



By **Jim Staley**

# A CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE TO CELEBRATING **HANUKKAH**

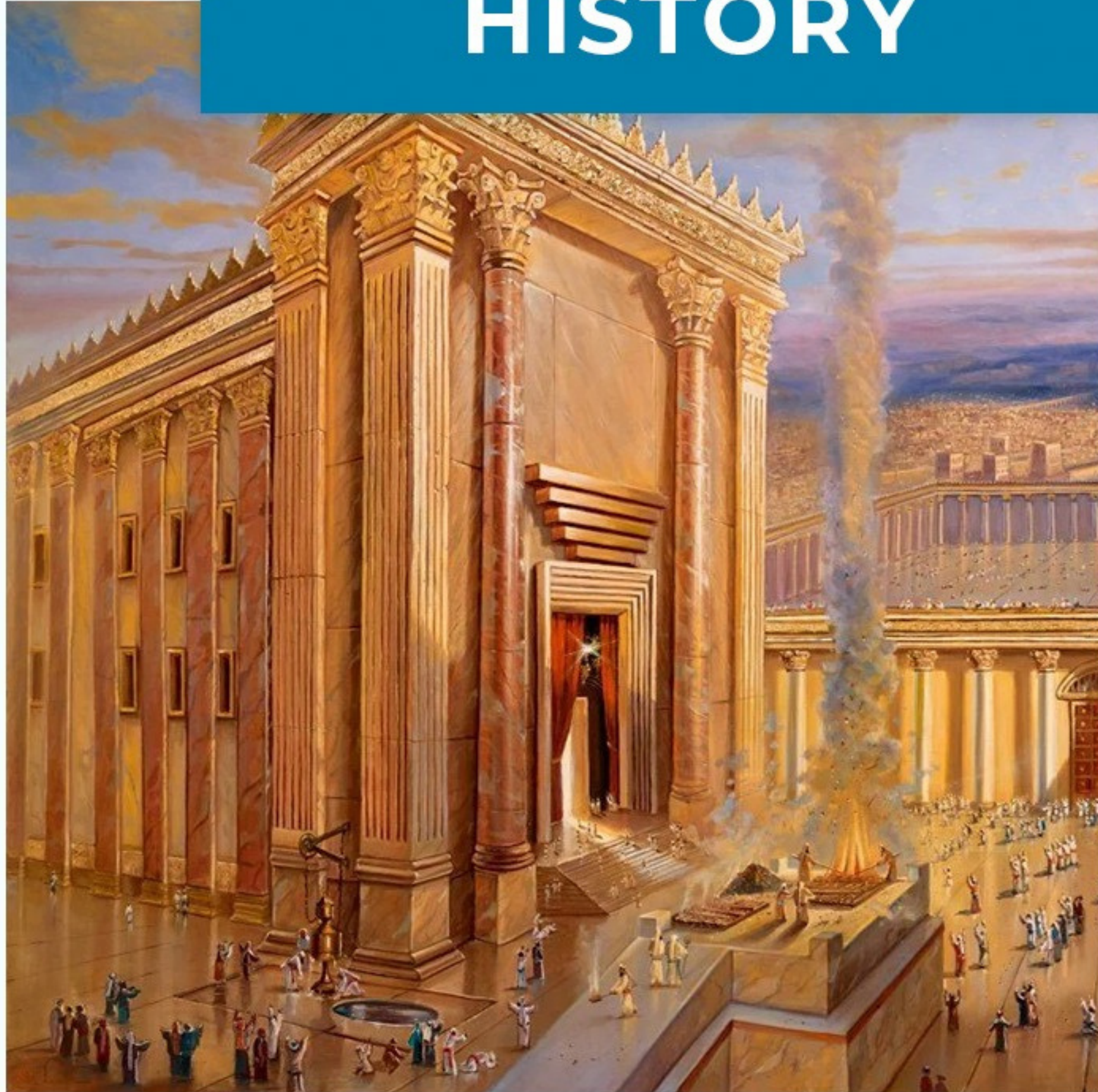
Learn the spiritual significance of Hanukkah  
and how you and your family can celebrate it!



# *A Glimpse at Hanukkah*



## HISTORY



**Hanukkah** commemorates the Maccabean (Hasmonean) victories over Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (reigned 175–164 BC) and the rededication of the Temple on Kislev 25, 164 BC by Mattathias & his son Judas Maccabeus.

The Maccabees fought to defend their religious beliefs rather than their lives. You can read the whole story in the Apocrypha - Maccabees I & II.

We also have several teachings on our website [passionfortruth.com](http://passionfortruth.com)

## TRADITIONS



There are many traditions for this **Festival of Lights**. The game of dreidels, the lighting of the Hanukkah, baking fried foods, hanging decorations, playing family games, as well as making your own traditions!

This is another great opportunity to engage your whole family into celebrating the **LIGHT** found throughout the scriptures. It is a joyous celebration filled with fun, family and traditions!

More ideas at:

[passionfortruth.com/how-to-celebrate-hanukkah](http://passionfortruth.com/how-to-celebrate-hanukkah)

## APPLICATION



This is the time to rededicate your own temple, your house, your life! It is traditional to read scripture each evening as you gather your family together in the evening, light the hanukkah, and maybe even have each say a prayer.

