



JEWISH TREATS

Complete Guide to Chanukah



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WELCOME TO JEWISH TREATS

Complete Guide to Chanukah!

Jewish Treats is excited to introduce our brand new eBook: **Complete Guide to Chanukah** - your online resource to Chanukah. This eBook includes a little bit of everything: Discover how gelt became gifts, the enduring dreidel game and menorah lighting methods. You will also find recipes, fascinating facts and lots of family fun. Everything you need to know and have been wondering about this spectacular holiday is now right at your fingertips!

[Click here](#) for a message from our director.

From everyone at NJOP and Jewish Treats, we wish you a very Happy Chanukah!

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The Story of Chanukah:

WHAT IS THIS HOLIDAY REALLY CELEBRATING?



When the Greeks conquered the world, they brought with them their highly developed Hellenistic culture - the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, the multitude of Greek gods and goddesses, and the worship of the physical. At first, the Greeks were peaceful rulers, luring Jews to their culture by inviting them in and being open to searching the wisdom of Judaism. In the year 199 B.C.E., however, the land of Judea, which had been under the control of the Ptolemies (Greeks ruling from Egypt), was conquered by the Seleucids (Greeks ruling from Syria).

“Matityahu’s sons, who continued the fight after his death, became known as the Maccabees.”

The Syrian-Greeks did not feel that it was appropriate for the Jews, now their subjects, to maintain their own national culture. By now, they felt, the Jews should have seen the error of their “primitive” ways and embraced the “far more advanced” Hellenistic culture with open arms...and many did. The majority of Jews, however, maintained the heritage of their ancestors, incorporating some Hellenistic activities, but remaining faithful to the Torah.

The Syrian-Greeks pursued a policy of forced assimilation of the Jews. Torah study became a capital crime. If a parent was found to have circumcised an infant son, both the parent and child were put to death. The Greeks set up idols

in the Jewish town squares, summoned the Jews to the square and forced them to worship the statue or sacrifice a pig before the idol. The Syrian-Greeks wanted the Jews to renounce their own heritage and to be like them, Hellenists. Their campaign against Judaism began slowly, but by 168 B.C.E. they had desecrated the Holy Temple, setting a statue of Zeus in the main plaza.

In the town of Modi’in, west of Jerusalem, there lived a man named Matityahu (Mattathias). He was from the Hasmonean family, one of the branches of the priestly families. In

167 B.C.E., Syrian-Greek soldiers came to Modi’in and demanded that the Jews sacrifice a swine to one of their gods. Matityahu refused to allow this desecration and slew the heretic who had volunteered. Matityahu’s sons joined him in his battle and attacked the soldiers. Matityahu and his family were victorious in that small battle, but, heavily outnumbered by the incoming reinforcements, they were forced to flee Modi’in and take refuge in the hills. Matityahu’s sons, who continued the fight after his death, became known as the Maccabees.

Continued on Page 5



Under the leadership of Judah the Maccabee, the Jews led a guerilla war to free their nation. In 165 B.C.E., the Maccabees finally succeeded in routing the vastly stronger Syrian-Greeks and retook the Temple. They were aghast to find that the Syrian-Greek soldiers had thoroughly desecrated the holy site. The Jews immediately set to work removing the idolatrous statues, replacing the altar, and performing the many tasks necessary to rededicate the Temple.

On the southern side of the sanctuary stood the Menorah, but there was no oil with which to light it. As the Jews cleansed the Temple they searched for an unopened jar of pure oil. When all seemed lost, however, one last flask, with its seal still intact, was found. The Jews rejoiced and hurried to light the Menorah and rededicate the Temple.

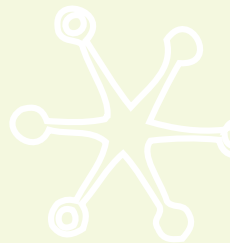
Only one small jar of oil...enough for a single day... It would take at least another week for a fresh supply of pure olive oil to be prepared. The Jews were in a quandary. Do they light the Menorah and allow it to fizzle out while waiting for more oil, or do they wait and use the oil the day before the new oil will arrive, in order to maintain a continuous flame? On the 25th of Kislev, not wanting to postpone performing the mitzvah, they decided to light the Menorah--and the miracle of Chanukah occurred. Despite the small quantity of oil, the

menorah remained lit for the entire eight days, announcing to the world that God's presence had returned to the Temple.

The celebration of Chanukah focuses on the miracle of the Chanukah lights. But the rekindling of the Menorah in the Temple was the culmination of a chain of wondrous events,

“Despite the small quantity of oil, the menorah remained lit for the entire eight days...”

the result of obvious Divine intervention, as well as sheer force of human will. When we light the candles of the menorah and recall the miracle of the oil, we must also remember the amazing triumph over our enemies. Focusing exclusively on the military victory, however, might make us believe that any group of rebels could have driven away the Syrian-Greeks, and that simple human power was behind the victorious Maccabean army. Focusing only on the military victory might have led us to forget the Divine hand in history.





The Menorah: **METHODS & MYTHS**

Chanukah is unique among the holidays in that it has only a single mitzvah - publicizing the miracle of Chanukah through the lighting of the menorah.

WHO?

All adults are equally obligated in the lighting of the Chanukah candles, and each one may light their own menorah. However, the head of the household may choose to light one set of Chanukah candles for the entire household. If individuals are lighting, it is customary to allow children over nine to light their own menorahs.

WHAT?

The Chanukah menorah can come in a wide array of styles, colors and sizes. Some people like a silver menorah, others prefer ceramic. Some prefer to have the shamash, the helper candle, positioned in the middle of the other eight candles, others prefer the shamash on one side.

MENORAH CHECKLIST!

- 1) You really don't need a menorah! That's right, one could technically light a series of tea lights (for example) one next to the other and still properly fulfill the mitzvah of Chanukah lights!
- 2) The lights should be in a straight line without any difference in height. They may be in a semi-circle as long as all the lights are visible at the same time. The place for the shamash on the menorah, however, should be differentiated from the other lights. Usually it is higher, lower or out of line with the others.
- 3) There should be enough space between lights so that none of the flames merge with their neighbor. Also the candles must be far enough apart that one candle does not cause the candle next to it to melt.
- 4) It is preferable to use olive oil for the Chanukah lights since the miracle took place with olive oil. One may, nevertheless, use wax or paraffin candles or other types of oils as long as they produce a steady, clean light.

WHEN?

While there are several opinions about when one should light the Chanukah candles, the popular opinion is that they should be lit approximately 30-40 minutes after sunset. If one is unable to light at the appropriate time, one may light later in the night, as long as there is someone else in the house who is awake or people on the streets that can see the candles. However, if the menorah was not lit at all during the night, there can be no "make-up" lighting during the day.

The Chanukah candles should remain lit for at least a half an hour and should not be used for any utilitarian purpose (e.g. for reading), but only used for the pleasure of viewing them.



On Friday night, the Chanukah candles must be lit before the Shabbat candles, and remain lit for at least 78 minutes (Tip: use oil or extra-long candles).

WHERE?

In order to fulfill the mitzvah of publicizing the miracle, it is important to light the Chanukah candles where others are able to see them. It is now common practice to place the menorah in a window facing the street. Please be sure to review fire safety procedures on page 9 with your family.

HOW?

On the first night, the first candle is placed on the far right side of the menorah. Each succeeding night, an additional candle is added to the left of the previous night's candle(s). The newest candle is always lit first.

