrates the power of the miracle in the face of mere humanism.

Chanukiah Lighting Procedures

The procedures for lighting the chanukiah (Chanukah menorah) are as follows. On the first night, set the first candle in the rightmost holder (as you face the chanukiah). Next, light the shamash (servant candle), recite the Hebrew blessings, and then light the first candle using the shamash. After kindling the first candle, set the shamash in its holder. Recite the Haneirot Hallalu (see below) and begin to celebrate!

On the second night, set the candles from right to left in the chanukiah. That is, beginning at the rightmost holder, put one candle, then put another candle in the holder to its left. Next, light the shamash, recite the Hebrew blessings, and then light the candles from left to right in the chanukiah (in other words, you begin lighting the newest candle first). Recite the Haneirot Hallalu and then celebrate! This sequence continues night after night, until the eighth night, when the entire chanukiah is lit up:

![Chanukiah Lighting Diagram]

Place right to left; Kindle left to right
Honoring the Light of the World

Of course *everything* centers on our beloved Savior Yeshua - including the festival of Chanukah. Indeed, as Jewish tradition readily affirms, “All the world was created for the Messiah” (*Sanhedrin 98b*), and therefore during the candle lighting ceremony we first of all reaffirm the glorious truth that Yeshua is the Light of the world. Those who follow Him will never walk in the darkness because in Him is the light of life (John 8:12).

Before performing the Chanukah candle lighting ceremony, you may want to offer up a prayer of thanks and then ask everyone present to listen to the words of the Messiah:

> אזכִי אוֹר הַעֲולָם חַלְלוֹן אֲחָדִי
> the light of the world is with me

> אחרֹה שלָיך֙ הַשָּׁלוֹם מִי לֹא יֵלֶךְ בַּשָּׁהַךְ קִיּוֹ לִי הָאֲלֵפִי
> is with you, you shall not walk in darkness, for there is life in me.

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall never walk in the darkness, for in him is the light of life.

> anokhi or ha’olam, ha-holekh acharai, lo yelekh bacho-shekh, ki-lo or ha-chayim.

by John J. Parsons
Candle Lighting Blessing (rabbinical)

When lighting the candles for Chanukah, most Jews recite Hadlakat Nerot Chanukah, the traditional blessing established by the rabbis:

בָּרוּךְ אֲתָה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָאֲלֹהִים אשר קִדְשָנִי בְּמִצְוֹתָךְ וְרַצְאָנִי לְהַדְלִיק נֵרַת הָנַחַוקה

Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, asher kideshanu be-mitzvotav, vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel chanukah.

Candle Lighting Blessing (Messianic)

Most followers of Yeshua do not accept rabbinical authority and therefore object that we are “commanded” to light the Chanukah candles. The following Messianic blessing may therefore be recited instead:

בָּרוּךְ אֲתָה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָאֲלֹהִים

Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, asher kideshanu be-mitzvotav, vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel chanukah.
She'asah Nissim Blessing

The second blessing (she'asah nissim – the One who works miracles) is then recited (just before or immediately following the candle lighting):

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, לֹֽאַדָּנִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָּׂה נִסִּים לְאָבֵֽוֵתִינוּ בָּעָבוֹתֵינוּ בָּזֵמֶן הָאָזֶה.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, Master of the universe, who performed miracles for our fathers in those days at this time.

Barukh attah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, she’asah nissim la’avoteinu ba-yamim hahem, ba-zeman hazeh.

The Shehecheyanu Blessing

On the first night of Chanukah (only), add the following blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, לֹֽאַדָּנִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁחֶֽכֶחְיָֽאֵנוּ וְקִי-יֶמֶנֵנוּ וְהִגִּיָּֽנוּ לְזַמֵּן הָאָזֶה.

Blessed art thou, Lord our God, Master of the universe, who has kept us alive and sustained us and has brought us to this special time.

Barukh attah Adonai eloheinu melekh ha-olam, she-hechecheyanu ve’ki-yemanu ve’higianu laz’man hazeh.
Hanerot Hallalu - the closing paragraph

After one candle has been kindled, the *Haneirot Hallalu* may be recited while lighting the other candles:

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han nif la'ot ve al han nis sim el mad li kin a nach nu halla lu ha nei rot
and for the wonders for the miracles kindle we these lights

la'avo tei ru she 'asita ha mil cha mot ve al ha te shu 'ot ve al
that you did for our forefathers the battles and for

bimeh ha he ha pemn she heh, 'al ber ve chatsi kecha shim.
the hands of your holy priests by at this time in those days

ha ke do shim ko ha ne kha ye dei al haz zeh ba se man ha hem bayamim

hem ka de sh halla lu ha nei rot cha nukah ye mei sh'no nat ve khol
are holy these lights eight days of Chanukah And all

roaz lil rosh la shemesh bim he, 'al la ra at halla la bil vad
only to behold them but of them to make use and we have no right

ve al nis se kha al ha ga dol le shim kha ul halel le ho dot ke dei
and for your miracles for to Your great Name and praise to give thanks in order

bim ha lo ne kha la hila la shem kha le ha nis he shi
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by John J. Parsons

Hebrew4christians.com
Henerot Translation - Transliteration:

Haneirot hallalu anachnu madlikin al hanissim ve'al hanifla'ot, ve'al hateshu'ot, ve'al hamilchamot, she'asita la'avoteinu bayamim hahem, bazeman hazeh al yedei kohanekha hakedoshim. Vekhol sh'monat yemei Chanukah Haneirot hallalu kodesh hem. Ve'ein lanu reshut lihishtamesh bahem ela lir'otam bilvad kedei lehodot ulhallel lishimkha hagadol al nisekha ve'al nifle'otecha ve'al yeshuatekha.

Some of the sages have said the word Messiah (i.e., mashiach) should be regarded as an acronym for the phrase: Madlikin (מ) Shemonah (ש) Yemei (י) Chanukah (ח), i.e., "we light throughout the eight days of Chanukah." During the eight days of Chanukah we kindle lights in commemoration of the "miracles, deliverance, mighty deeds salvations, wonders and solace" that our Heavenly Father performed for us "in those days, at this time" -- and this is thought to prefigure the greater deliverance to come in the power of the Messiah.

Note: On Friday night the Chanukah lights are lit before the Shabbat candles (and on Saturday night they are light during Havdalah). No practical use may be made of the Chanukah lights, such as the illumination of a room: they are sacred for the occasion.

Displaying the Chanukiah

It is an old custom to display the chanukiah where its lights will be visible from the outside. Note that if you place the chanukiah near a window, the candles should appear lit right to left from the point of view of the one seeing them from outside. Many families have multiple chanukiahs, one for each child of the household, and perhaps a larger one for the entire family.

So let us celebrate the true Light of the World, Yeshua our beloved Savior and Messiah! Let your light shine, chaverim! Let's put away the sin that so easily besets us and rededicate our lives to the Lord. Chag Chanukah Same'ach!