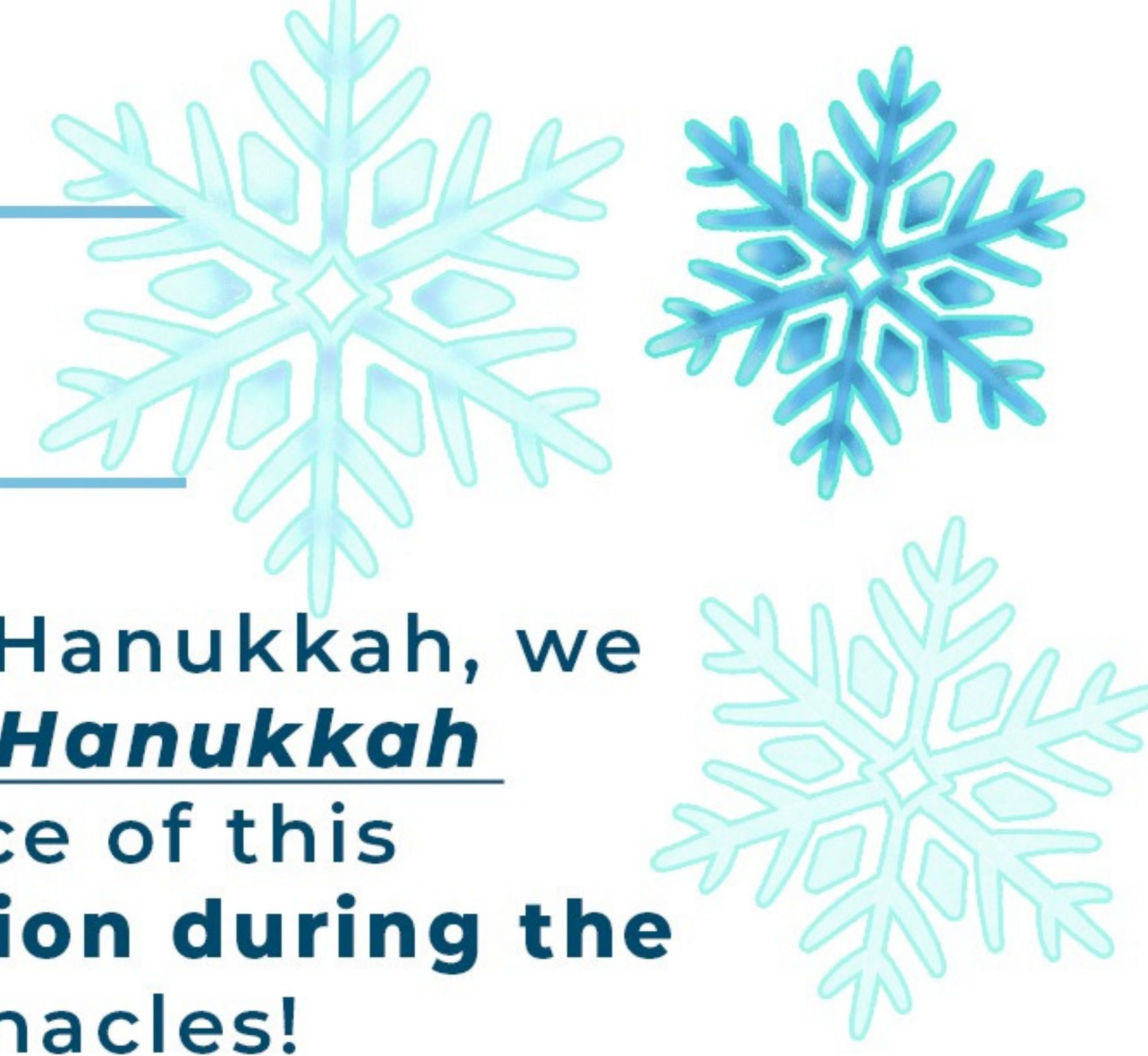
**Hanukkah** is also a wonderful time to read a portion of the Scriptures in Psalms, to share the story of the Maccabees, to give to the poor, and to instill in your children the importance of **giving thanks to God for dispersing the darkness with His Light!**



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## *A little bit about Hanukkah*

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If you have not watched some of our teachings concerning Hanukkah, we encourage you to do so! Check out [\*\*To Hanukkah or Not To Hanukkah\*\*](#) You will learn about the history and the spiritual significance of this holiday. You will also learn all about **the Messiah's conception during the Feast of Lights** and His real birth during the Feast of Tabernacles!

Cheryl & I, with our children, share the beauty found within the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) by teaching our children **the power of the light of Scripture for eight days**. We trace the spiritual applications through the great men of the Bible, learning many valuable lessons along the way.



**Hanukkah**, as we know it, has many man-made traditions that have developed throughout the centuries. This is one reason that each year we receive messages from so many who think of this holiday as 'pagan'. To be "pagan," it must come from paganism, be connected to the worship of YHWH, and be something very specific that any reasonable person would not do otherwise in their worship. The story of Hanukkah comes from the real history of Israel (except for the miracle of the oil lasting 8 days, which was an invented tradition of the Rabbis.)

See [\*\*In Defense of Hanukkah\*\*](#) to help clear up the confusion.

The story of **Hanukkah** is not only a beautiful story of the redemption of the temple in Jerusalem from the ones who defiled it, but the parallels to the gospel are just as beautiful. After all, the enemy defiled our own temples and has left each of us without a way to be in the presence of or reflect **the true light of God**. Then Yeshua defeated the enemy of death and gave us the right to have a clean temple again for all those who believe in Him. **And that is worthy of a celebration!** Not to mention that this was the most likely time that Yeshua was actually conceived in his mother's womb, **where the true light of the world first came into the world!**

There are eight candles of Hanukkah and one Servant candle that represents Yeshua. So while the seven-branched candlestick represents the seven days of creation, in my mind, the eight candles of Hanukkah represent and look forward to that eighth day, **the day the new heavens and the new earth arrive**, and the Servant of all mankind is lifted up for all eternity to His rightful place at the right hand of God.