Lighting the CHANUKAH CANDLES



Before lighting the candles, the following blessings are recited:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai, Ehlo-haynu Melech ha'olam, asher kiddeshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzeevanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

Blessed are You Lord, our God, Ruler of the world, Who sanctified us through His commandments and commanded us to kindle the lights of Chanukah.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ, בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai, Ehlo-haynu Melech ha'olam, she'asah neesim la'avotaynu, bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.

Blessed are You Lord, our God, Ruler of the world, Who wrought miracles for our ancestors in those days at this season.

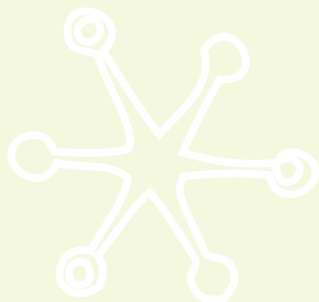
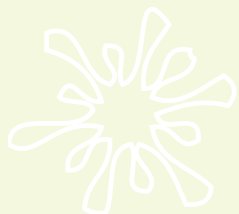
The third blessing is recited on the first night only:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִחְיָנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לַזֶּמֶן הַזֶּה.

Baruch Atah Ado-nai Ehlo-haynu Melech ha'olam, sheh'heh'chey'yanu v'kee'manu v'hee'gee'anu la'zman ha'zeh.

Blessed are You Lord, our God, Ruler of the world, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

It is customary to recite the songs *Ha'Neyrot Halalu* and *Ma'Oz Tzur* after lighting the candles. Both songs can be found on page 21.

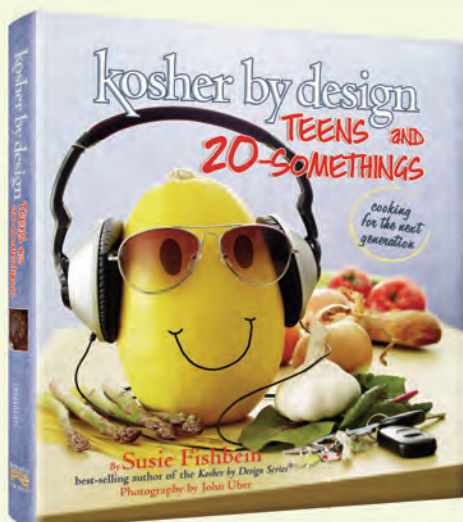


Safety Tips:

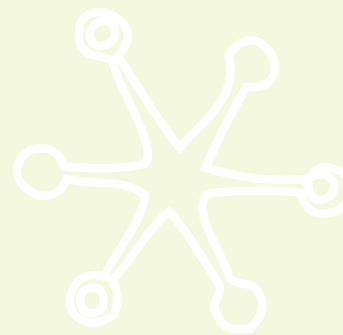
Lighting the Chanukah candles is a special and enjoyable experience; however, if not handled properly, they can cause a fire. Here are some suggestions from the National Fire Protection Association to ensure that your fire stays where it should be - on the menorah.



- 1 If you have small children or pets, make sure to place your menorah out of their reach.
- 2 Secure drapery around windows if your menorah is nearby, and place your candles at least 12 inches away from anything flammable.
- 3 Keep a fire extinguisher handy.
- 4 Make sure your smoke detectors are working properly by testing them the day before Chanukah.
- 5 You don't want your menorah to tip over, so be sure to use one that is sturdy.
- 6 Be mindful of your hair and loose clothing when you are lighting.
- 7 It is a good idea to place a piece of tin foil under your menorah just in case a candle falls. Since tin foil is not flammable, it will prevent the table from catching fire.
- 8 If your clothing or hair catches fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL.



Susie Fishbein's GREAT RECIPES



Susie Fishbein's best-selling Kosher by Design series has revolutionized kosher cuisine. Her creative and delicious recipes are always crowd-pleasers for tastes of all ages. Susie's latest cookbook, Kosher by Design: Teens and 20-Somethings, has something to offer everyone. Below are two Greek recipes from her latest book.

To add a new twist to your Chanukah party this year, why not serve some Greek dishes...think of it as a way of celebrating the survival of the Jewish people against the desire of the Syrian-Greeks to obliterate Jewish culture.

For a Chanukah Dinner:

- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 ½ teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried oregano leaves
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried basil
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 head romaine lettuce, finely chopped
- 1 small English (hothouse) cucumber, peeled and cut into ½-inch dice
- ½ medium red onion, peeled and cut into very thin slices
- ½ cup sliced black olives
- 1 cup sliced grape tomatoes
- ½ pound plain or smoked store-bought turkey breast, sliced or cut into cubes

Greek Turkey Salad

*Meat -Yields 6 servings

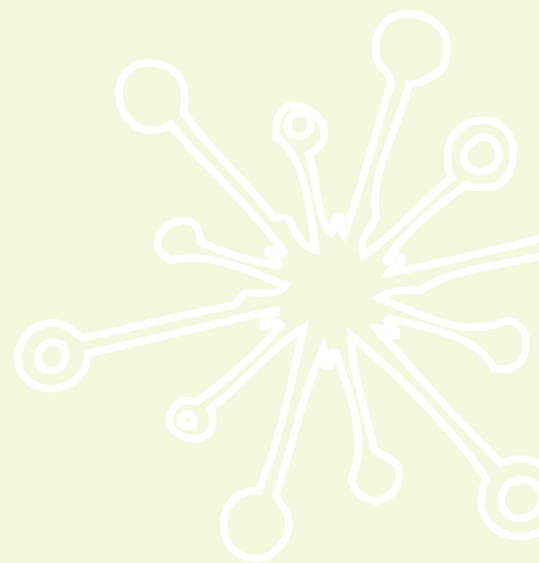
For a dairy option, leave out the turkey and crumble in some feta cheese. (For a vegetarian option, toss in some cubed tofu.)

1. In a quart-sized container, whisk or cover and shake the vinegar, garlic powder, oregano, basil, onion powder, pepper, salt, and mustard. Pour in the olive oil. Whisk vigorously until blended. Cover and store at room temperature.

2. Place the chopped lettuce, cucumber, onion, olives, tomatoes, and turkey into a large bowl. Toss to mix well. Add dressing to coat all the lettuce; you may have extra dressing.

3. Transfer to a salad bowl or individual plates.





It is customary to eat dairy on Chanukah. This tradition is in honor of the heroic acts of Judith, who saved the city of Bethulia from the tyrant General Holofernes, by feeding him cheese and wine until he fell into a deep sleep, whereupon she killed him.

To read more about this incredible story [click here](#).

This delicious dip combines two elements of Chanukah feasting; dairy and Greek:

Apple Walnut Greek Yogurt Dip

*Dairy -Yields 4 servings

A quick, healthy snack for between meals or anytime. Greek yogurt is thick and creamy and a little more tart than regular yogurt. It also wins out in the protein and probiotic categories when compared to regular yogurt.

1. Measure the yogurt into a small mixing bowl.
2. Spray a 1/4-cup measure with nonstick cooking spray. This will help the honey slide right out when measured. Add the honey and cinnamon to the yogurt. Mix well.
3. Slice the apples into rings or wedges, discarding the core and seeds. Arrange on a plate. Drizzle with yogurt dip.
4. Sprinkle with walnuts. Serve cold.

