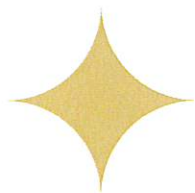




TEMPLE  
EMANUEL



CELEBRATE ALL  
8 NIGHTS OF  
HANUKKAH  
WITH YOUR FAMILY





**F**OR 4,000 YEARS THE JEWS HAVE BEEN WEAVING THE FABRIC of their religious life, expanding it, restyling it for the times, and adding new strands of meaning for each holy day of the year. The Bible and other sacred Jewish writings describe in detail how the holidays should be observed. Rabbis, sages, and ordinary people through the ages have sought to make each holiday speak to the sensibilities of their particular time while still leaving it grounded in its origins. Hanukkah, for example, has been reinvented and reformed numerous times. This flexibility of the Jewish holiday cycle allows Jews to introduce new holidays into the calendar or infuse secular holidays with Jewish meaning. In recent times, two new observances have been added to the Jewish calendar: Israel Independence Day and Holocaust Memorial Day.

American society's excitement about Christmas, Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Valentine's Day clearly expresses a human need to celebrate and commemorate. Two of these American holidays—Halloween and Thanksgiving—have been adopted by American Jews and endowed with Jewish meaning. Jewish families that partake of the full, diverse menu Judaism has to offer will have a rich and interconnected year of celebration. The cycle of Jewish holidays and Shabbat offers Jewish children a cornucopia of fun and spiritual nourishment.

## Squaring the Home Calendar with the Jewish Calendar

The writer of a recent letter to *The New York Times*, commenting on an op-ed piece that compared Hanukkah to Christmas, observed that it was impossible to describe Hanukkah in a vacuum. She might have been writing about any of the Jewish holidays.

Hanukkah is not an isolated event. It is part of a yearly cycle, a spoke that turns with the whole wheel. The particular meaning of this and other holidays can be fully appreciated only within the wider frame of Jewish tradition and observance. Rabbi Susan Fendrick suggests that we should consider the holidays as a way of experiencing the different faces of God throughout the year—God as a judging, laughing, redeeming, comforting, creating, teaching being. With each new understanding of God, we also understand more about our own and our children's potential for being judgmental, humorous, redemptive, comforting, and creative, for teaching and learning. Recognizing those aspects of God and the Jewish tradition within ourselves increases our sense of purpose and leads us closer to spiritual fulfillment.

A good way to make Judaism a part of everyday family life is to use a Jewish calendar when planning family events. With a Jewish calendar on hand, you will be able to chart the important dates of the secular cycle—special events at your children's school, vacations, national holiday observances—and still keep track of the important high points of the Jewish year. In this way, the flow of the Jewish year becomes integrated with your family's life.

**Source:**

Jewish Family and Life: Traditions.

Holidays and Values.

Yosef Abramowitz &  
Rabbi Susan Silverman

# The Festival of Light: Hanukkah

The best-loved of Jewish holidays in America is actually a minor festival in the Jewish calendar. Children go to school and adults go to work, just as on any ordinary day. In fact, there are really very few religious obligations associated with Hanukkah other than lighting the candles in winter's dark evenings and saying the blessing over them; this is done each evening, beginning with the evening before the first day.

We recall the Hanukkah story. A small band of Jews, led by the Maccabees, triumphed over the Assyrians and reclaimed the Jerusalem Temple. The Temple had been defiled, and much cleaning and purifying needed to be done. The Jews relit the eternal light, but there was only enough oil to last a day. Miraculously the oil lasted for eight days—enough time to replenish the supply and keep the eternal light lit.

The meaning of Hanukkah has changed over the centuries and varies from place to place. In Israel, it celebrates the military victory of the underdog Jews over the superpower Syrian Greeks. It has also taken on an athletic theme: the Maccabee Games, in which Jews from all over the world compete in Israel, parallel the Olympic Games. In the United States, we emphasize the struggle for freedom of religion, and gift giving has gained great importance.

The story of Hanukkah, the miracle of the light that lasted for eight days, attunes us to the contrast between darkness and light, in a physical, metaphorical, and spiritual sense.



## RULES AND REGS

Normal school and work hours. Before lighting the candles in the Hanukkiyah (special Hanukkah candleholder), say the appropriate blessings. The first night, light the candle farthest to the right. The second night, light the two candles farthest to the right—but light them from left to right. Continue to add one candle each night, moving leftward (but light them from left to right). The *shammas* is the candle used to light the others and remains lit along with the rest. On the Friday night during Hanukkah, light the menorah before the Shabbat candles. Shammai, a first-century rabbi, advocated lighting eight candles on the first night of Hanukkah and decreasing the number by one each night down to a single candle on the last night of the festival to represent the decreasing amount of oil that miraculously lasted for eight days. However, today Jews follow the practice of Hillel, another first-century rabbi, whose rulings generally prevailed over those of Shammai: we add a candle each night for eight nights. This lighting symbolizes the spreading of light and faith and our ability as Jews to continue the legacy of Hanukkah, with the hope and freedom it implies, and to carry it forth into the world.

In fact, the Hanukkah lights should be put in a place where they can be seen by passers-by in the street, proclaiming the miracle of the lights to all the world.

# 4

## CHANUKAH

### Some Historical Background

#### 1. What does Chanukah mean?

The Hebrew word Chanukah means “dedication” and refers to the joyous eight-day celebration through which Jews commemorate the victory of the Maccabees over the armies of Syria in 165 B.C.E. and the subsequent liberation and “rededication” of the Temple in Jerusalem.

#### 2. Is Chanukah biblically based?

No. Unlike most Jewish holidays, Chanukah is not mentioned in the Torah, Prophets, or Writings. The historical events upon which the celebration is based are recorded in I and II Maccabees, two books contained within a later collection of writings known as the Apocrypha.

#### 3. What is the Apocrypha?

When the final format of the Bible was debated (first century C.E.), a number of books were considered for inclusion but ultimately rejected. The two books of Maccabees were among those passed over. Some time later, because of the popularity which some of the rejected writings enjoyed among the people, fourteen of them were gathered into a single collection called the Apocrypha. The term Apocrypha comes from a Greek word mean-

ing “hidden writing.” While the apocryphal works were never made part of the Hebrew Bible, they were included in the Greek and Latin versions.