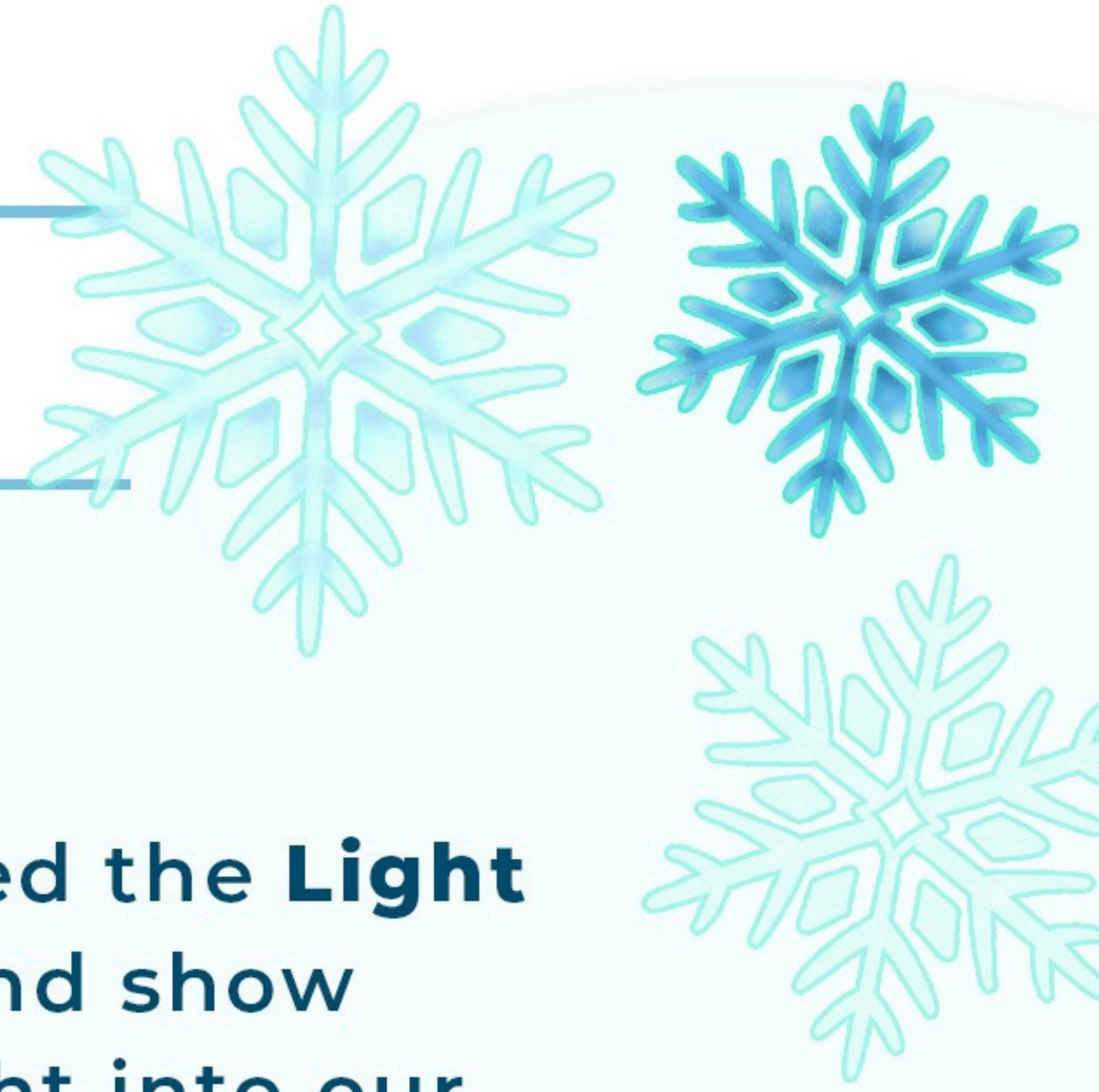
I am grateful for this tradition and what it means to my family and countless others like us around the world. I was once lost, unclean, and had a foreign idol on the altar of my temple, and God liberated me and filled my temple with **the Light of the world**, Yeshua my Messiah.

The following are some ideas on how our family celebrates each night and what the candles represent to us.

**Trust the Light. Be the Light. Share the Light!**



# Lighting the Hanukkah



## DAY ONE



On day one, the first candle was called the **Light of Creation**. We read from Genesis and show how the **Light of Messiah** was brought into our existence and how the **physical lights** in the universe were also created. We talk about how Adam and Eve were given the **first light** and how they were supposed to pass it to the next generation. I talk about how from **one light** will come all the other **lights throughout time**.