**[Click here](#) to purchase Susie Fishbein's Kosher by Design: Teens and 20-Somethings*

- 1 cup low-fat 2% Greek yogurt
- high heat or professional cooking spray
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 large Honeycrisp, Granny Smith, or other apple
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts





Perfect POTATO PANCAKE RECIPE

Because of the significance of oil in the miracle of Chanukah, it has become customary to eat foods fried in oil during the holiday. Two traditional treats are potato pancakes (aka Latkes) and doughnuts (aka Sufganiot).

- 1 medium-size onion, grated fine (onethird cup approximately)
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 2 pounds potatoes (approximately 6 medium)
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt (omit or reduce if on a salt-restricted diet)
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- vegetable oil for shallow frying

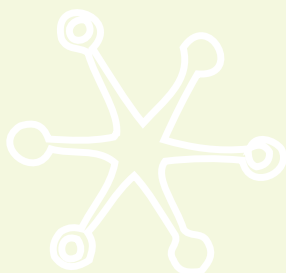
Potato Pancakes - Latkes

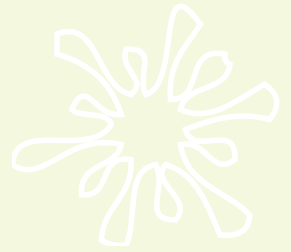
*Yields 16 latkes

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Submitted by: B. Goldberg

1. If you are using a hand grater, place the onion and eggs in a large bowl. Peel the potatoes, then shred or grate them directly into the bowl. Stir in the flour, salt, and pepper.
2. If you are using a food processor, grate the onion, then peel all the potatoes and grate or shred as many as you can at once. Place the potatoes and onions in a large bowl, mix in the eggs, flour, salt, and pepper.
3. In a large skillet, heat 1/8 inch of oil until it is hot but not yet smoking. For each latke, spoon about 1/4 cup of potato mixture into the oil, flattening slightly with the back of the spoon to make a 3-inch pancake. Cook until crisp and brown on one side, then turn and brown the other side. Add oil as necessary to cook all the latkes.
4. Drain well on paper towels. Serve hot. Many people serve latkes with applesauce or sour cream.





Classic DOUGHNUT RECIPE

Doughnuts - Sufganiot

*Yields about 1 dozen

Reprinted with the permission of Kosherfinder.com
Submitted by: B. Goldberg

In a medium size mixing bowl, use electric mixer to beat the eggs with sugar and oil until well mixed. Beat in the juice or coffee, the flour, and the baking powder.

1. Spread a thin layer of flour on a clean, dry work surface. Turn the dough out onto the flour. Coat your fingers with flour. Flatten the dough a little, then flip it over to coat the other side lightly with flour. Gently roll the dough out to a thickness of 1/2 inch.

2. Using a doughnut cutter dipped in flour, cut the dough into as many doughnuts and doughnut holes as you can. Reroll scraps, cut the remainder.

3. In an electric skillet or a large deep pot, heat an inch of oil until it is hot but not yet smoking. Carefully drop as many doughnuts and holes as will fit comfortably in the skillet or pot. Fry a few minutes on each side until nicely browned. Drain well on paper towels.

4. For the glaze, place the confectioners' sugar in a small shallow bowl that will be large enough to accommodate a doughnut for dipping. Blend in orange juice or coffee half a teaspoon at a time, until smooth and just thick enough to run off the spoon. While still warm, dip the doughnuts into the glaze. If you prefer, sprinkle the fried doughnuts with plain confectioners' sugar.

- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup canola, soybean, or other oil
- 1/4 cup orange juice or brewed coffee
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- extra flour for the work surface
- oil for deep frying glaze:
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons orange juice or brewed coffee, approximately





Eleni's Chanukah COOKIE SECRETS

Eleni Gianopulos started baking her mom's oatmeal-raisin cookies in her apartment in 1996, but quickly outgrew her oven. Since 1997, Eleni's has been a must-stop at the Chelsea Market (and more recently the Upper East Side at 90th & Madison), where irresistibly designed "conversation cookies," cupcakes and other treats await. She has shared her scrumptious Sugar Cookie Recipe so you can make them right at home for Chanukah!



Sugar Cookie Recipe

Preheat the oven to 360 degrees Fahrenheit.

1. Combine all of the dry ingredients in a bowl and set aside. In a mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar using a paddle attachment.
2. Add the egg and vanilla and slowly mix to combine. Use a rubber spatula to scrape down the sides of the bowl and paddle.
3. Add the dry ingredients last and mix just until combined.
4. Shape the dough into a circle onto parchment paper or plastic wrap and refrigerate until firm enough to roll.
5. Roll approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick and cut into desired shapes. Bake on parchment lined sheet tray until golden around the edges, 9-11 minutes, depending on the size of the shape.
6. Cool completely before icing.

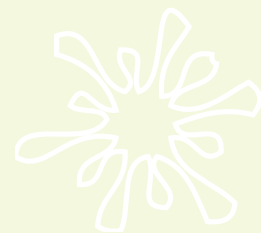
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsalted butter at room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Icing Recipe

Combine all of the ingredients using a whisk. For a stiffer consistency, add more sugar. To thin out, add a bit of egg white. Color using food dyes and frost cookies as desired.

- 2 large egg whites
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, strained
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar, sifted

About Eleni



For over a decade, Eleni has wowed New Yorkers and the rest of the country with her sugary creations. Her hand iced sugar cookies are a favorite of everyone from Blake Lively of Gossip Girl to Catherine Zeta Jones, Jerry Seinfeld, A-Rod, Leonardo DiCaprio 0 dozens more famous faces. What's more, she's made custom creations for the biggest names in the business world from Starbucks to Bobbie Brown, the WSJ and every company in between.

This Chanukah season, Eleni talks to us about the hobby that became a full time business.

Why is baking such a great family activity?

Whether your children are 2 or 12, baking cookies together is always a great activity and something that can last a lifetime. Not only is it a great way to all spend time together at home, with your kids, it's a wonderful way to unplug from the TV and computer and focus attention around doing something creative.

What can kids learn from baking?

Baking is a terrific activity because regardless of your child's age, there is something to be learned. Whether it's learning about



measurements, reading a recipe, following directions, the lessons learned in a kitchen are priceless and can be applied to other aspects of life.

What are some tips on decorating cookies?

Decorating cookies is always the fun part. If you're in the kitchen with toddlers, consider buying small squeeze bottles and putting the icing in them. Keep in mind they need to be small so little ones can handle them. If you're working with older kids, the traditional pastry bag is great – just add a rubber band to the end of it so the frosting doesn't come out.

Visit elenis.com to check out her sweet treats.

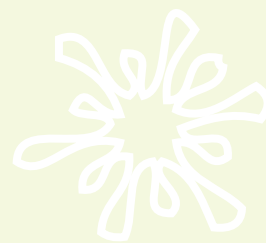
Eleni's is a NUT FREE bakery and is Kosher certified.

Follow Eleni's on Facebook



Chanukah NOSTALGIA

We asked our Jewish Treats Facebook Fans and @JewishTweets Followers to share their thoughts on Chanukah!



WE ASKED: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHANUKAH TRADITION?

"Celebrate by having family over for dinner. We play dreidel with high piles of gelt to be won. After a retelling of the Maccabees everyone lights a menorah, all the many that have been collected over the years. We nosh on latkes throughout the evening, and of course the kids get that first present."

