

# Hanukkah

First Candle - Sunday, December 21, 2008

24 Kislev - 2 Tevet 5769

## What is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah is one of the happiest of Jewish holidays. In 167 B.C.E., the Syrian emperor Antiochus set out to destroy Judaism by making its observance a capital offense. In one horrible instance, two Jewish mothers who had secretly circumcised their sons were paraded through the streets of Jerusalem and then executed along with the infants. A Jew named Mattathias, along with his five sons, initiated a revolt against the Syrian monarch. Three years later, the rebels ousted Antiochus's troops from Palestine.

The Jewish revolutionaries, known as Maccabees or Hasmoneans, regained control of the Temple in Jerusalem, which during the years of Syrian control had been defiled. Antiochus had even arranged for swine to be sacrificed in the Temple. The Jewish troops wept when they saw the Temple's degradation, and immediately resolved to restore it to a state of ritual purity. According to Jewish tradition, they could find only one cruse of uncontaminated olive oil; unfortunately, it contained oil sufficient for only one day. The Jews were very upset because it would take eight days to prepare ritually permitted oil. However, a miracle happened and the small quantity of oil continued to burn the full eight days.

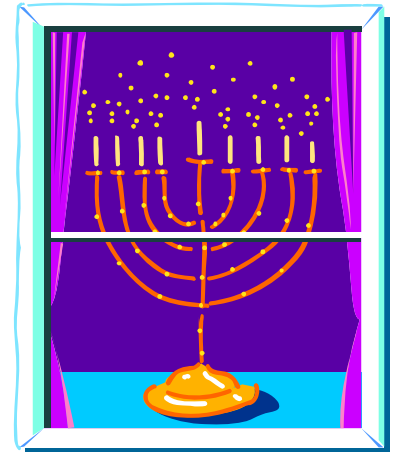
In commemoration of this happy event, Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days. On the first night, one candle is lighted, on the second, two candles, and so on, until the last night, when eight candles are lighted. The candles are placed in a *menorah*, a candelabrum that has eight openings, and a ninth, elevated opening known as a *shamash*. The *shamash* candle, which is lit first, is used to light the others.

Jewish law dictates that the candles be placed near a window, so that passersby can see them from the street. This is in fulfillment of the rabbinic dictum "to publicize the miracle." Indeed, this is the sole function of the Hanukkah candles; it is forbidden to use them for any other purpose; one cannot, for example, read by the Hanukkah lights (it is fully permissible, however, to use the Sabbath lights for illumination). During the time the candles are burning, it is also customary that women relax and not work.

A popular Hanukkah children's game is spinning of the *dreidl*, a four-sided cylindrical figure that spins like a top. On each side, a Hebrew letter is printed: *Nun*, *Gimmel*, *Hay*, *Shin*, which make the acronym "*Nes Gadol Haya Sham* – A Great Miracle Happened There [in Israel]." Bets are taken on what letter will be showing when the *dreidl* stops spinning. If it stops on the *nun*, no one wins; on the *gimmel*, the spinner takes the pot; on the *hay*, half the pot; and on the *shin*, he or she puts money into the pot.

Among American Jews, the *latke*, a pancake made of potatoes and onions fried in oil, is the food most associated with Hanukkah. And because the Hanukkah miracle concerned oil, all the preferred holiday foods are fried in oil; in Israel the most popular Hanukkah delicacy is the *sufganiyah*, a fried jelly roll.

- from Telushkin, Jewish Literacy



Laws and  
Customs -  
p.2

How to play  
dreidle - p.4

Chanukah  
songs - p.5

### Hanukkah Candlelighting

Join us as we  
festively light  
Hanukkah  
candles every  
evening at the  
weeknight  
5:45 p.m. Minyan  
service during  
Hanukkah.

# Hanukkah Laws and Customs

## Who should light the menorah?

According to Jewish tradition, every man, woman and child should light his/her own menorah. At the minimum, there should be one menorah per household.

## When to light?

Candles should be kindled at dusk, so that people will see them in the window as they come home from work. Many families light candles together just before or after dinner.

## What is the Shamash?

The Shamash, the most conspicuous of the candles, is the assistant or helper. According to tradition, one is not permitted to make use of the Hanukkah lights for any purpose except the Mitzvah of kindling. In order to avoid inadvertent use of the lights, the Shamash was added. Thus, the light we "use" derives from the Shamash and not from the other candles.

## Why do we eat latkes and donuts?

The Hanukkah holiday focuses on the miracle of the one jar of oil which lasted for eight days. Therefore, we eat food fried in oil to celebrate the miracle.