We make the second candle represent **the light of Noah**. Much like Judah Maccabee and his father, Noah was one man who stood up to the evil of his day. The torch was passed from Adam to Noah's family, as Noah's father would have been alive during Adam's life. **Pretty amazing to think about!** There were eight people in the ark, and I connect it to the eight days of Hanukkah. I explain how the eight "**lights**" in the ark were not meant to stay in the ark but are meant to be shared with the world. **We can't keep our light under a bushel!**

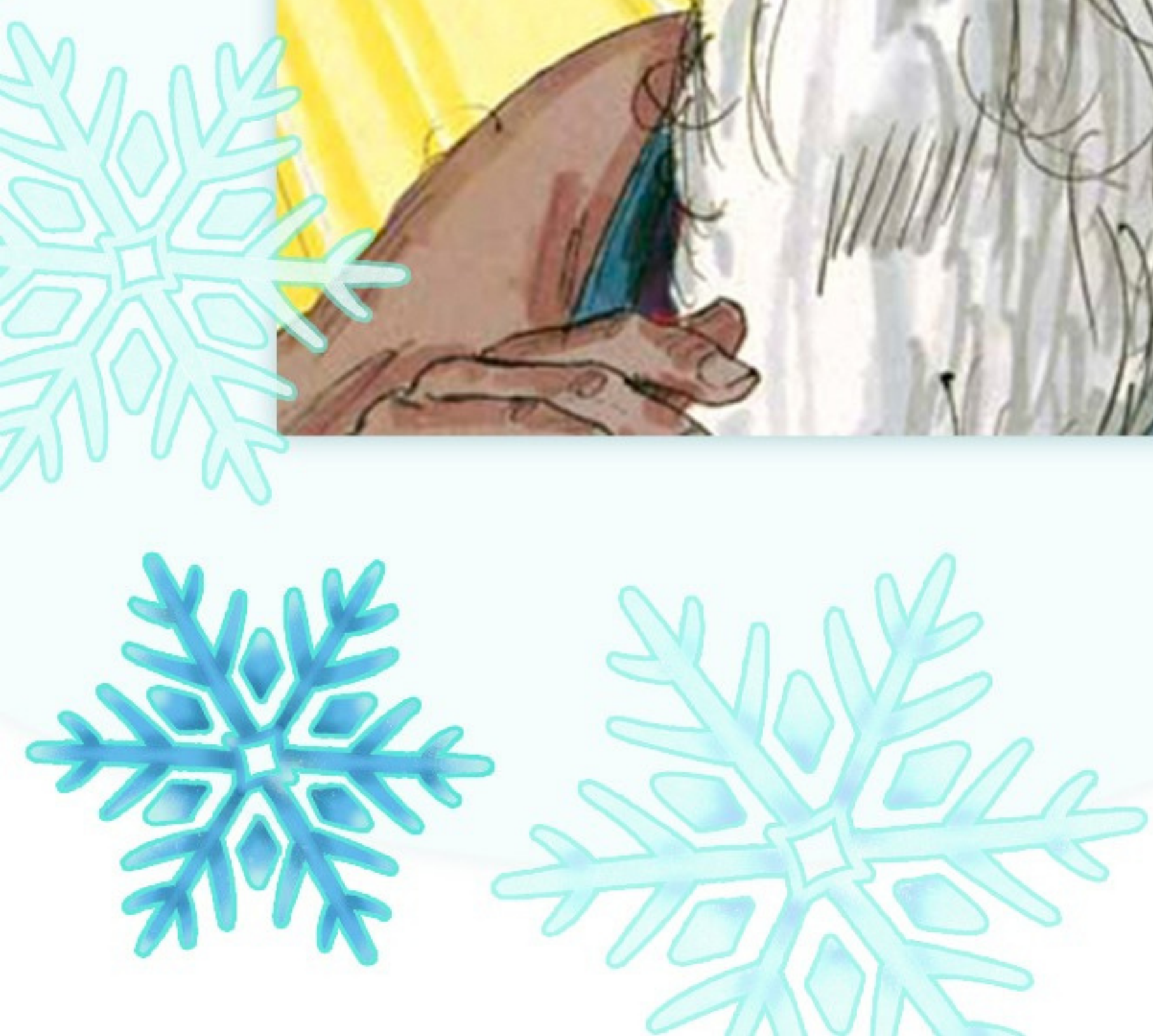
## DAY TWO



## DAY THREE

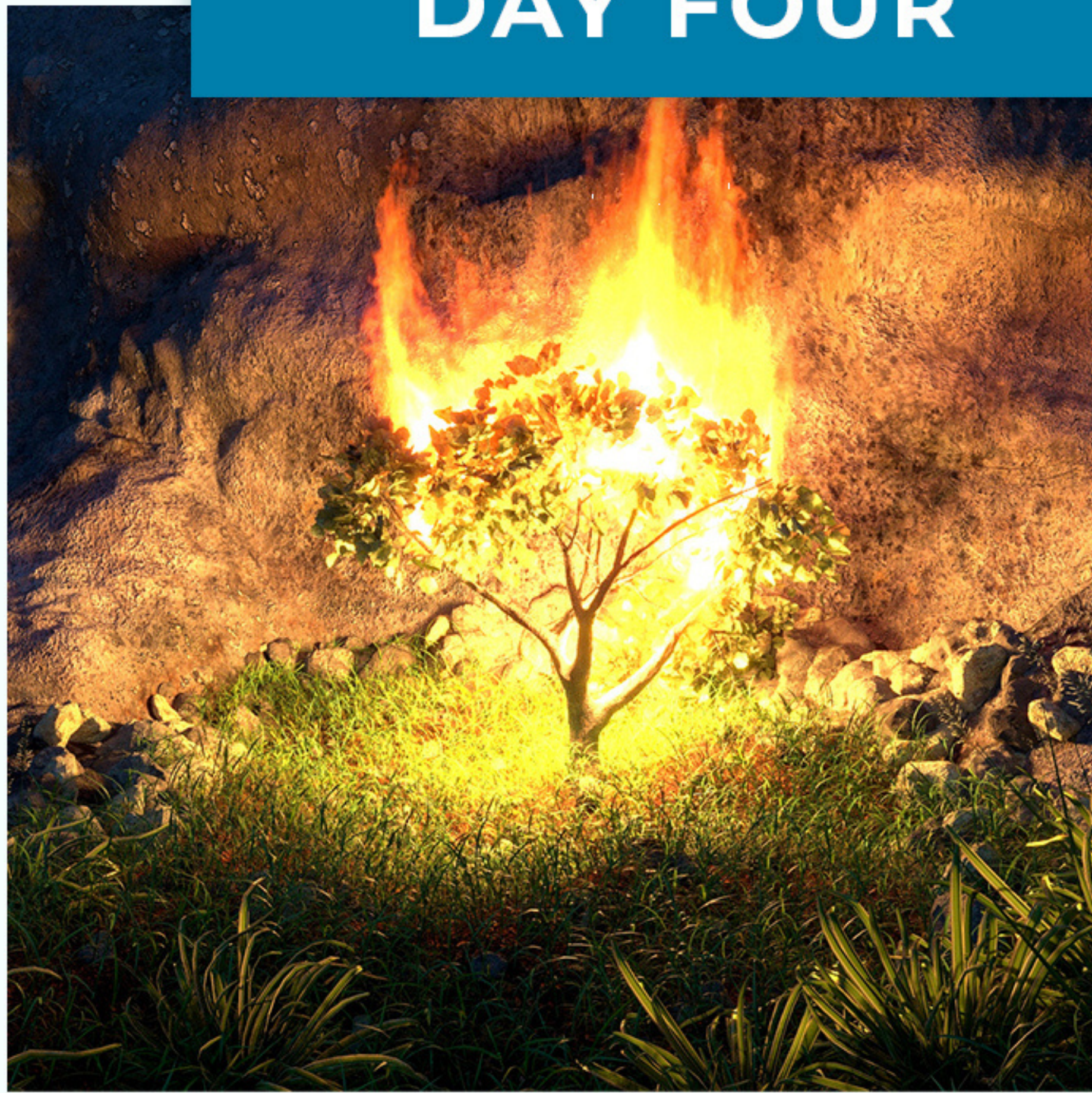


The third light is Abraham, the Father of the people of God. This is where **the light was reintroduced** to the people of earth and where obedience through faith