- Theresa O., Eustis, FL

"We'd perform Glick's Hannukah Suite. There's a lullaby about the next candles we'd light. I get to sing it to my baby this year."

@bakerash - Kerstin B.,
Toronto, Canada

"Although I'm 41 and my dad 64, and I've lived in another country...we always get home to the NYC menorah lighting near the Plaza Hotel."

- Erica B.

"Eating latkes!"

@joefrohlinger
- Joe F., Tenafly, NJ

"We have a new tradition. My boys enjoy nothing more than to ride in our car with our 3 foot high Car Menorah attached to the roof. Each year we parade around the streets of Center City Philadelphia (150+ cars strong)"

@gruvenreuve - Reuven F., Philadelphia, PA

"Getting together with our friends for a latkes and vodkas party."

- Anita B., Rio Rancho, NM

"Using a menorah which my husband's grandfather brought with him when he emigrated from Lithuania in the 1890's."

- Susan B., Tiverton, RI

"Retelling Eric A. Kimmel's The Chanukah Tree, Herschel and the Hanukkah Goblins, and one of the stories from 'Jar of Fools' (the one about the Chelm dreidel)."

- Alyssa F., Richmond, VA

"The grown-up version of the dreidel game - with shots instead of gelt!"

Michael G., St. Louis, MO

"Making latkes with the family! I can't wait for my 2 year old to try some this year :)"

- Lisa Marie S., Nashville, TN

"As a child, insisting on rainbow arrangement for the menorah's candles." @jyuter - Josh Y., New York, NY

Chanukah NOSTALGIA

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WE ASKED: WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHANUKAH MEMORY?

"My fav Chanukah memory: teaching my friends to play dreidel in high school. They got bored and made a color coded M&M rainbow."

@melschool - Mel S., Denver, CO

"Every year during Chanukah I think of in college when we tried to make 400 Latkes, and burnt down the Hillel kitchen."

@schnit -
Evan G., Teaneck, NJ

"Going to my mother's 'secret' closet in the basement and spying all the presents at once!"

@GailPeckRauner -
Gail R., Westchester, NY

"Celebrating my first Chanukah this year!"

-Elvis W.
Memphis, TN

"When I was in Israel in December 2009, my now-husband would call me and light the candles over the phone from Connecticut!"

@kvetchingeditor -
Chaviva G., Teaneck, NJ

"I remember my Saba (Grandpa) grating a huge mound of potatoes by hand for latkes. He said scraped knuckles helped with the taste!"

@hsabomilner - Hadassah M., Spring Valley, NY

"A big Chanukah party with all my cousins. Half the toys would be broken before we went home."

@chambanalaura - Laura B., Champaign, IL

SIX CREATIVE & MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES

For the Family



Like most Jewish holidays, Chanukah is an opportunity for families to connect. Whether that means getting together for a Chanukah party or exchanging holiday-focused greeting cards, Chanukah is a time when people think about those near to them.



This also means that Chanukah is the perfect time for fun and meaningful family activities:

1) Great Gift Giver: Since Chanukah is about chinuch (Jewish education), scout out your local Jewish bookstore (or online Jewish bookstore) and choose a Jewish book for each member of your family.

2) Dreidel Competition: If you come from a large family that lives near each other, gather everyone together for a Dreidel competition. Dreidel, the famous spinning top game, has easy rules and can be played by most kids over 5. (For more on the Dreidel and how to play, see page 22).

3) Menorah Moments: Make your own menorahs, or send a menorah that is specific to the recipient's tastes. (For more on the Menorah, see page 6)

4) The Gift of Giving: At this time of year, help teach the children in your life about the power of giving, by encouraging them to choose one or more charities to which they may make a donation, or give one of the gifts they receive. Take a moment to discuss the importance of

charity in Jewish life. (To learn what Chanukah presents are really about, see page 27)

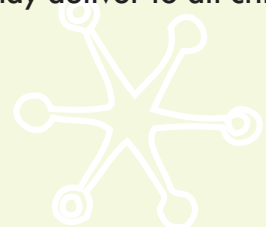
5) Weekend Warriors: Here's a hands-on game that will enthrall and educate your kids and their friends. Take the gang to the park and have them re-enact (safely) the story of Chanukah. Most kids will love the "action."

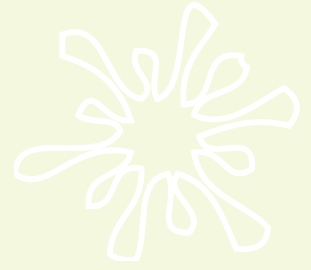


6) Running Telephone Story: This is for long-distance families. Write out the story of Chanukah and divide it into 8 different sections, ending with a cliff hanger wherever possible. Each night of Chanukah, call

up your long distance grandchild/niece/ nephew/etc, and present them with the most recent "installation" of the heroic tale of the Maccabees.

Beyond all else, Chanukah is a holiday about Jewish identity and Jewish pride. Make the most of the holiday by demonstrating its warmth and the broad variety of holiday customs. This is the greatest Chanukah gift of all that every Jewish adult may deliver to all children!





From the Star of Blossom: **MAYIM BIALIK'S THOUGHTS ON CHANUKAH**

As a child, I didn't love Chanukah. Don't get me wrong: I liked it well enough. The candles, the presents (pajamas and pencils were standards), the songs, and the fried foods all made me

generally very excited to be a Jew, and I was happy for any indications that Judaism held yummy and fun treats for us at Christmastime, a time when every person I met from Halloween through New Year's seemed to be not Jewish and wanted to wish me a Merry Christmas and ask what I wanted from Santa. "I don't believe in Santa. I celebrate Chanukah," I would mumble.

So why didn't I love Chanukah? Well, I grew up in a home that straddled the Orthodoxy of my grandparent's youth and the membership

"...every person I met from Halloween through New Year's seemed to be not Jewish and wanted to wish me a Merry Christmas."

we held to a Reform synagogue, so things were sometimes a little mixed up and not fully understandable. I only got the most basic explanation of Chanukah: how brave Judah Maccabee

helped save the Jews.

Chanukah presented in this way lacked the "meat" of the preferred Jewish holiday of my youth, Passover. Passover entailed elaborate preparing, two nights of a fancy meal in our home where I got to sip Manishevit, and eight days of restricted eating that somehow made me feel deeply connected to being Jewish. Chanukah by comparison seemed a bit ...weak. I felt no real connection to the spiritual and religious parts of me that Passover stirred up.



Now that I am older, and now that I have become more immersed in Judaism and Jewish learning, I can honestly say that I love Chanukah. I have had my eyes opened to the deeper historical conflict and tension surrounding the story of the Maccabees, and I have even studied the political issues that were in the mix when Matityahu and Judah rose up to lead the Jews to victory. The phrase "the many were delivered into the hands of the few" these days gives me chills, as I picture our brave ancestors fighting to practice their religion as Hellenism threatened to end all that we hold dear as Jews. And the larger but more serious issues of the freedom to be Jews, faith in God, and being open to the possibility of miracles in the modern age do not take away from the joy I still feel when I eat fried foods, spin a dreidel, or open a package of yellow mesh-enclosed chocolate gelt.