#### 4. If the story of Chanukah was so obscure, how did the holiday become so popular?

Technically, Chanukah is considered a “minor” Jewish festival. Yet it ranks along with Pesach and Purim as one of the most beloved Jewish family holidays. Clearly, the stirring story associated with Chanukah, the rituals which emerged from it, and the special Chanukah games and foods combined to capture the Jewish imagination and elevate its status within the Jewish community.

#### 5. What is the story of Chanukah?

In the year 168 B.C.E., the Syrian tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes sent his soldiers to Jerusalem. The Syrians desecrated the Temple, and Antiochus declared that Judaism was to be abolished. The only options he offered Jews were conversion or death. Altars and idols were set up throughout Judea for the purpose of worshiping Greek gods. Antiochus outlawed the observance of Shabbat, the festivals, and circumcision.

On the twenty-fifth day of the Hebrew month of Kislev in 168 B.C.E., the Temple was renamed for the Greek god Zeus. Pigs were sacrificed in the Temple. The Torah was splattered with pigs'

#### *Source:*

The Jewish Home: A Guide for Jewish Living.  
Daniel B. Syme, VAHC



blood and then burned. Thousands of Jews chose to die rather than commit idolatry. Among these martyrs was a woman named Hannah who, with her seven sons, defied the Syrian decree.

But slowly a resistance movement developed against the cruelty of Antiochus, led by a priestly family known as the Hasmoneans, or Maccabees. The head of the family was an elderly man named Mattathias. He and his five sons left Jerusalem and took up residence in a small town north of Jerusalem, called Modi'in. When Syrian soldiers appeared in the town and commanded the inhabitants to offer sacrifices to Zeus, Mattathias and his sons refused. Mattathias killed one Jew who began to sacrifice to Zeus, and his sons then turned upon the Syrian troops and slew them.

It was a turning point in the struggle. The Maccabees became instant folk heroes. Fleeing to the hills with their followers, they conducted a campaign of guerilla warfare against the occupying Syrian forces. Mattathias's son, Judah, known as "The Hammer," became the chief strategist and military leader.

Furious, Antiochus decided to destroy the people of Judea. He sent a large army, with instructions to kill every man, woman, and child. Though outnumbered, Judah Maccabee and his fighters miraculously won two major battles, routing the Syrians decisively. By 165 B.C.E., the terror of Antiochus had ended. The Jews had won a victory for their land and their faith.

The idols were torn down, and, on the morning of the twenty-fifth day of Kislev in 165 B.C.E., the Temple in Jerusalem was reconsecrated—three years to the day after its original defilement. In celebration, the people of Jerusalem lit bright lights in front of their homes and decided to mark their deliverance with an annual eight-day festival. It was called the Feast of Lights, the Feast of Dedication, or simply Chanukah.

**6. Is that why we celebrate Chanukah for eight days? What about the jar of oil that burned for eight days?**

Originally, the eight-day Feast of Lights was intended to parallel the eight days of Sukot. The books of the Maccabees made no mention of the beautiful legend concerning the jar of oil which has come to be a part of Chanukah. Several centuries later (500 C.E.), the story of the cruse of oil emerged in the Talmud.

The legend relates that, when the Maccabees entered the Temple and began to cleanse it, they immediately relit the *ner tamid*, or Eternal Light. A single jar of oil remained, which was sufficient for only one day. The messenger who was sent to secure additional oil took eight days to complete his mission. But, miraculously, the single cruse of oil continued to burn for eight days. The rabbis of the Talmud, therefore, attributed the eight days of Chanukah to the miracle of the little jar of oil.

We continue the ancient customs related to Chanukah today, commemorating the liberation of our people and their affirmation of human dignity and freedom of religion. In Jewish homes throughout the world, the eve of the twenty-fifth of Kislev begins an eight-day celebration involving many joyous customs and ceremonies.

## Chanukah: Ceremonies, Symbols, Customs

The modern home celebration of Chanukah centers around the lighting of Chanukah candles in the menorah, unique foods, and special games and songs.

### 1. What is the meaning of menorah?

Menorah is a Hebrew word meaning "candelabrum." In relation to Chanukah, it refers to the nine-branched ceremonial lamp in which the Chanukah candles are placed and then blessed.

### 2. Is the menorah unique to Chanukah?

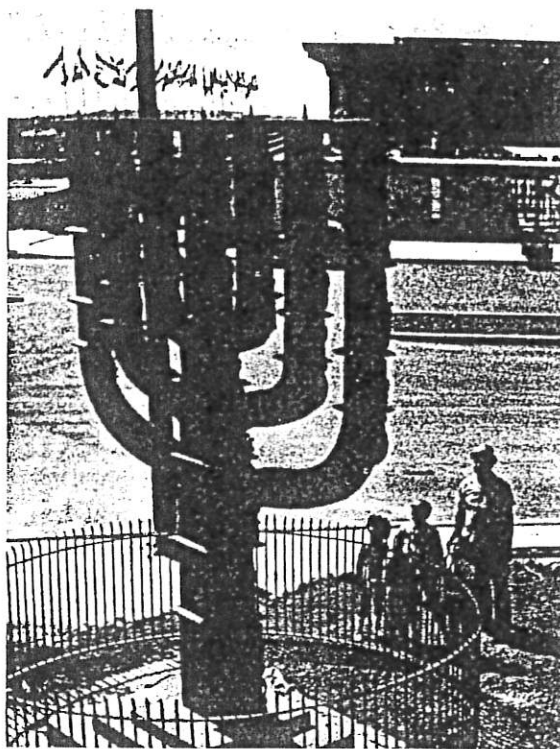
No. The menorah originated as a religious symbol in biblical times. The Torah records how the great artist Bezalel fashioned a seven-branched menorah for the desert tabernacle in fulfillment of a Divine commandment (Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24). Such a seven-branched menorah adorned the Temple in Jerusalem and was carried away by the Roman legions at the time of its destruction in 70 C.E. While the Roman Empire has long since vanished, a seven-branched menorah stands before the Knesset building in Israel, yet another tangible reminder of the indestructibility of the Jewish people.