really begins to come to the forefront when Isaac is bound to the altar. On this night we talk about how the beautiful picture of Abraham preparing to sacrifice his son is a **picture of Yeshua** offering Himself as a substitute for all of us.



# Lighting the Hanukkah

## DAY FOUR



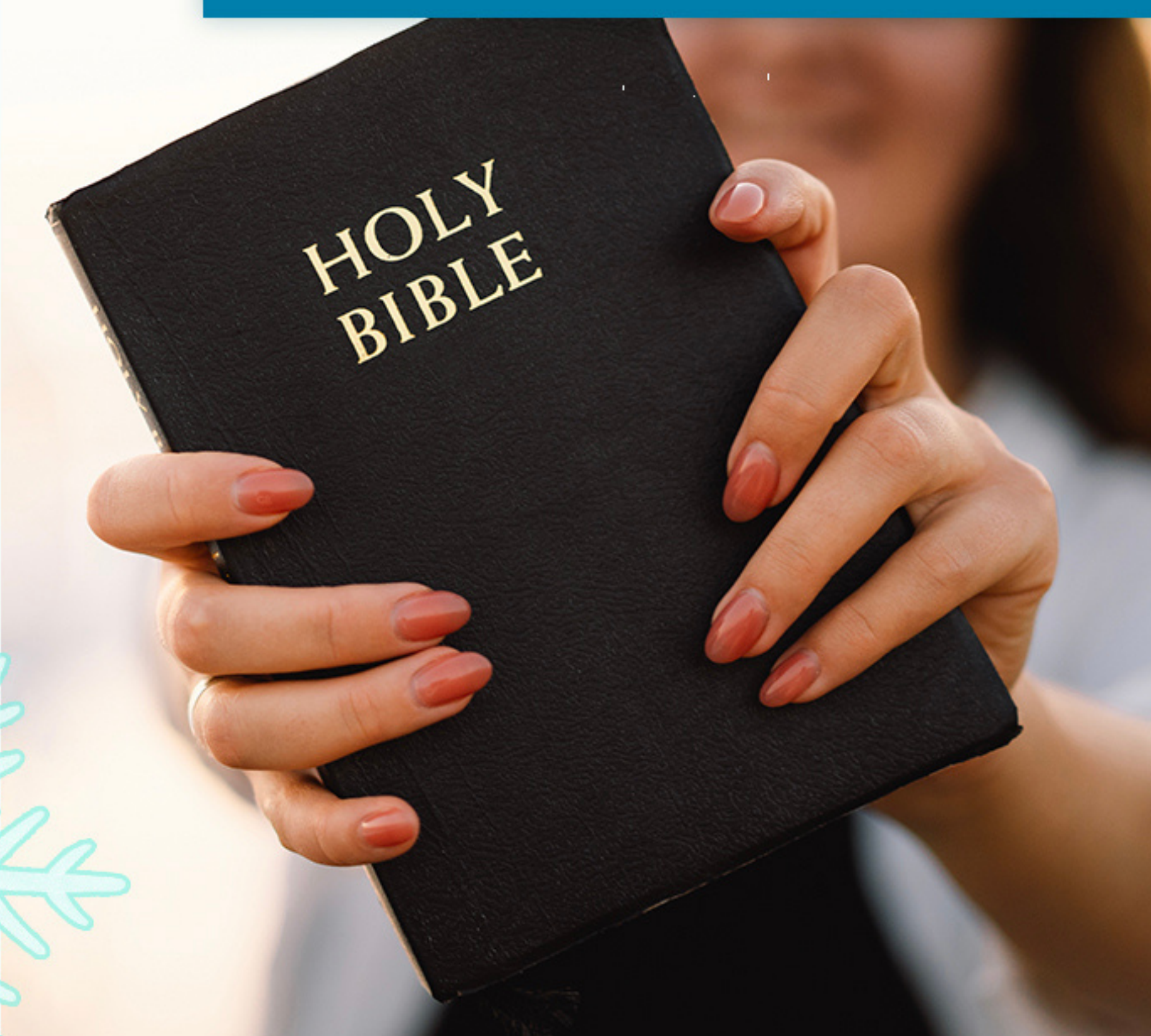
Day four is Israel, with Moses at the head. The **light** was reintroduced to him at the burning bush and the miraculous story of the people of Israel being **redeemed** from Egypt. We talk about the Exodus story and how it foreshadows our Lord Yeshua, who “Passed Over” us and our sins because **we put His blood over the doors of our hearts**. Then we talk about how the **Light came in the form of the Torah commandments** and read scriptures that talk about His Law being a **light unto our path**.