The path I have taken towards observant Judaism has truly helped me become the Jew that I believe I was destined to be, and it has given me back what history tried to rob us of. For me, the investment in Jewish learning has transformed Chanukah from a holiday that did not quite have "enough" for me into a holiday that has served as a gateway to all of the other meaningful practices that I have taken on, including the eventual observance and passion for all of the holidays I never even knew much about to begin

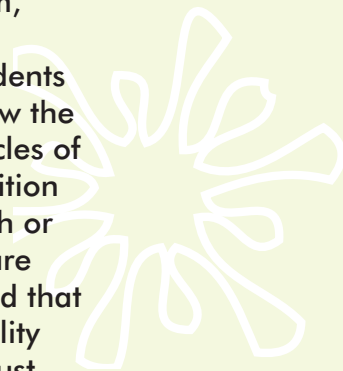


with, like Shavuot, Sukkot, and even Tisha B'Av. And to think this all started with wanting more from Chanukah!

"...it has given me back what history tried to rob us of."

Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (z"l) greeted my Rabbi and his fellow students one day in

University by banging on the podium, declaring loudly, "Students! I have witnessed a miracle today!" The students fell silent. He continued gently, "I saw the sun come up today." Enjoy the miracles of this season, whether it is the recognition of the historical miracle of Chanukah or the greatest miracle of all: that we are constantly growing and learning, and that we are truly blessed with the possibility for seeing miracles every day if we just open our eyes and allow them to be witnessed.



Watch Mayim on this season's hit CBS comedy- The Big Bang Theory! Mayim also writes regularly for Kveller.com.

Become a fan of Mayim on Facebook!





FESTIVE Chanukah Songs

It is customary for the following song to be sung while the candles are being lit:

הנרות הקלו אנחנו מדליקין על הנסים ועל
הנפלאות, ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות, שעשית
לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה, על ידי כהניך
הקדושים. וכל שמונת ימי חנכה, הנרות הקלו קדש
הם. ואין לנו רשות להשתמש בהם, אלא לראותם
בלבד, כדי להודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול על נסיה
ועל נפלאותיה ועל ישועתך.

"These lights we kindle upon the miracles, the wonders, the salvations and on the battles which You performed for our ancestors in those days in this season, through Your holy priests. During all eight days of Chanukah, these lights are sacred. We are not permitted to make ordinary use of them, but to look at them, in order to express thanks and praise to Your great name for Your miracles, Your wonders and Your salvations."

It is also customary for the following song to be sung while the candles are being lit:

מעוז צור ישועתי לך נאה לשבח.
תכון בית תפילתי ושם תודה נזבח.
לעת תכין מטבח מצר המנבח.
אז אגמור בשיר מזמור חנכת המזבח.

*For the full version of this song [click here](#)

Ha'Neyrot Halalu

Ha'neyrot halalu anachnu madlikin
al hanisim v'al ha'niflaot,
v'al ha't'shu'ot v'al hamilchamot,
she'aseetah la'avotaynu ba'yamim hahem
bazman ha'zeh, al y'dey Kohanecha ha'k'doshim.

V'chol shmonat y'mey Chanukah, ha'neyrot
halalu kodesh hem. V'eyn lanu r'shut l'hishtamesh
ba'hem, ehla lir'otam bilvad, k'dey l'hodot u'leha'lel
l'shim'cha ha'gadol al neesecha v'al nif'l'otecha
v'al y'shu'atecha.

Ma'Oz Tzur

Ma'oz tzur y'shu'ahtee, l'chah nah'eh l'shabeyach;
Tee'kone beyt t'feelah'tee, v'sham todah n'zah'beyach;
L'ayt tacheen matbeyach, mee'tsahr ham'nabeyach;
Ahz egmor b'sheer mizmor, chanukat ha'mizbeyach.

"Rock of Ages let our song, praise Thy saving power.
Thou amidst the raging foes, was our sheltering tower.
Furious they assailed us, but Thine arm availed us.
And thy word, broke their sword, when our own
strength failed us."

(Please note that this is the english version of the song)



Spin the DREIDEL

The Dreidel is a four sided top, with a single Hebrew letter on each of its sides. Before the game begins, all players are given an equal number of coins or candies. Each player makes an initial deposit of coins or candies to the middle of the circle and then takes a turn spinning the Dreidel. When it falls, depending on the Hebrew letter that is facing up, the following occurs:

- (נ) Nun: Nothing happens, on to the next player.
- (ג) Gimmel: The player wins the pot.
- (ה) Hey: The player takes half the pot.
- (ש) Shin: The player must put a coin/candy in the pot.

Why is gambling a custom on Chanukah?

When the Syrian-Greeks ruled Judea (c. 167 BCE), they banned the study of Torah. The Jewish people defiantly continued to study and to teach their children. Under the threat of death, the children and their teachers met in secret, with a lookout to watch for soldiers.

When the enemy approached, the books were quickly hidden and the Jews pretended to be gambling (which was perfectly acceptable to the Syrian-Greeks). Playing dreidel, which may seem like just a cute game to us today, actually helped save Torah study in Israel!