### 3. How did the Chanukah menorah originate?

The nine-branched Chanukah menorah was a modification of the biblical model and seems to have originated in the first century C.E. It had eight branches, one for each day of the holiday, and a ninth branch for the *shamash* or "servant" light.

In ancient times, oil was used in the menorah. Over time, candles were substituted for the oil.

Interestingly, some scholars believe that the use of small candles for the menorah was a deliberate choice, designed to distinguish Chanukah lights from Christian votive candles. Except in times of religious persecution, the menorah was placed outside the front door or, as is the custom today, displayed in the window of every Jewish home.



### 4. How do we light the Chanukah candles?

In a celebrated talmudic dispute, two great Jewish teachers, Hillel and Shammai, argued whether we should begin by lighting eight candles and gradually decrease to one (Shammai), or begin with one candle and add an additional one each night, thus continuously increasing the light and joy of the holiday (Hillel). The majority ruled with Hillel. Thus, on the first night of Chanukah, we recite or chant the blessings and light one candle with the *shamash*, two on the second night, and so on. Customarily, the candles are placed in the menorah from right to left but lit from left to right.

### 5. What are the Chanukah candle blessings?

There are two *berachot* which are chanted or recited on every night of Chanukah. The first is a blessing over the candles themselves: *Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kideshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel Chanukah*. "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Ruler of the world, who has sanctified us through your *mitzvot* and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah lights."

The second *berachah* expresses thanks for the "miracle" of deliverance: *Baruch Atah Adonai Elohenu Melech ha'olam she'asah nisim laavotenu bayanim hahem bazeman hazeh*. "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Ruler of the world, who did wondrous things for our ancestors in former times at this season."

There is a third *berachah* which is chanted or recited only on the first night. This is the *Shehecheyanu* prayer, pronounced by Jews on all happy occasions: *Baruch Atah Adonai Elohenu Melech ha'olam shehecheyanu vekiyemanu vehigyanu lazeman hazeh*. "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Ruler of the world, who has kept us in life, sustained us, and brought us to this happy time."

Any member or members of the family may chant or recite the blessings. One person lights and holds the *shamash*, the *berachot* are pronounced, and the candles are then lit. On Shabbat, the Chanukah candles are lit before the Shabbat candles. The traditional melody for the Chanukah candle blessings may be found in "Chanukah Candle Blessings," arranged by David J. Putterman, published by Transcontinental Music (UAHC catalogue #990439, \$1.50).

#### 6. How did the game of dreidel come to be associated with Chanukah?

Dreidel is a derivative of a German word meaning "top," and the game is an adaptation of an old German gambling game. Chanukah was one of the few times of the year when the rabbis permitted games of chance. The dreidel, therefore, was a natural candidate for Chanukah entertainment.

The four sides of the top bear four Hebrew letters: *nun*, *gimel*, *hei*, and *shin*. Players would begin by "anteing" a certain number of coins, nuts, or other objects. Each one in turn would then spin the dreidel and proceed as follows: *nun* ("nichts")—take nothing; *gimel* ("ganz")—take everything; *hei* ("halb")—take half; *shin* ("shtell")—put in.

The winner would often receive money (Chanukah *gelt*). Over time, the gambling terms were reinterpreted to stand for the Hebrew phrase *Nes Gadol Hayah Sham*, "A great miracle happened there." Thus, even an ordinary game of chance was invested with Jewish values and served to

remind Jews of the important message of Chanukah. Today, Jewish children throughout the world continue to enjoy the game of dreidel. In Israel, one letter on the dreidel has been changed. The *shin* has been replaced with a *pei*, transforming the Hebrew phrase into *Nes Gadol Hayah Po*, "A great miracle happened here."

#### 7. Why do we eat latkes on Chanukah?

A common explanation is that we eat latkes (potato pancakes) because they are cooked in oil and thus remind us of the miracle of the single cruse.

Rabbi Solomon Freehof, a great contemporary Jewish scholar, has hypothesized that the eating of latkes may have grown out of an old custom of eating *milchig* (dairy) foods on Chanukah. *Milchig* foods evolved into *milchig* pancakes and then into latkes, possibly because the main potato crop became available about the time of Chanukah.

No one knows for certain how the association began, but for anyone who feasts on latkes at Chanukah time, a historical rationale is unnecessary.

#### 8. Why do we give gifts on Chanukah?

Again, no one knows for sure. Many scholars postulate that the practice is a carry-over from the biblically-based custom of sending gifts (*mishloach manot*) to one's friends on Purim. It is clear, however, that presents were never a major element in Chanukah, which emphasizes enduring religious and ethical values.

#### 9. Who wrote "Rock of Ages"?

*Ma'oz Tzur*, or "Rock of Ages," was composed in Europe in the twelfth or thirteenth century by a man known as Mordecai. His words were set to different melodies over the centuries.

When all is said and done, perhaps the most important message of Chanukah may be found in the name of the holiday itself—Dedication. When Jews have dedicated themselves, through faith and action, to the pursuit of high religious and human ideals, Judaism has been strong. That imperative, to strengthen our religion and our people, remains an important challenge at this season, in every generation.



## THE HISTORY OF CHANUKAH



7

It was in the time of the Second Temple in Jerusalem, nearly twenty-two centuries ago, that the events took place which we commemorate each year at Chanukah time.

The Jewish people had returned to the land of Israel from the Babylonian Exile, and had rebuilt the Holy Temple. But they remained subject to the domination of Imperial powers- first, the Persian Empire, then later, the conquering armies of Alexander the Great. Upon the death of Alexander, his vast kingdom was divided among his generals. After a power struggle which engulfed all the nations of the Middle East, Israel found itself under the sway of the Seleucid Dynasty - Greek kings who reigned from Syria.

Though at first, the rule of the Seleucids was rather benign, there soon arose a new king, Antiochus IV, who was to wage a bloody war upon the Jews - a war which would threaten not just their physical lives, but their very spiritual existence.

