

Dear Haverim,

As we prepare to light the sixth candle of Hanukkah, I share this thought with you.

It is customary to place the hanukiah in a window and to light it when the greatest number of people are passing on the street. Our tradition teaches us that it is best to light the hanukiah just as it is getting dark, during the time that people are returning home from their day. While one can light the candles at any time of the night, it is preferable to light them when others will see. This tradition is derived from the idea of *perumei nissa*, publicizing the miracle. This idea implies that the lights of the hanukiah are not meant for us but for those who pass our home on the street and see the beauty of the candles. In other words, to allow others to experience our light.

Today was the funeral of one of the greatest rabbis of our generation. Rabbi Harold Schulweis touched the lives of countless Jews and had a profound impact on the direction of North American Judaism.

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism CEO Rabbi Steven Wernick said, "Rabbi Schulweis showed us that we do not have to choose between a particularist or universalist type of Judaism. He showed, rather, that Jewish practice, a love for *Clal Yisrael* (all of the Jewish people), and a love of all people goes hand in glove with an imperative to stand up for social justice and to live a life of meaning and purpose. The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous, Mazon, Jewish World Watch – all are organizations that exist because of Rabbi Schulweis's passion to heal the world.

Rabbi Schulweis taught us all that there is much more to our Judaism than what we do in the synagogue. We must be leaders in working for the betterment of the entire world. This work makes us better Jews and makes the entire world a better place.

The prophet Isaiah says "I will make you a light of nations", meaning that we are symbol of what the world can be. Our liturgy is filled with references to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Time and time again we are tasked with ensuring that every human being on our planet, regardless of religion is cared for.

Today so many Jews want to close their blinds and only focus on our own community. But our tradition of lighting the hanukiah for others to see and Rabbi Schulweis in particular teach us otherwise. We need to let our light shine outward!

Hag Urim Sameach,
Rabbi Michael Kushnick