

# *Shamor v'Zachor: Observe and Remember for Refugees*



**Read the following aloud before you light the Shabbat candles, followed by the blessing:**

*Shamor v'zachor* – we observe and we remember.

We welcome Shabbat with two candles – one to remember Shabbat, and one to make it holy through our observance.

*Zachor* – we remember. After the Jewish people's original journey as refugees, when we fled our biblical oppressors in Egypt, we were given the gift of Shabbat rest. Today, we remember Shabbat by linking ourselves to those who came before us, a people who, time and time again, were forced to leave home in order to practice Judaism openly and freely.

As we remember our own ancestors' journeys, we think of the millions of refugees and asylum seekers around the world today still fleeing violence and persecution because of who they are.

*Shamor* – we observe. We observe Shabbat by creating sacred space in our homes, in our synagogues – in all the places that give us refuge. We hope that the lights we kindle over these holy hours will illumine a path to a world made whole once more, a world in which our rest on this day will inspire us to action on all the days that follow.

We observe. We remember. And, now, inspired by our history and our faith, we will act.

Together, we will speak out against those who seek to close the doors of our country to refugees and asylum seekers. We will welcome newcomers to our communities, helping them to settle into new lives with ease. We will ground ourselves in our shared values, living them each and every day as we fight for justice for all.

The flickering of these lights reminds us of the Divine spark that is within each of us – all of us equally deserving of dignity and respect, no matter who we are, what we look like, what we believe, or where we call home.

*Shamor v'zachor* – we observe and we remember. May the transformative power of these Sabbath lights embolden us in our pursuit of justice so that we may transform our world.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

*Baruch Atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech Ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who hallows us with commandments, commanding us to kindle the light of Shabbat.