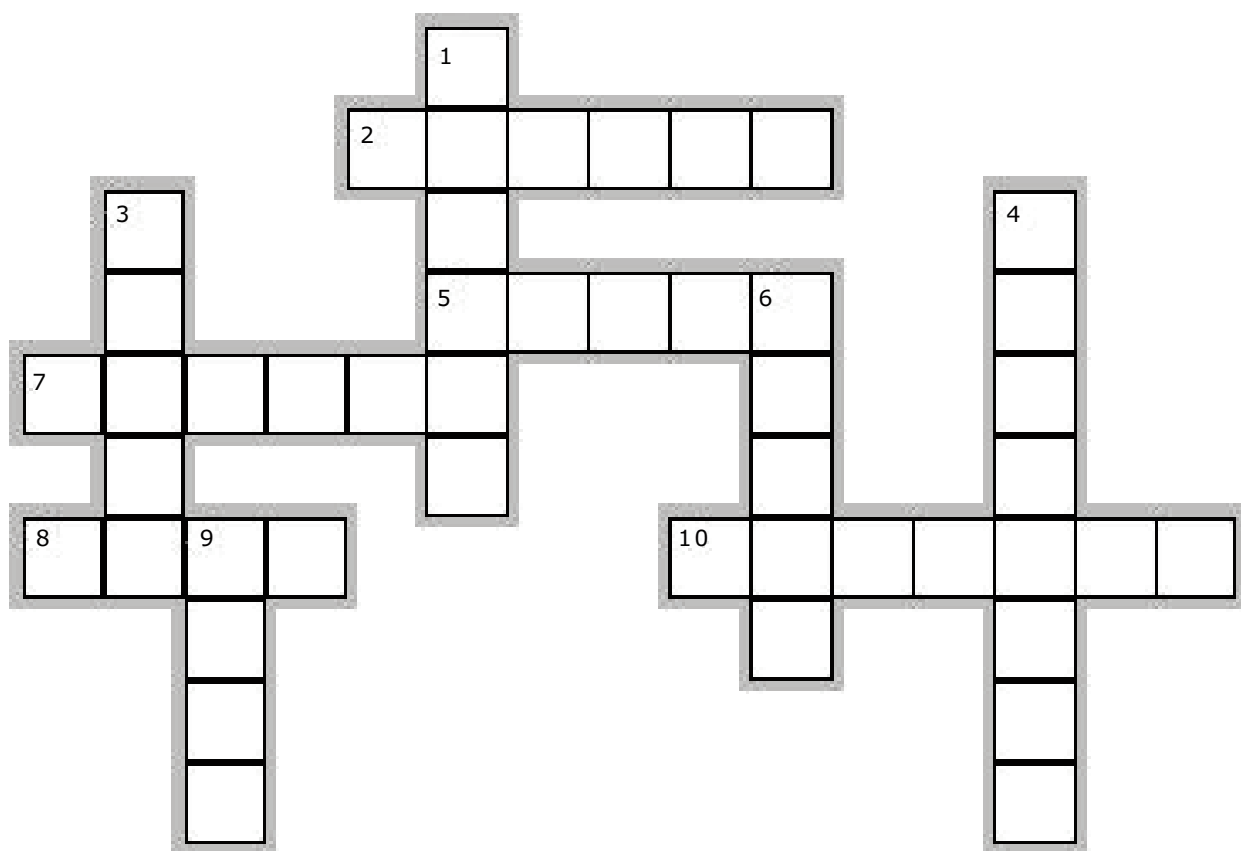


The letters on the Chanukah dreidel spell out *Nayse Gadol Hayah Sham*, A Great Miracle Happened There (referring to Israel). In Israel, therefore, dreidels have a Pey instead of a Shin, representing the word *Poh*, which means Here, since the miracle actually occurred in the land of Israel.



Game CORNER

Chanukah crossword puzzle
*Answers on page 26



Across

2. Place the menorah by the...
5. Another word for potato pancake
7. Another word for light (as in we light the candles)
8. After the first night, we begin lighting from this side of the menorah
10. The "servant" candle that lights the others

Down

1. Hebrew month in which Chanukah takes place
3. The kind of oil used in the menorah in the Temple
4. Second name of Judah
6. Number of nights we celebrate Chanukah
9. Faces on a dreidel



Chanukah WORD SEARCH

*Answers on page 26

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

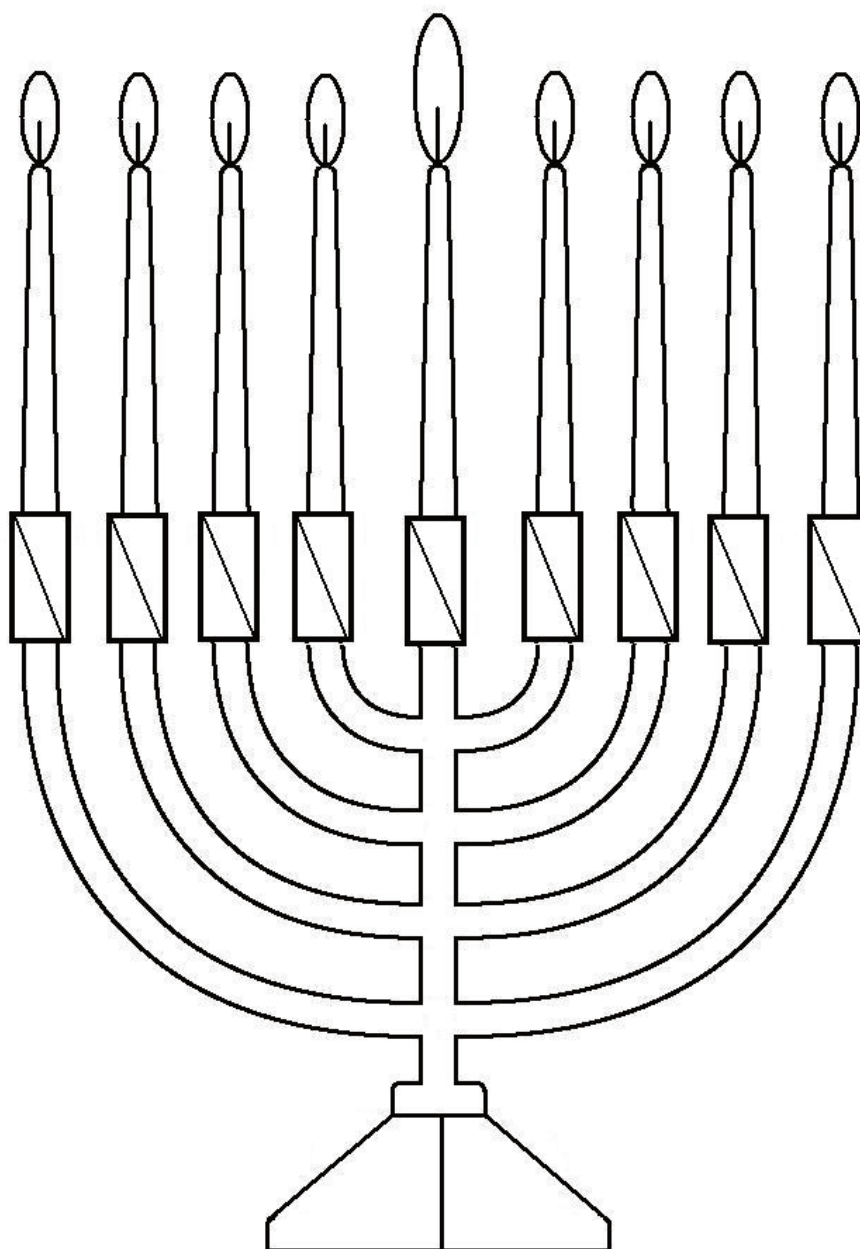
Blessing
 Gelt
 Menorah
 Courage
 Gimmel
 Miracle
 Dairy
 *Hallel
 Nun
 Doughnuts
 Hey
 Shin
 Dreidel
 Holy
 Temple
 Flame
 Light
 Tradition

*To learn about Hallel [click here](#)

Chanukah

COLOR ME PAGE

Print this page for your favorite kid to color in!



Test your CHANUKAH SKILLS

*Answers on page 27 and 28

1. The Chanukah story took place

- a) During the First Temple Period
- b) Between the First and the Second Temple
- c) During the Second Temple Period
- d) After the destruction of the Second Temple.

2. The Maccabees were

- a) Shepherds
- b) Mercenaries
- c) Priests
- d) Merchants

3. Antiochus was a ____ king

- a) Syrian-Greek
- b) Egyptian
- c) Babylonian
- d) Roman

4. What is the primary mitzvah of Chanukah?

- a) Eating latkes (potato pancakes)
- b) Giving Chanukah gifts
- c) Publicizing the miracle
- d) Playing Dreidel

5. The Chanukah candles must burn for at least

- a) 25 hours
- b) 1 hour
- c) 30 minutes
- d) 15 minutes

6. Who lights the menorah?

- a) The oldest person present
- b) The rabbi
- c) The youngest able person present
- d) Everyone can light their own menorah

7. The Dreidel game became a Jewish tradition

- a) Because Jews were always involved in gambling
- b) To keep children entertained
- c) To hide their Torah classes from the Syrian-Greeks
- d) Because the Syrian-Greeks introduced it to the Jewish people

8. Which traditional Chanukah food is fried in oil?

- a) Latkes/Potato Pancakes
- b) G'vina/Cheese
- c) Sufganiot/Doughnuts
- d) All of the above are fried in oil for Chanukah

9. Yehudit (Judith) made the Syrian-Greek General Holofernes sleepy by feeding him ____ and wine?

- a) Cheese
- b) Olives
- c) Steak
- d) Apples

10. What had happened to almost all of the oil in the Temple?

- a) It had been defiled
- b) It was dirty
- c) It had been stolen
- d) It had been used for cooking

