

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE: STEPPING INTO THE SHAMASH ROLE



SHAMASH

On Hanukkah we use a candle called the Shamash to light all the other candles on our menorah/hanukiah (candelabra).

The Shamash is special and unique, and does not have the same status as the other candles as it's not a "mitzvah candle."

We are commanded to light up to 8 candles each night of Hanukkah, but not the 9th. The 9th candle is set apart and given a crucial role. The Shamash is hugely important because without it, the other candles cannot fulfil their mitzvah. The Shamash lifts up all the other candles, bringing them to wholeness and holiness.

Each of us can be a shamash in our own lives. The middah, Jewish value, of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) tells us it is our responsibility to help uplift and heal our communities and the world.

Leadership does not necessarily mean being the best; leadership is a service role. There is a Jewish Midrash that shares Moses was picked to be the leader of the Jewish people because he cared about each and every sheep in his flock.

This Hanukkah, think about leadership and service, and what it means to step into the Shamash role as a leader.

What is one special strength I have to offer my community?
(If you struggle to think of a strength, ask yourself what do you frequently get thanked for?)

What's one time I used compassion or empathy this past month?

Choose one person: how can you lift them up or support them in something they care about?

What is one way to search for the good in others?

What's one thing I can do to be inclusive and invite others to the table?

What's one issue facing my community that I'd like to get involved with?

What's one resource I know about and love that I could share with others?

What's one thing I can do this week to make someone feel celebrated?



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