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Genesis 2009: Let there be a Lamp

Genesis 1:1-2 Hovering over the surface of the water.

John 1:1-3 In the Beginning was the Word.

Genesis 1:3-4 Let there be light (*ohr or ner?*).

John 1:4-7 The light (*ohr or ner?*) shines in the darkness.

John 8:12 I am the light (*ohr or ner?*) of the world.

The Hebrew word "*ohr*" means "*light*" as in absence of darkness.

The Hebrew word "*ner*" means "*light*" as either in emitted light (like a lamp) or spiritual light.

Ner is the root of the word "*menorah*".

I Samuel 3:3 The *ner* of Hashem.

The *ner tamid* or "*eternal light*" is the lamp that burns continually above the Torah ark. It symbolizes the seven-branched Menorah burning in the Mishkan and Temple. In the Psalms, the soul of man is likened to a lamp (*ner*) burning before God. The *ner tamid* is also modeled after the vision described in Zechariah, revealing a golden candelabrum.

Zechariah 4:6 But through my Spirit.

Isaiah 42:5-9 Light to the nations.

Isaiah 42:16 Turning darkness into light.

Psalms 139:8-12 Night becomes light around me.

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp unto my feet.

Exodus 37:17-24 The Menorah, made according to the model that God showed Moses at Sinai.

Revelation 1:12-13 The Son of Man and the Menorahs. Why seven Menorahs?

Matthew 5:14-16 You are a light to the world.

The Sages say in the *Zohar* (3:187a) that the symbolism of the Chanukah menorah is as follows: "*the body is similar to the wick, the flame itself is analogous to the divine presence that rests above the head, and the oil that fuses the two together, allowing the flame to join and remain connected with the wick is our ma'asim tovim-good and illuminating deeds.*"

Additionally, they state that people are like the flame of the menorah. The Hebrew word "*nefesh*" (*spirit*), comprised of the three letters, nun, pei, shin, is an acronym for *ner* (*flame*), *pesilah* (*wick*) and *shemen* (*oil*).

Was the light in **Genesis 1:3-4** *ohr* or *ner*?