11. The patriarch of the Maccabee clan was

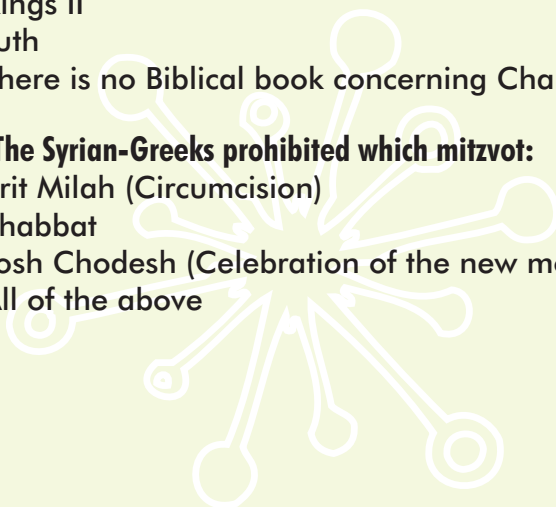
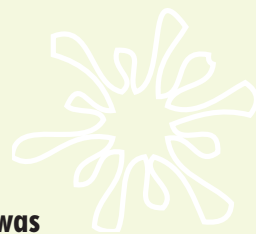
- a) Judah
- b) Matityahu (Mattathias)
- c) Jonathan
- d) Johanan

12. The Chanukah story is related in which Biblical book?

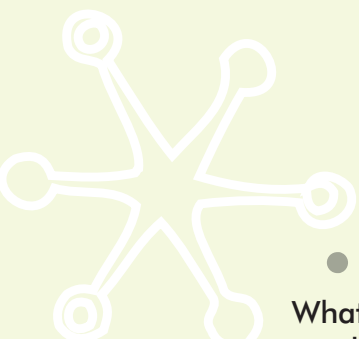
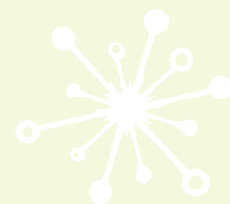
- a) Esther
- b) Kings II
- c) Ruth
- d) There is no Biblical book concerning Chanukah

13. The Syrian-Greeks prohibited which mitzvot:

- a) Brit Milah (Circumcision)
- b) Shabbat
- c) Rosh Chodesh (Celebration of the new month)
- d) All of the above



What are Chanukah presents really about?



What is the connection between Chanukah candles, intelligent children and gelt? The Talmud (a central text of mainstream Judaism, pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, philosophy, customs and history), in Shabbat 23b, teaches that one who is diligent in lighting Chanukah candles will have children who are scholars! The sages did not elaborate on what was the exact connection between lighting the candles and scholarship, but the name of the holiday itself can help clarify the relationship.

Chanukah shares the same root as the Hebrew word chinuch, which means education.

The Maccabees fought so that their children and their children's children would be able to study Torah freely and be knowledgeable about their Jewish heritage. Publicizing Chanukah is so important that one is even encouraged to borrow money, if needed, in order to buy oil. It soon became customary for people to give a little money (gelt) to the poor so that they would not be embarrassed or forced to ask for assistance.

Because the idea of "being diligent in the lighting of the Chanukah lights" is a primary consideration in both giving to the poor and meriting wise children, it became the custom to give children a bit of gelt as a reward for studying. Children who showed mastery of the laws and customs of the holiday, or who were diligent in their studies, were rewarded with a shiny coin. Over time, the simple giving of gelt (coins or presents) itself became a Chanukah custom.

Today, many families exchange presents (instead of coins) to keep the tradition alive.





MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S *Menorah*

In our 2007 Judaica Across America Campaign, the National Jewish Outreach Program searched the country for meaningful Judaica with a history. This Chanukah, we'd like to share one of the stories with you:

Menorah

Could I have waited any longer to submit this entry? Here it is, December 31, 2007, at 5:12 PM. Part of the reason why it took me so long to get this together has to do with my great-grandfather's legacy.

Isadore Singer, my maternal grandfather's father, was a cavalryman in the Russian army under Czar Nicholas II. His prestigious position was very unusual; in fact, he was the only Jewish soldier in the cavalry. Due to persecution against his family and community, Isadore decided to make a run for America. Around the year 1902, when he was about 21 years old, Isadore escaped to America. He deserted the army in the middle of the night, said good-bye forever to his only brother Benjamin, and took only one object with him: his menorah. It took him weeks to get to Germany, and from then on to the United States through Ellis Island.

Isadore Singer came to this country so that I

could be free, even though he never knew me. He risked his life for an idea, a place where Jews could live without persecution. Not that my grandparents didn't have to put up with discrimination, and not that I didn't encounter the occasional rude and ignorant comment growing up; but every time I think about pogroms or the Holocaust, I thank God my great-grandfather was brave enough to risk all. I grew up lighting his menorah every Chanukah, and so the holiday came to mean more than religious freedom from the ancient King Antiochus, but also tangible religious freedom for my family and myself.

His legacy: four sons, three of whom went to college, of which he was enormously proud. (He hung their diplomas on the outside of his front door so all the neighbors could see.) His oldest son, Benjamin, my grandfather, passed away more than ten years ago, but his youngest son, my great-uncle Meyer, is still my pen pal from New York. We just got together this summer at my brother's wedding.

"He deserted the army in the middle of the night, said good-bye forever to his only brother Benjamin, and took only one object with him: his menorah."

I know that I am also part of Isadore Singer's legacy. And so it is that I sit here at my computer more than 100 years after he came to the United States, typing this entry, a 'typical' harried American with a gazillion things to do. That's why he came here. So I could be me.