## Should I decorate our house with Hanukkah decorations?

Absolutely! Play it to the hilt!

It's true that Hanukkah is not as central in Jewish tradition as Shabbat, Pesach, Shavuot or Sukkot. It's true that Hanukkah is not in the Bible, while Purim is. It's true that the rabbis of the Talmud tried to play down Hanukkah in general, and certainly the aspect of the Maccabees' military victory over the Syrian Greeks. And it's true that Hanukkah achieved some of its hype for us because of its proximity to Christmas. But so what? It's a joyous holiday, and its observance strengthens us as Jews and Jewish families. Rabbi Havivi says: "Go for it!"

**Should I decorate our house with Hanukkah decorations?**



## A MEANINGFUL HOLIDAY TRADITION CONTINUES.....

This Christmas marks the 30<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that members of Beth David Synagogue and Temple Emanuel will volunteer at Moses Cone Hospital. In the traditional spirit of giving, volunteers from the Jewish community will work Wednesday, December 24 and Thursday, December 25, so employees and some volunteers may spend the holidays at home with their families. We help staff the kitchen, cafeteria, and reception desks.

We need your help to continue our annual gift of brotherhood, caring, and time to our community. Please think about what job you would like and call us to volunteer your time. Call either one of us to sign up for a specific time period. Shifts are usually 3 – 4 hours. We have about 80 volunteers for this project. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by the hospital staff and administration.

We need help Wednesday, December 24 and Thursday, December 25 from 6:00 am – 8:30 pm  
We thank you for supporting this wonderful project.

For more information, or to sign up to help, please call:

Sylvia Berkelhammer 294-3073  
Derek Davis 299-9909

## ***(More) Things to Know about Hanukah***

It doesn't matter how you spell it in English: Hanukah, Chanukah, Hanukkah, Channukah. The word Hanukah means dedication.

There is no special meal required on Hanukah, but very oily foods (like potato latkes or *sufganiyot* – doughnuts) are traditional.

A Hanukah lamp is called a *hanukiah*. It can be made out of any material (preferably non-flammable, and fairly heat resistant, to avoid bothering the fire department).

In traditional *hanukiot* (plural of *hanukiah*), all eight candles are all on the same level, in a line, with a higher or separated shamash (helper candle).

You may use either candles or olive oil in a *hanukiah*. Make sure that the wicks are separate.

Place your *hanukiah* in the window, if possible, so that you can "publicize the miracle" – *pirsumei nisah* in Hebrew.

One may not make use of the Hanukah candles while they are burning for anything other than their ritual use. You shouldn't read by their light or cook by their flame – there is even a tradition that women do not do housework while the candles are burning.

Candles are lit each night just after sundown. (This year, the first night is Tuesday, December 4th. The first day of Hanukkah is the 5th, but Jewish holidays start the night before).

Each night, you add a new candle to the *hanukiah*. Place the candles in the *hanukiah* from the right (as you face it), and light them from the left. Light the shamash first, and using it, start with the "newest" candle each day.

On the Shabbat Hanukah, light Hanukah candles before you light Shabbat candles. Try to use extra-long burning candles so that at least one lasts into Shabbat.

## ***How to Light Hanukkah Candles***

1) Prepare the menorah with the proper number and placement of candles. On the first night, put one candle in the far right holder. On the second night, put a candle on the far right, and one to the left of it. On each subsequent night, add one new candle to the immediate left. The placement of the Shamash candle depends on the configuration of the individual menorah.

2) With the menorah on a table (or on a windowsill) light the Shamash extra helper candle. Men and boys should wear a kippah while lighting the menorah. Recite the blessings:

*Bahrooch ata Adonai, Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, asher keed'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzeevanu l'hadleek nair shel hanukkah.*

*Bahrooch ata Adonai, Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, sh'asah neeseem la'avotaynu, bayameem hahaym, baz'man hazeh.*

*Bahrooch ata Adonai Elohaynu Melech ha'olam, shehecheyanu v'keymahnu v'heegeeyanu la'zman hazeh.* (only on the first night)

3) Light the newest candle (the left most candle) first, and continue lighting from left to right. The rule is "place right to left, light left to right."

4) Sing or recite *Hanerot Halalu* and *Ma'oz Tzur* (see words to these and other Chanuka songs elsewhere in the bulletin).

5) Place the menorah in the window facing the street, so people outside can see it.

6) Enjoy the lights – play, talk, eat with your family and friends while they are burning.