Over the years of Greek domination, many Jews had begun to embrace the Greek culture and its hedonistic, pagan way of life. These Jewish Hellenists became willing pawns in Antiochus' scheme to obliterate every trace of the Jewish religion. The Holy Temple was invaded, desecrated, and robbed of all its treasures. Vast numbers of innocent people were massacred, and the survivors were heavily taxed. Antiochus placed an idol of Zeus on the holy altar, and forced the Jews to bow before it under penalty of death. And he forbade the Jewish people to observe their most sacred traditions, such as the Sabbath, and rite of circumcision.

Antiochus went so far as to proclaim himself a god, taking the name 'Antiochus Ephiphanes' - the Divine. But even his own followers mocked him as 'Antiochus Epimanes' - the madman.

In every city and town, altars were erected with statues of the Greek gods and goddesses. Soldiers rounded up the Jews and forcibly compelled them to make offerings, and to engage in other immoral acts customary to the Greeks. As Antiochus' troops tightened their grip on the nation, the Jews seemed incapable of resistance.

It was in the small village of Modin, a few miles east of Jerusalem, that a single act of heroism turned the tide of Israel's struggle, and altered her destiny for all-time. Mattityahu, patriarch of the priestly Hasmonean clan, stepped forward to challenge the Greek soldiers and those who acquiesced to their demands. Backed by his five sons, he attacked the troops, slew the idolaters, and destroyed the idol. With a cry of "All who are with G-d, follow me!" he and a courageous circle of partisans retreated to the hills, where they gathered forces to overthrow the oppression of Antiochus and his collaborators.

The army of Mattityahu, now under the command of his son Yehuda Maccabee, grew daily in numbers and in strength. With the Biblical slogan, "Who is like unto Thee, O G-d" emblazoned on their shields, they would swoop under cover of darkness and scatter the oppressors, then return to their encampments in the hills. Only six thousand strong, they defeated a heavily armed battalion of forty-seven thousand Syrians.

Enraged, Antiochus sent an even larger army against them and in the miraculous, decisive battle at Bet Tzur, the Jewish forces emerged victorious. From there, they proceeded on to Jerusalem, where they liberated the city and reclaimed the Holy Temple. They cleared the Sanctuary of the idols, rebuilt the altar, and prepared to resume the Divine Service.

A central part of the daily service in the Temple was the kindling of the brilliant lights of the Menorah. Now, with the Temple about to be rededicated, the only small cruse of the pure, sacred olive oil was found. It was only one day's supply-and they knew it would take more than a week for the special process required to prepare more oil.

Undaunted, in joy and thanksgiving, the Maccabees lit the lamps of the Menorah with the small amount of oil, and dedicated the Holy Temple anew. And miraculously, as if in confirmation of the power of their faith, the oil did not burn out- and the flames shone brightly for eight full days. The following year, our Sages officially proclaimed the festival of Chanukah, as a celebration lasting eight days, in perpetual commemoration of this victory over religious persecution.



## WHEN ARE HANUKKAH CANDLES LIT?

The Hanukkah candles should ideally be kindled right after sundown, when people are still likely to be walking around outside. If this is not possible, the candles may be lit at any time during the night, preferable as soon as possible. They should burn for at least 30 minutes after sunset.

On Friday night the Hanukkah candles are kindled before sunset and before the Shabbat candles are lit. Since Shabbat is ushered in before nightfall, it is customary to use large candles (such as Shabbat candles) so that the Hanukkah lights can burn for half an hour into the night.

On Saturday night, the Hanukkah candles are kindled after the conclusion of the Shabbat, and after the recitation of Havdalah.

## LIGHTING THE HANUKKAH CANDLES



As you face the Hanukkah Menorah, place the first candle on your right. Subsequent candles are added to the left.

Light the shamash, take it in your hand and say:

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

*Baruch atah adonai elohenu melech ha-olam asher kidshanu  
b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel hanukkah.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who has made us holy with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

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

*Baruch atah adonai elohenu melech ha-olam she'asah nisim  
la-avotaynu ba-yamim ha-hem bazman ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in long-ago days, at this season.

On the first night of Hanukkah, Shehecheyanu is also said:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיָּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah adonai elohenu melech ha-olam shehecheyanu v'kiye-  
manu v'hi-gi-anu lazman ha-zeh.*

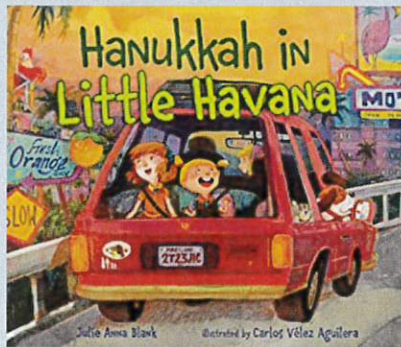
Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has kept us alive and strong and brought us to this season.

Light the candles. The new candle is always kindled first.

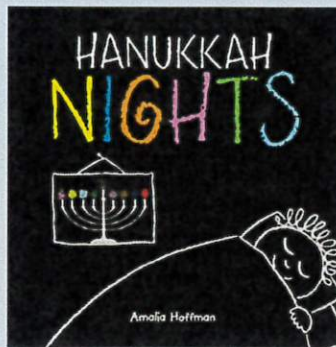
Following the lighting of the candles, it is customary to sing or recite "Hanerot Hallalu." Following "Hanerot Hallalu" it is customary to sing "Ma'oz Tzur."