GAME ANSWER KEY

Crossword

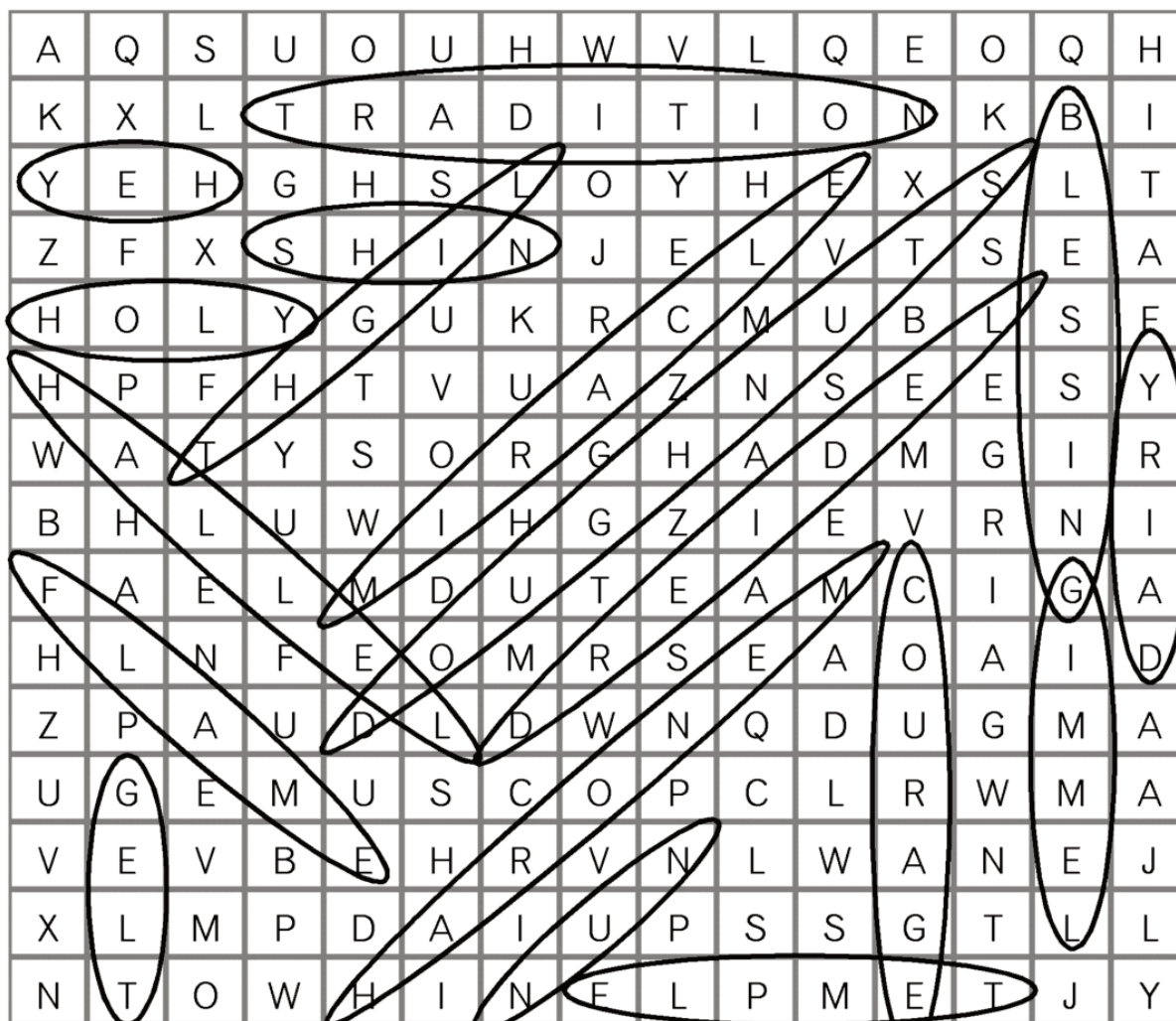
Across

2. Window
5. Latke
7. Kindle
8. Left
10. Shamash

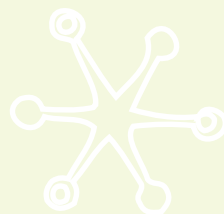
Down

1. Kislev
3. Olive
4. Maccabee
6. Eight
9. Four

Answers to Chanukah Word Search



QUIZ ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS



1. The Chanukah story took place

c) *During the Second Temple Period*

The revolt of the Maccabees, or the Chanukah story, occurred around 164 B.C.E., well into the era of the Second Temple.

2. The Maccabees were

c) *Priests*

The Maccabees were actually a priestly family, Kohanim, meaning that they were descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses, and served in the Temple.

3. Antiochus was a _____ king

a) *Syrian-Greek*

4. What is the primary mitzvah of Chanukah?

c) *Publicizing the miracle*

The primary mitzvah of Chanukah is publicizing the miracle, which is accomplished through the lighting of the menorah. The act of lighting the Chanukah candles entails more than just that. The laws of the Chanukah candles include the instructions that the lights should be placed in a doorway (which was the most public place in ancient times) attached to a public space. The law was enacted so that the holiday would not only show the Jewish people's acknowledgment of the gratitude to God, but would also serve as a reminder to the nation of what they had lost, what they had reclaimed, and what had allowed them to reclaim it. Today, we place the candles in the window, where others can see them when they are lit.

5. The Chanukah candles must burn for at least

c) *30 minutes*

In order to ensure that the lights are seen by many people, the lights of the menorah must burn for at least 30 minutes.

6. Who lights the menorah?

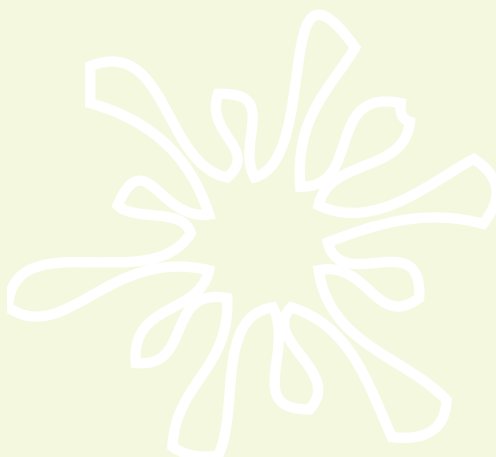
d) *Everyone can light their own menorah*

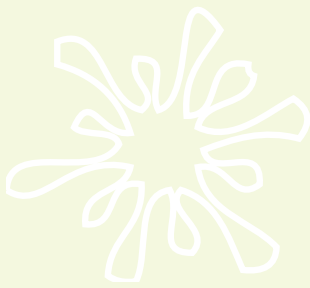
All adults are equally obligated in the lighting of the Chanukah lights and everyone may light their own menorah. The head of the household may, however, elect to light one set of Chanukah candles for the entire household. While it is obvious that young children should not be allowed to play with fire, children over the age of 9 should have the opportunity to light for educational purposes.

7. The Dreidel game became a Jewish tradition

c) *To hide their Torah classes from the Syrian-Greeks*

See page 22





8. Which traditional Chanukah food is fried in oil?

d) All of the above are fried in oil for Chanukah

They all are! Because of the significance of oil in the miracle of Chanukah, it has become customary to eat foods fried in oil during the holiday.

9. Yehudit (Judith) made the Syrian-Greek General Holofernes sleepy by feeding him _____ and wine?

a) Cheese

It is customary to eat dairy on Chanukah. The tradition is in honor of the heroic acts of Judith, who saved the city of Bethulia from the tyrant General Holofernes, by feasting on cheese and wine until he fell into a deep sleep, whereupon she killed him. To read more about this incredible story [click here](#)

10. What had happened to almost all of the oil in the Temple?

a) It had been defiled

According to Torah law, the oil for the Temple Menorah had to be pure olive oil. What is pure olive oil? It is made using just the first drop of each olive. Just as today we have "safety seals" to ensure that our food was not tampered with, the jars of oil for the Menorah were sealed with the seal of the High Priest. When the Maccabees drove the Syrian-Greeks out of the Temple, they found that the seals on all but one flask had been broken, rendering them unusable since it was impossible to tell whether or not the oil had been used for idolatrous worship. The wonderful pure olive oil was thus defiled.

11. The patriarch of the Maccabee clan was

b) Matityahu (Mattathias)

12. The Chanukah story is related in which Biblical book?

d) There is no Biblical book concerning Chanukah

The Book of Maccabees, which relates the story of Chanukah, is known as Apocrypha, a non-Biblical text. The books of the Apocrypha are often related to the Biblical texts, and written in a similar style, but were either written after the sages closed the Biblical canon (as is the case of the Book of Maccabees) or were not seen to have prophetic insights to guide the Jewish people in future times and were therefore not included in the Bible.

13. The Syrian-Greeks prohibited which mitzvot:

d) All of the above

To learn more [click here](#)





Shabbat Across America - On Friday night, March 3, 2017 hundreds of synagogues across the continent will take part in an historic national Jewish event to celebrate what unifies all Jews - Shabbat! Everyone is invited... singles, couples, families - all ages.



Want to Know **WHAT NJOP IS UP**



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