The fifth candle is when the **Light of Messiah** was passed to His disciples. They were told to **take that light to the rest of the world**. Matthew 5:14-16 has Yeshua telling His disciples, “**You are the light of the world**. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, **let your light shine before others**, that they may see your good deeds and **glorify your Father in heaven**.”

## DAY FIVE



## DAY SIX

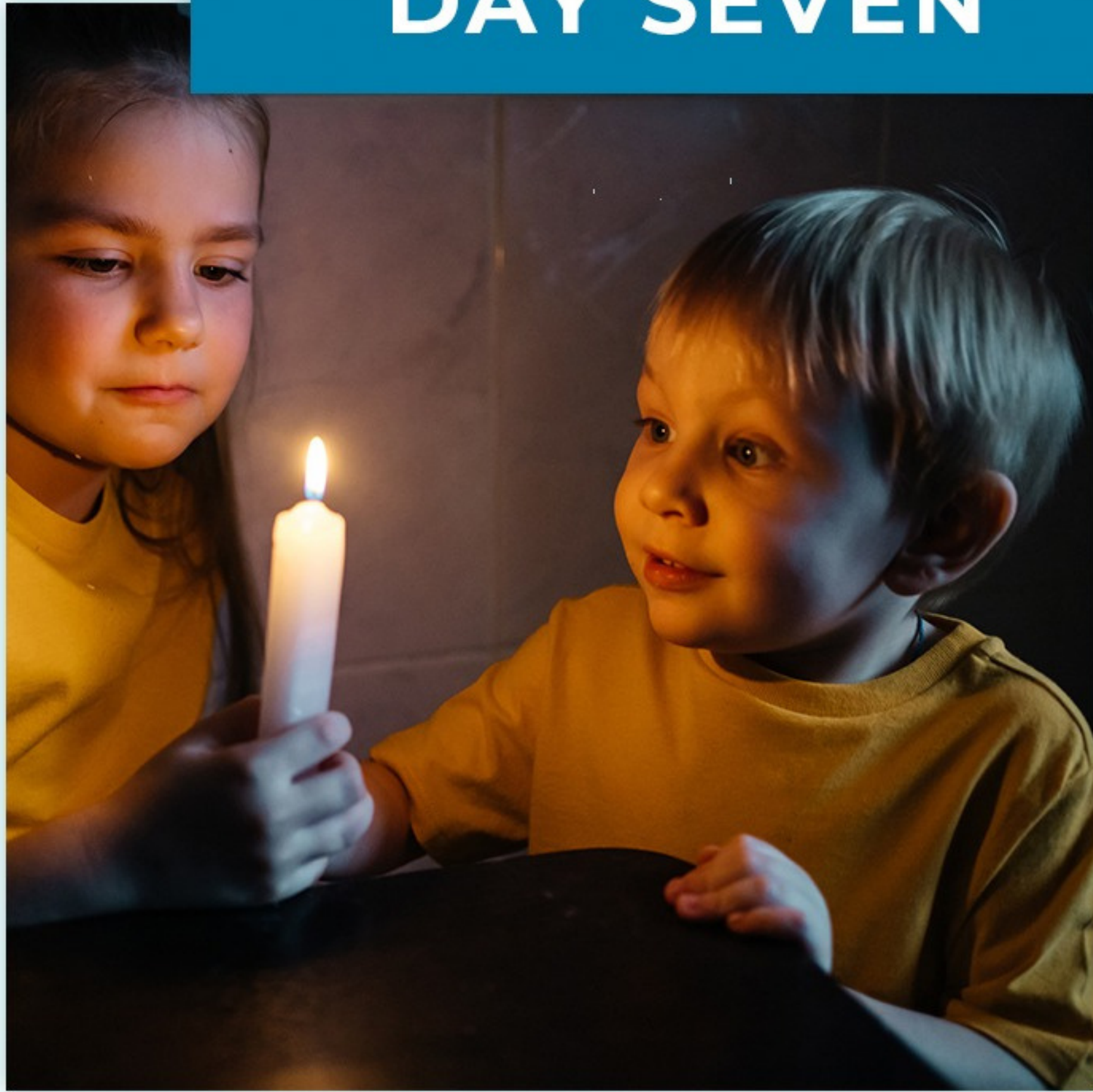


The sixth light is for the Gentiles. We read Acts 10 and explain how God called Peter to go give the gospel to Cornelius but how Peter resisted, thinking that the Gentiles were unclean. I talk about how the Spirit finally opened his eyes in verse 28 and he realized that the sheet of unclean animals was representative of the Gentiles and that the vision was not about animals at all. **He then took the Light to the Gentiles**.