Recommended by Deb Abner, Director of Library Services

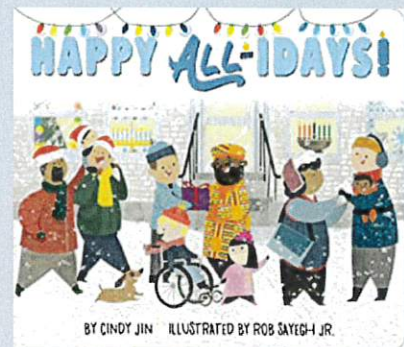
# HANUKKAH Books



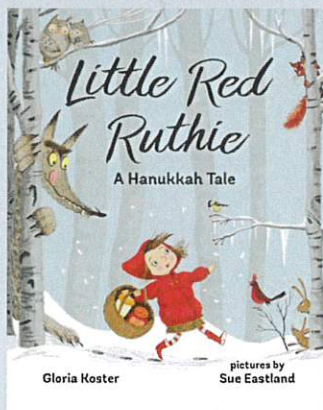
**HANUKKAH IN LITTLE HAVANA**  
BY JULIE ANNE BLANK



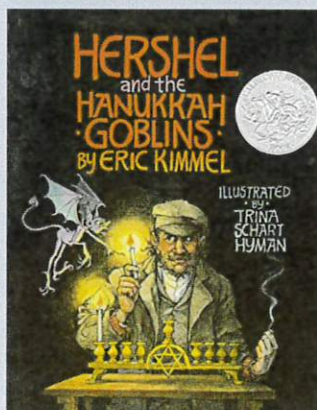
**EIGHT NIGHTS**  
BY AMALIA HOFFMAN



**HAPPY ALL-IDAYS!**  
BY CINDY JIN  
ILLUSTRATED BY ROB SAYECH JR.



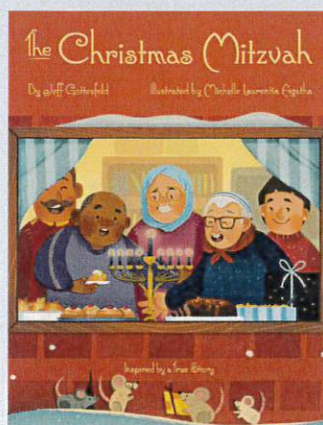
**LITTLE RED RUTHIE**  
BY GLORIA KOSTER



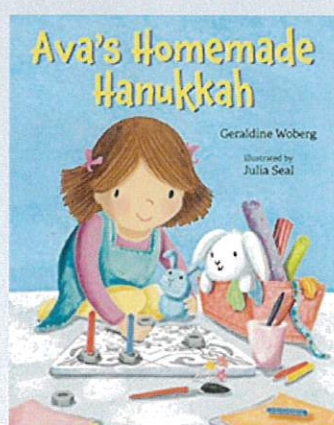
**HERSHEL AND THE HANUKKAH GOBLINS**  
BY ERIC KIMMEL (REISSUED)



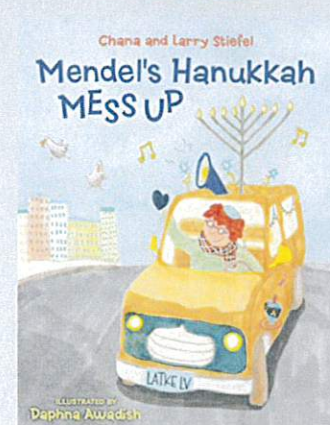
**RED AND GREEN AND BLUE AND WHITE**  
BY LEE WIND



**CHRISTMAS MITZVAH**  
BY JEFF GOTTESFELD



**AVA'S HOMEMADE HANUKKAH**  
BY GERALDINE WOBBERG



**MENDEL'S HANUKKAH MESS UP**  
BY CHANA STIEFEL AND LARRY STIEFEL



## ◆ HOW TO PLAY DREIDEL ◆

Make sure that everyone who is playing starts with the same number of objects.

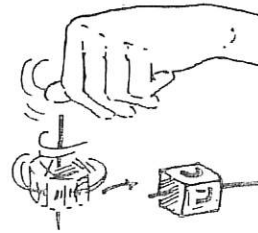
You only need one dreidel since everyone takes turns spinning it.

Also, make sure you all agree on the rules before the gambling gets going.

**1.** Each player puts one from his or her pile of objects into the center, called the pot.



**2.** A player spins the dreidel; the letter that comes up tells what to do:



**א** (nun) : *The player does nothing; the next player spins.*

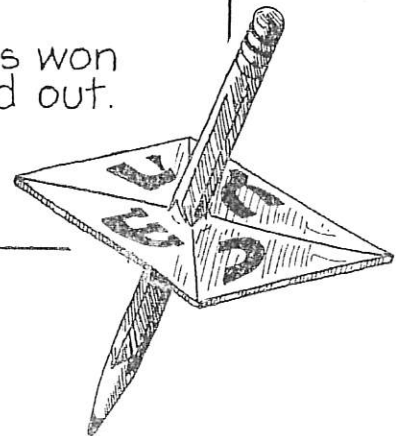
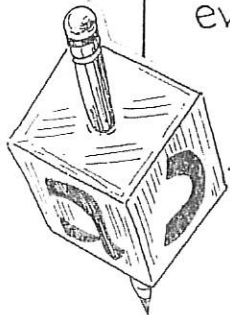
**ג** (gimmel) : *The player takes all that's in the pot; everyone puts one more in before the next person spins.*

**ה** (heh) : *The player takes half of what's in the pot (or half plus one extra if there's an odd number in the pot).*

**ש** (shin) : *The player puts one into the pot.*

**3.** Whenever the pot is empty, or there's only one left in it, every player has to put one in before the next spin.

**4.** The game is over when one player has won everything, and everyone else is wiped out.



This Hanukkah, play dreidel with the family!!

Dreidels are very much a tradition on Hanukkah. However, after playing the traditional dreidel game on one night of Hanukkah people are usually 'done for another year'. Here are some very 'untraditional' dreidel games, one for each of the 7 other nights of the holiday.

These games come from a new book for Hanukkah entitled "A Different Light: the Hanukkah Book of Celebration" edited by Noam Zion and Barbara Spectre. This is a great gift for the holiday that will help enhance family Hanukkah celebrations for many years.

Best wishes for a Chag Hanukkah Sameach – a happy Hanukkah full of light, joy and dreidels!

Terri Swartz Russell, Family Educator

### (1) Dreidel Gamble Race

**T**his game is appropriate for 2-4 players. Draw a scoreboard — a table with the 4 letters of the dreidel (at the top of each column), each with 5 empty spaces (in a row beneath the letter), one per spin in a round. Each player chooses a different letter of the dreidel. Every time the dreidel is spun, whoever bet on the correct letter, advances on the scoreboard. After 5 spins — the end of the round, check which player advanced the furthest in the race! If you'd like, new bets can be taken at the end of every round, so that a player may choose to switch the gamble to a different letter, hoping for better luck! (\*If there are less than 4 players, players can choose two letters to bet on rather than one, or certain letter outcomes can be meaningless.)