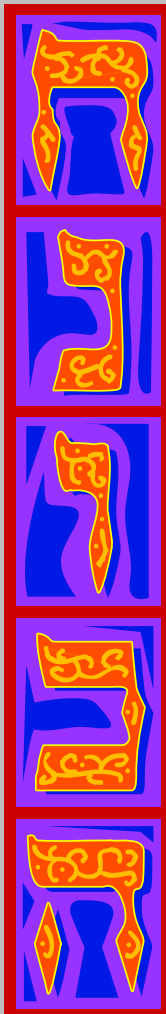
For a wonderful treatment of whys and hows of Hanukkah, candle lighting, Christmas issues, etc., pick up a copy of *The Art of Jewish Living – Hanukkah*, by Ron Wolfson, in our Sisterhood Gift Shop.

# How to Play Dreidle

Although normally frowned upon, games of chance emerged as the most popular of the games of Hanukkah. The best known of these involves a spinning top, called a *dreidle* (Yiddish) or *s'vivon* (Hebrew). On each of the four sides of the dreidle is one of four Hebrew letters: *nun*, *gimmel*, *hey*, *shin*. The letters are the initials of the words: "*Nes gadol hayah sham*," literally, "A great miracle happened there." Of course, this refers to the miracle of the victorious Macabees that happened "there," in the land of Israel. In fact, an Israeli *s'vivon* will have a letter "*pey*" instead of a "*shin*," for the corresponding phrase in Israel is "*Nes gadol hayah poh*," "A great miracle happened **here**."

The game of dreidle is played in any number of variations. The most popular follows these rules:

1. Every player puts in an equal share of something – nuts, raisins, pennies, candy Hanukkah coins – into the "pot."
2. The first player takes a turn spinning the dreidle. Depending on which letter is showing on the dreidle when it lands, the player does the following:  
*Nun* : (*Nisht*) Neither get nor put; Nothing  
*Gimmel* : (*Gantz*) Get everything (then start a new "pot")  
*Heh* : (*Halb*) Get half the pot  
*Shin*: (*Shtetl*) Shell out; put more in the pot - whatever number was agreed to at the beginning of play
3. Play proceeds clockwise around the circle of players, each person taking a turn. When a *Gimmel* lands and the pot is taken, each player puts another share into the pot.
4. The winner is determined when one player has won all the goodies from the other players. Or, the game is called when the latkes are ready!



## Chanukah Symbol Cookies (Parve)

3 cups flour  
 2 teaspoons baking powder  
 1 cup sugar  
 1 teaspoon salt  
 1 large egg, beaten lightly  
 1 teaspoon vanilla  
 ½ cup orange juice  
 ½ cup vegetable oil

Into a large bowl sift together the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt; add the egg, vanilla, orange juice and oil and combine the mixture until it forms a dough.

Divide the dough into four parts, wrap each part in waxed paper, and chill the dough for one hour, or until it is firm enough to roll.

Roll out one part of the dough ¼ inch thick on a floured surface and with cookie cutters, cut out dreidels, menorahs, stars of David, or shapes pertaining to Chanukah.

Bake the cookies on lightly oiled baking sheets in a preheated moderately hot oven (375 degrees) for 10 to 15 minutes or until they are golden. Make cookies with the remaining dough in the same manner.

Makes about 50 cookies.

**Chanuka cookie cutters are available in the gift shop.**

## Traditional Potato Latkes

12 large potatoes, grated  
 3 medium onions, grated  
 4 eggs, beaten lightly  
 5 tablespoons flour  
 3 teaspoons salt  
 1 teaspoon pepper  
 oil for deep frying

The secret to great latkes is to remove as much liquid from the potatoes and onions as possible. Put the grated potatoes in a clean tea towel and squeeze the liquid out of the mixture. Do the same for the grated onions. Combine all the ingredients and mix together well by hand.

In a heavy skillet, put a ¾" deep layer of oil. Heat until sizzling. Form individual pancakes by hand and carefully slide into the pan using a slotted spatula. Fill the pan, but leave room between the pancakes. When the latkes are nicely browned on one side, turn carefully and cook until browned on the other side and crisp on the edges. Remove with a spatula and place on paper towels. Let the excess grease drain onto the paper towel. Serve immediately for the best taste. You can keep the latkes hot in a warm oven. Serve with sour cream or applesauce, or sprinkle with granulated sugar.