# Lighting the Hanukkah



## DAY SEVEN

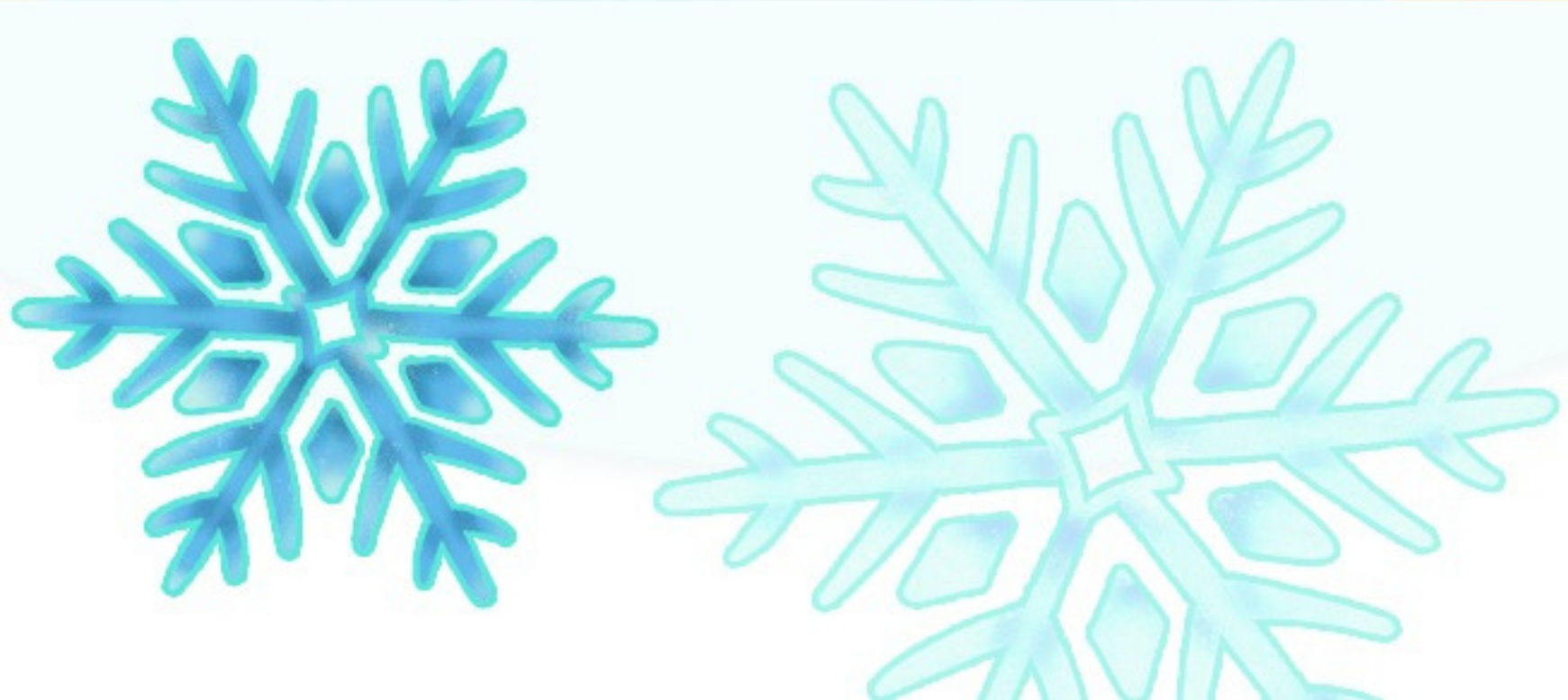
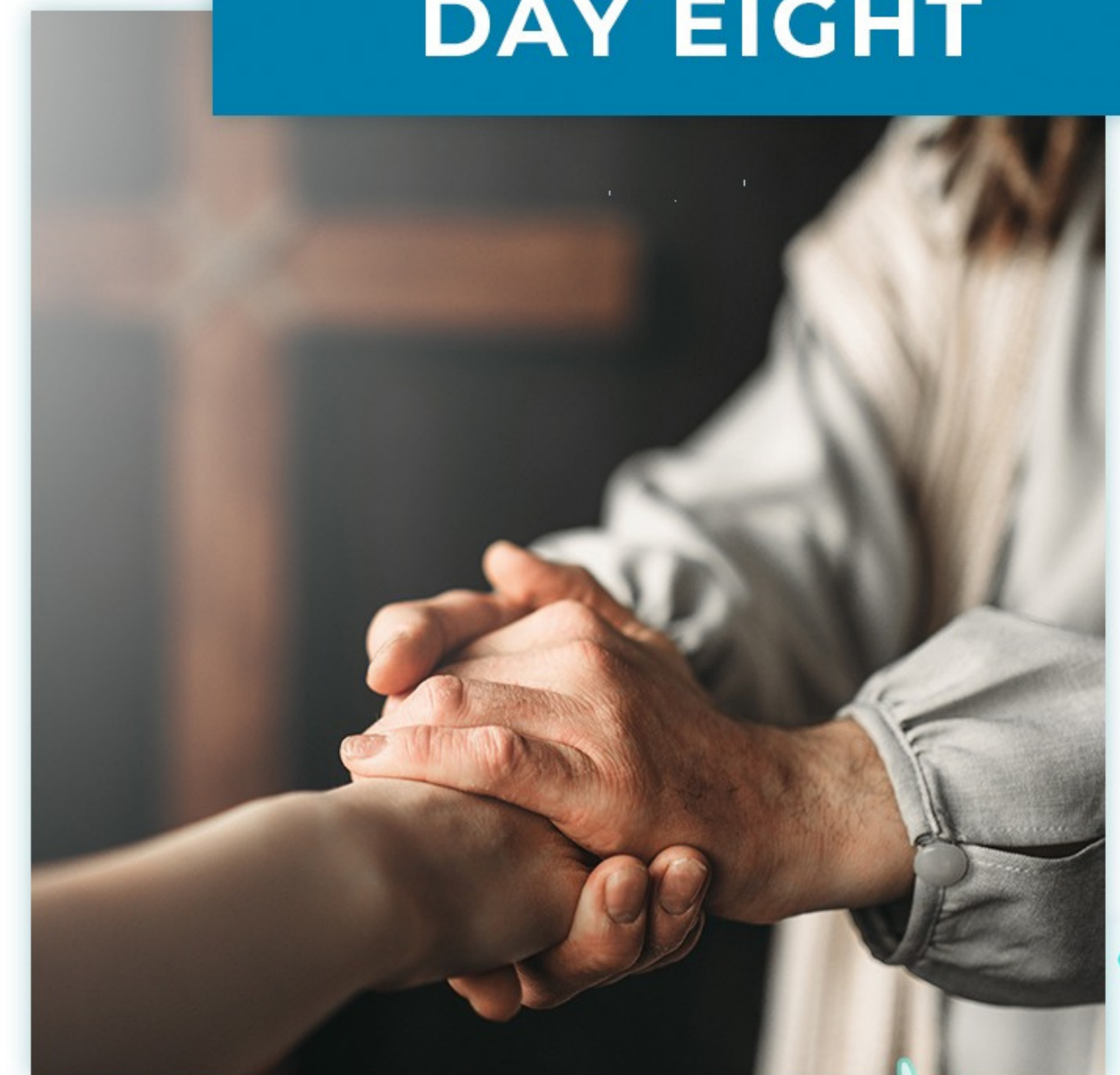