### (2) The Perfect Score

**I**n this game, as in "blackjack," every player's aim is to reach 21 or as close as possible to that sum without scoring more than 21. To each of the 4 letters of the dreidel, assign a new value which is a number of Jewish importance — such as 1 (one God), 5 (five books of Moses), 4 (matriarchs), 8 (eight nights of Hanukkah), 10 (ten commandments). Every player is required to spin the dreidel twice and add the sum of the score received. After that first round, each player may decide if they wish to spin again, an unlimited number of times, trying to reach the sum of 21 without surpassing that score. In case of a tie, play till the score of 36 or 44 (the number of candles used on Hanukkah — with or without the shamash).

### (3) Two Spinning Contests

**T**his contest demands skill in the art of dreidel spinning. It's all in the wrist! What do I need? A dreidel, a stop-watch or digital wrist-watch. Each player spins the dreidel once, and the length of the spinning-time is recorded. Since it takes a little practice and "warming up," each player has three chances to spin the dreidel and may choose the best score of three. The winner of the contest is the player with the longest spinning record.



**B**eat the dreidel: your dreidel may know how to spin, but do you? Each player competes against their own dreidel spin. As soon as you've spun the dreidel you begin spinning yourself — whoever falls first has lost. Remember — the more rounds you play, the tougher it becomes to keep your balance and win!

### (4) Stack the Latkas

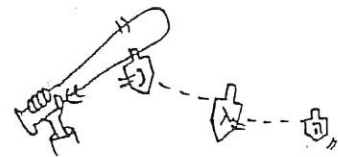
**T**his is the Hanukkah version of musical chairs. Set out a row of chairs, one less than the total number of players. One person does not play the game but is responsible for the important, skillful task of spinning the dreidel. Players must move and circle the chairs as long as the dreidel spins. When the dreidel stops, everyone must find a seat (in a chair or someone's lap). After each round, one chair is removed. No one is ever "out" since you may always sit on someone's lap. The game continues until everyone is piled up like a stack of latkas!

### (5) Hot Latka

**P**layers sit in a circle passing the dreidel from hand to hand. One player sits in the middle of the circle spinning another dreidel or singing a Hanukkah song. The passing stops when the song/spin ends and whomever was caught holding the dreidel, replaces the player in the center.

### (6) Dreidel Thief

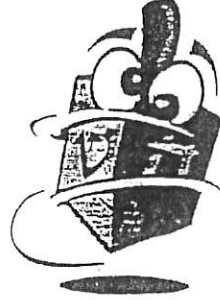
**P**layers (at least two on each team) sit side by side across from the opposing team. The teams take turns being team "A" or "B." Team A passes the dreidel behind their backs back and forth until team B says "stop." Team A pulls out their hands from behind their backs, all clenched in a fist. Team B proceeds to guess in which hand the dreidel is hiding, and whatever hand they point to must be opened. If they find the dreidel, they win a point. Whoever has eight points, wins the round.



### (7) Dreidel Baseball

**C**all a letter out loud, then take three "swings" (spins). If the letter appears once out of three, it's a single! Twice — double! All three times — triple! After a triple or a double, you receive an extra turn to spin one more time. Guess the outcome exactly and get a home run!

I had a Little Dreidel (funny version)



I had a little dreidel,  
I made it out of clay  
And when it's dry and ready my dreidel I will play

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of mud  
And when I tried to spin it it fell down with a thud

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of soap  
I'll spin it in the bathtub it will not melt I hope

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of ice  
It melted when I spun it which was not very nice

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of smaltz  
And when I tried to spin it it did a little waltz

I had a little dreidel  
I made it in my mind  
An imaginary dreidle is the hardest one to find

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of straw  
It went 80 miles an hour and broke the speeding law

I had a little dreidle  
I made it out of bread  
I could not spin my dreidle I ate it up instead

I had a little dreidel  
I made it out of sand  
And when I tried to spin it it crumbled in my hand

I had a little dreidel  
It's sitting on the shelf  
And if you want more verses you can make them up yourself

# DREIDEL GAMES

## NUMERICAL EQUIVALENTS

☆ Hebrew letters stand for their numerical equivalents: *Nun* (50); *Gimel* (3); *Hay* (5); *Shin* (300). Players agree before game starts upon a certain goal/limit. The first person to reach the goal is the winner.

☆ Players decide in advance upon a definite number of times that the dreidel is to be spun. The person who achieves the highest number of points during that number of spins is the winner.

## LENGTH OF TIME

☆ A record is kept of the length of time that a dreidel is in motion when spun. The person who spins the dreidel for the longest period of time (within a defined number of attempts) is the winner.



## ◆ POTATO LATKES ◆

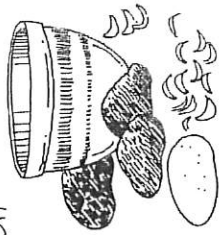
### Ingredients

- 5 medium-sized potatoes
- 1 small onion
- ½ to 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 eggs
- salad oil

### Steps

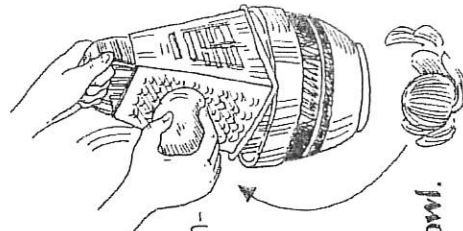
#### 1. Peel the potatoes.

If you're not going to use them right away, put them in a bowl and cover them with cold water.



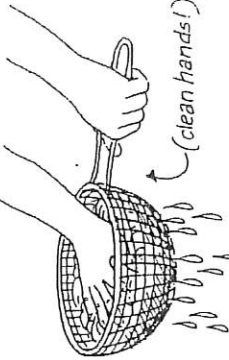
#### 2. Grate the potatoes into a bowl.