# Chanukah Songs

## MA-OZ TZUR (ROCK OF AGES)

*Ma-oz tzur y'shu-a-ti  
L'cha na-eh l'sha-bay-ach  
Tea-kone bayt te-fee-la-tea  
V'sham todah n'za-bay-ach  
L'et ta-chin mat-bay-ach  
Mitz-are hom'na-bay-ach*

Repeat:

*Oz egg more be-shir miz-mor  
Chanukat ha-miz-bay-ach*

Rock of Ages, let our song  
Praise Your saving power  
You amid the raging foes,  
Were our sheltering tower  
Furious they assailed us  
But your arm availed us.

Repeat:

And your word  
Broke their sword  
When our own strength failed us.

## MY DREIDEL

Chorus:

I have a little dreidel,  
I made it out of clay,  
and when it's dry and ready,  
Then dreidel I shall play.  
O dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,  
I made it out of clay,  
O dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,  
Now dreidel I shall play.

It has a lovely body,  
with leg so short and thin,  
And when it is all tired,  
It drops and then I win. (Chorus)

My dreidel is always playful,  
It loves to dance and spin;  
A happy game of dreidel,  
Come play, now let's begin. (Chorus)

## HANUKKAH OH HANUKKAH

Oh Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah,  
Come light the Menorah,  
Let's have a party  
We'll dance around the horah.  
Gather round the table,  
We'll give you a treat  
A dreidel to play with  
And latkes to eat.  
And while we are playing  
The candles are burning low.  
One for each night  
They shed a sweet light.  
To remind us of days long ago.

One for each night,  
They shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago.

## S'VIVON

*S've-von sov, sov, sov, Ha-nu-kah hu hag tov!  
Ha-nu-kah hu hag tov! S'vi-von, sov, sov, sov.  
Hag sim-cha hu la-am, Nes ga-dol ha-ya sham  
Nes ha-dol ha-ya-sham, Hag sim-cha hu la-am.*

## MI Y'MALEL – WHO CAN RETELL

*Mi y'ma-lel g'vu-rote Yisrael? O-tam mi yim-neh?  
Hen b'chol dor ya-kum ha-gi-bor, go-el ha-am.  
Sh'ma! Ba-ya-mim ha-hem baz-man ha-zeh,  
Mac-ca-bee mo-shi-a u-fo-deh.  
Uv-ya-may-nu kol am Yis-ra-el;  
Yit-a-hed ya-kum l'hi-ga-el.*

## WHO CAN RETELL

Who can retell the things that befell us?  
Who can count them?  
In every age, a hero or sage, Came to our aid!  
Hark! In days of yore in Israel's ancient land,  
Brave Macabeus led the faithful band.  
But now all Israel must as one arise,  
Redeem itself thru deed and sacrifice.

## LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Light one candle for the Maccabee children  
With thanks that their light didn't die  
Light one candle for the pain they endured  
When their right to exist was denied  
Light one candle for the terrible sacrifice  
justice and freedom demand  
But light one candle for the wisdom to know  
when the peacemaker's time is at hand.  
Don't let the light go out -- it's lasted for so  
many years  
Don't let the light go out -- let it shine thru our  
love and our tears!

Light one candle for the strength that we need  
to never become our own foe  
Light one candle for those who are suffering  
the pain we learned so long ago  
Light one candle for all we believe  
in that anger won't tear us apart  
And light one candle to bring us together  
with peace as the song in our heart.  
Don't let the light go out -- it's lasted for so  
many years  
Don't let the light go out -- let it shine thru our  
love and our tears!



# Hanukkah Gelt and Year-end Tax Planning

The law encourages donors to support their favorite charitable institutions by providing an income tax deduction in the year that gifts are made.

The end of the calendar year is approaching. Now is a good time to make a gift to Beth David Synagogue. Any size gift is welcome, and we are also establishing named endowments to make possible yearly educational and cultural events.

For information, call the Synagogue office, 294-0007.

In order to take a deduction for your gift on this year's tax return, the gift must be made by December 31.

## Gift and Gelt Giving in the Jewish Tradition

Where does Chanukah gift giving come from in Judaism? The gift giving of today is a post WWII answer and competition with Christmas which had already bolstered itself to compete with Chanukah. However giving gelt, the Yiddish term for money, is an age old tradition that has deep roots.

Some suggest that it comes from the Jewish legal code the Shulchan Aruch which mentions the prohibition of counting money using the light of the Chanukiah (menorah). Unlike Shabbat candles which are intended to help people see one another and where they are walking during Shabbat, the light of the chanukiah is solely ornamental meant to remind us of the miracles of the season. Thus some historians say that the tradition of giving money is to remind people of this law.