From there, the Jewish and Gentile believers **spread the light** together for 2000 years until they came to us. So the seventh candle represents us. We read the scriptures that talk about us **being the light of the world** and how we are not to hide our light under a bushel. We are getting closer and closer to the point of coming full circle back to the first night, the light of creation. The original intent of the Creator was to share Himself, **the Light**, to all the nations (Hebrew: Goyim, which is the same word for Gentiles). The original plan of God was that there would always be one people under Him, and **the light would continually be shining in and through His people.**

Finally, we come to the end of time as we know it where **the Messiah comes back to usher in the final candle, the Light of the Millennium.** This is the thousand-year reign of Messiah where **He will be the Light coming directly from the new temple.**

“But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. **The Lamb is its light.**”  
Revelation 21:22-23

## DAY EIGHT



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## Create your own traditions!

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Please take this short guide to “**Hannukah**” and make it yours! You can do as little or as much as you want with each of the above days. Whether you have small children or teenagers, **you can create your own traditions**. For instance, on day four when I’m talking about the commandments, I turned off all the lights and took my younger children and blindfolded them, making sure they can still see their feet. Then I give them a small flashlight and they have to follow my voice as I lead them to a small gift or some candy. This illustrates how **His Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths**. We’ve also played flashlight tag in the dark house. That’s always fun, even for the older girls.



Another idea ~ take construction paper and paint it with black light paint and then cut it out in different shapes, one of which should be an arrow. Have your kids hide their eyes as you put the shapes on the floor throughout your house. Then with all the lights off and just a black light on, they follow the signs that lead to a surprise. The black light represents the written Word and the Spirit. **This teaches them to follow only the signs of God.**

The dreidel game is another favorite! The dreidel is a small top that has four different Hebrew letters on each of its four sides. When you spin it and it lands, each letter tells you to do something different. The game starts with everyone putting a chocolate coin in the middle of the playing space. This is the “pot.” Players take turns spinning the dreidel and do whatever the letter they land on says to do. Whether you get to take half the pot, the whole pot, get nothing, or have to add to the pot, depends on which Hebrew letter the dreidel lands on. It’s a fun game that ends with someone getting a lot of candy! You can buy dreidels online or in stores like Party City or Hobby Lobby, and there are full game instructions online, as well.

From making miniature arks for Noah’s flood to doing science experiments with light, the sky’s the limit when it comes to creating fun traditions for your family. The great part about this holiday that sets it far apart from Christmas is that it’s not just one day, it’s eight! For eight days we get to invite people over for dinner, go to other people’s houses, eat lots of candy, watch family movies, and really focus on **the Light of the world**.

Another Staley tradition is filling the house with lots of mouth-watering sweets and candy! Our girls love making yummy cookies with traditional icing on them in stars, hanukkiah, or whatever they want. Fried food is another staple for us at Hannukah – latkes (fried potato pancakes) and let’s not forget about jelly donuts!

So there you have it! These are a few of the traditions we Staleys have during the Hanukkah season. There are more ideas in our teaching **How to Celebrate Hanukkah**.