It really doesn't matter which holes of the grater you use. Larger holes are the only ones that will do the job, some people think, since they produce crunchier latkes. Others insist on using the medium-sized holes for smoother latkes. It's up to you. *Watch your knuckles*, especially when you're near the end of a potato. Grated knuckles can hurt.



#### 3. Grate the onion into the same bowl.

(Peel the skin off first.)

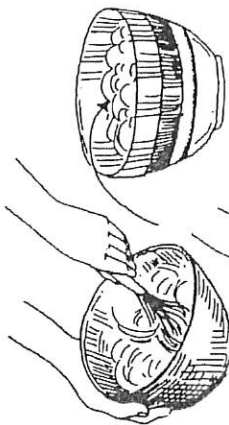


#### 4. Get rid of the liquid

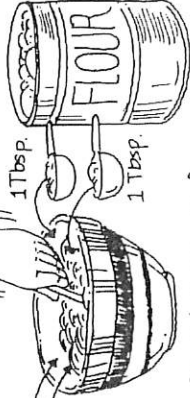
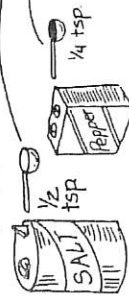
that has collected in the bowl. Either pour it out carefully, or put the mixture in a sieve and press out the extra liquid.

(clean hands!)

5. Beat the eggs in another bowl, and then add to the potato/onion mixture.



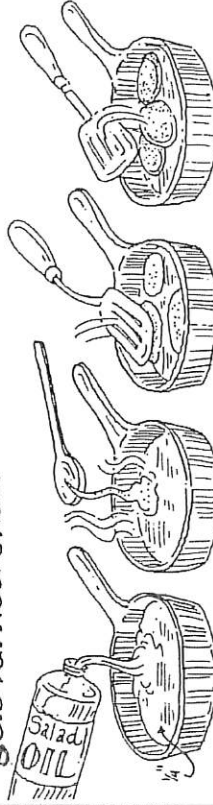
6. Add the flour, salt, and pepper. Mix well.



7. Turn the oven to 250°

This is so you can keep the first latkes you fry warm while you're cooking the rest.

8. Pour enough salad oil into the bottom of a large frying pan so it's about ¼ inch deep. Heat the oil, and keep it hot at medium to medium high heat. Put a tablespoon of the batter into the oil and press it with a slotted pancake turner to a thin pancake. Do as many of these as the pan will hold. Each latke gets turned once.



You can tell when they're ready to turn because the edges get brown. You should cook the latkes so they're golden brown and crisp on each side. As they're done, put them in a shallow pan lined with some paper towels and keep them warm in the oven.

## 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,  
and 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 through our love and our tears.*

Light one candle for the strength that we need to never become our own foes.  
Light one candle for those who are suffering, the pain we learned long ago.  
Light one candle for all we believe in, let anger not tear us apart,  
And light one candle to bind us together, with peace as the song in our heart.

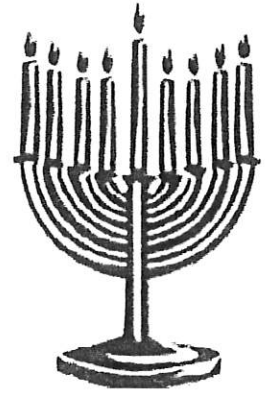
*Don't let the light go out, it's lasted for so many years.*

*Don't let the light go out, let it shine through our love and our tears.*

What is the memory that's valued so highly that we keep it alive in that flame?  
What's the commitment to those who have died when we cry out that they've not died in vain?  
We have come this far always believing, that justice will somehow prevail,  
This is the burden, this is the promise, this is why we will not fail....

*Don't let the light go out, it's lasted for so many years.*

*Don't let the light go out, let it shine through our love and our tears.*



## I AM A LATKE

I am so mixed up that I cannot tell you....

I'm sitting in this blender turning brown...

I've made friends with the onions and flour  
and the cook is scouting oil in town.

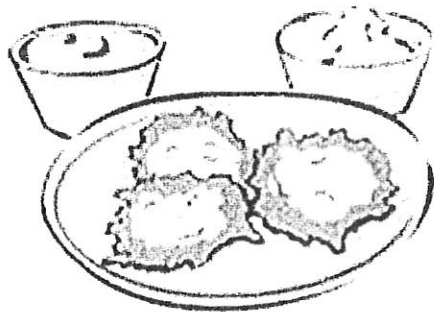
I sit here wondering what will become of me,  
I can't be eaten looking as I do.

I need someone to take me out and cook me, or  
I'll really end up in a royal stew.

*I am a latke and I'm waiting for Hanukkah to come*  
*I am a latke and I'm waiting for Hanukkah to come.*

Every holiday has food so special,  
I'd like to have that same attention too,  
I do not want to spend life in this blender,  
Wondering what I'm supposed to do.

Matzah and charoset are for Pesah,  
Wine and challah for Shabbat,  
Blintzes on Shavuot are delicious,  
And gefilte fish no holiday without.



## LATKE DITTIES

Each Hanukkah we glorify, brave Judah Maccabeus,  
Who had the courage to defy Antiochus, and free us.  
Yet it is not fair that we should forget Mrs. Maccabeus,  
Whom we owe a debt. She mixed it, she fixed it, she  
poured it into a bowl  
You may NOT guess that it was the LAT-KES that  
gave brave Judah a soul.

The Syrians said, "It cannot be, that old Mattathias  
whose years are more than 83, will dare to defy!"  
But they didn't know his secret you see -  
Mattathias dined on latkes and tea.

One latke, two latkes, and so on into the night,  
You may NOT guess, but it was the LAT-KES, that  
gave him the courage to fight!

Now this is how it came about, this gastronomic  
wonder; That broke the ranks of Syria, like flashing  
bolts of thunder! Mrs. Maccabeus wrote in the dough,  
portions of the Torah,  
Then fried them so they shimmered and simmered,  
absorbing the olive oil.  
You may NOT guess, but it was the LAT-KES, that  
made the Syrians recoil.

Now these little lat-kes, brown and delicious must  
have hit the spot, 'cause with appetites vicious, all the  
heroes downed them after their toil. Causing in our  
Temple a shortage of oil.