Others offer a similar but different twist on the tradition. The Talmud as well as the Shulchan Aruch speak of the importance of buying wax or oil for this mitzvah. Every family must have at least one chanukiah. Including the poor. Some say that gelt was given to the poor at this time to enable them to buy wax to fulfill this deed.

Another view of the tradition stems from the Maccabees themselves. Twenty-two years after the famous battle was won, the Maccabee minted coins with images of the menorah to commemorate their victory and independence. Each year the modern Bank of Israel mints special coins around the holiday. Giving out gelt for Chanukah throughout time recalls and celebrates the ideal of Jewish freedom.

The Hebrew language is built on a system of three letter root words. For the most part, one can figure out the meaning of a word by recognizing the root and looking at the relationship to other words containing the same root. This being said, Chanukah shares the root –chet, nun, chaf, with the word “chinuch”- education. Around this holiday, during the coldest part of the year, teachers would receive bonuses from their students' parents.

A final theory of the tradition of gelt giving focuses on the children themselves. This view attests that due to the lull between holidays which caused children to be in schools for a long time without vacation days, parents would give prize money to reward them for their studies.

Yosef I. Abramowitz  
CEO, Jewish Family and Life



# Chanukah Burn & Scald Prevention

## Chanukah Specific Reminders

- ✧ Keep the menorah away from curtains or any other flammable objects.
- ✧ Keep the menorahs away from the reach of small children.
- ✧ When making latkes, keep ALL children away from hot oil.
- ✧ When making latkes, remember to turn frying pan handles away from the edge of the stove, so that they do not get knocked over and cause the oil to be spilled.

## Sabbath and Holiday Candles General Reminders

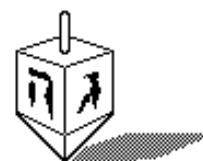
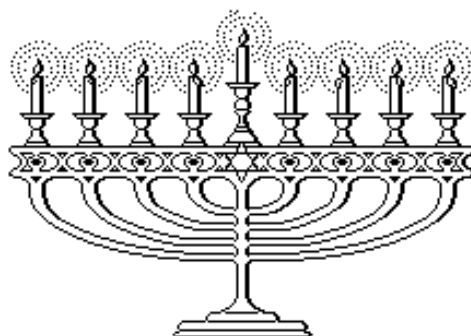
- ✧ Never place candles near or under anything flammable.
- ✧ Keep Shabbat, Yom Tov, Chanukah, and Yahrzeit candles on sideboards, out of the reach of small children.
- ✧ If candles are on the table, keep them in the center where they are less likely to be pulled down by a small child.
- ✧ The following are common locations in which candles are placed and which cause household fires—under kitchen cabinets, near window curtains, any location a young child can easily reach to pull the candles down, any location a family pet can knock candles over.
- ✧ When lighting and blessing candles, women in particular need to insure that they do not accidentally set their sleeves on fire when they put their hands over the flames. They must also be very careful of their hair or any headcovering.
- ✧ When lighting multiple Sabbath candles, families need to be aware of the high amount of heat the candles can generate. Create a safe place in the house in which multiple candles can be lit. Sometimes a safe place might need to be built which is non-flammable and away from small children's hands.

- From NewYork-Presbyterian, The University Hospitals of Columbia and Cornell



# Chanukah Word Search

4



M I I N Z U F B O T D M A L N  
 S H O A D X T V V H L A T K E  
 T G S H N I H S N F A T D E S  
 H K R A F T G O S K P T B O G  
 G I K R M M I S S A N A H L A  
 I A H O A A E O B Q C T P I D  
 L C H N O C H R C C V H A Y O  
 F N A E N O M S A H R I G E L  
 O I L M C T Y M N A U A I O H  
 L D L J H R H I D N Z S M I A  
 A O E E I A X E L U T R E L Y  
 V M L A D Z K D E K Z W L L A  
 I L N U N I G U Q I O H P C H  
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 S T Z L U A L R H A M M E R H  
 E B E U W R T C D J H L T D A  
 F V N Y I Z R K Z A F C D K M

AL HANASSIM  
 ANTIOCHUS  
 CANDLE  
 CHANUKAH  
 CHANUKIYA  
 DREIDEL  
 EIGHT  
 FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS  
 GELT  
 GIMEL  
 HALLEL  
 HAMMER  
 HASMONEAN  
 HAY  
 JUDAH MACCABEE  
 KISLEV  
 LATKE  
 MAOZ TZUR  
 MATTATHIAS  
 MENORAH  
 MODIN  
 NES GADOL HAYAH SHAM  
 NUN  
 OLIVE OIL  
 SHAMASH  
 SHIN  
 SYRIANS  
 TEMPLE