One lat-ke, Two lat-kes, and so into the night.  
You may NOT guess, but it was the LAT-KES, that  
gave us the Hanukkah light.



# Light The Menorah

Make a playing board like the one in the diagram, and cut out a small candle playing piece for each guest. (Number them or make them different colors so players will know their own pieces.) Each time a player answers a question correctly, (s)he moves one space ahead. The first to place a candle in the menorah is the winner. Here are some questions you may ask. Try to think up others.

Round 1: Potato latkes are a favorite Hanukkah treat. Everyone name something else made from potatoes.

Round 2: We light candles on Hanukkah. Everyone name another time we light candles.

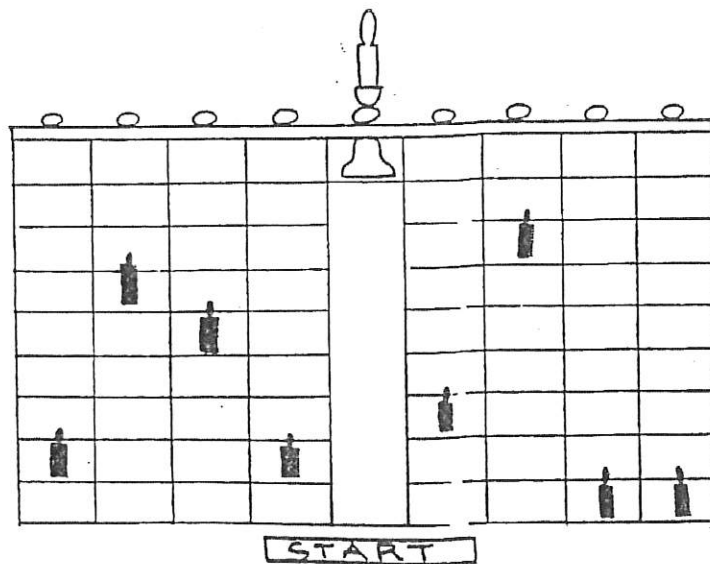
Round 3: Judah Maccabee was a Jewish hero. Everyone name another Jewish hero.

Round 4: There are four Hebrew letters on the dreidel, but twenty-two in the Hebrew alphabet. Everyone name a Hebrew letter.

Round 5: The Maccabees rebuilt the Temple. Everyone name something you find in a Temple or Synagogue today.

Round 6: Hanukkah is a time for gift-giving. Everyone name another time we give gifts.

Round 7: A dreidel spins. Everyone name something else that spins.



Taken from Jewish Holiday Crafts For Little Hands by Ruth Esrig Brinn

## ◆ OIL CANDLES ◆

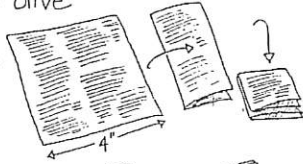
When the Maccabees rededicated the Temple, they didn't use wax candles. They used oil in the Temple lamp. You can use oil at home for the Hanukkah lights by making your own oil candles. These are placed in a shallow bowl of water. Each night of Hanukkah, you add one more of your oil candles to the bowl. Use a candle and a separate candle holder for your shamash.

### You'll need:

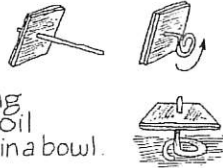
- a large shallow bowl, about 2 or 3 inches deep
- pipe cleaners for wicks — cut each in half
- aluminum foil, a 4-inch square for each candle
- oil — salad, cooking, or olive

### Steps

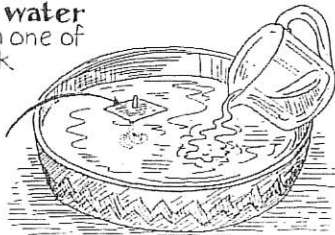
**1. Fold each square of foil** in half and in half again so each is a 2-inch square.



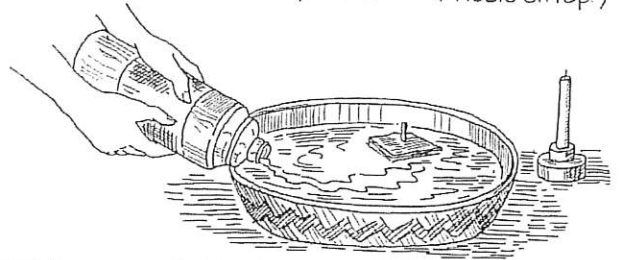
**2. Push half a pipe cleaner** through a small hole in the middle of each aluminum foil square. It should be sticking out of one side about ¼ inch. Coil the other end so it will stand up in a bowl.



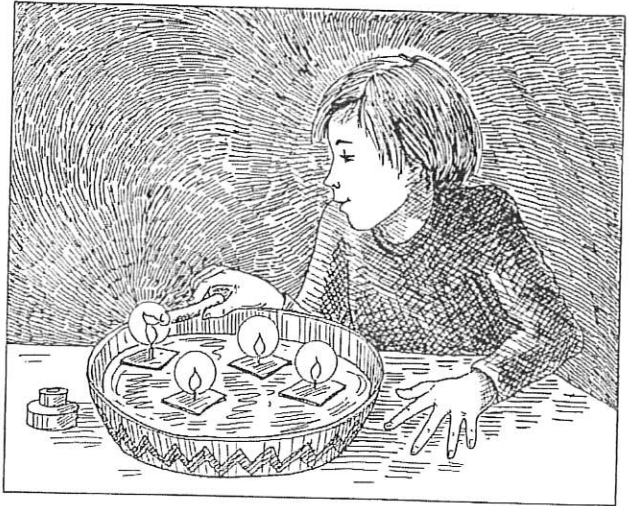
**3. Fill the bowl with water** so that when you put in one of the pipe cleaners stuck through a square, the foil will be just above the water level with the extra ¼ inch of pipe cleaner sticking up into the air.



**4. Gently pour some oil into the bowl** until a film of oil covers the surface of the water. (Oil and water don't mix, and the oil floats on top.)



**5. When you light the pipe cleaner**, it will burn, using the oil for fuel. When the oil is used up, the water will put out the flame.



## ◆ ROLLED BEESWAX CANDLES ◆

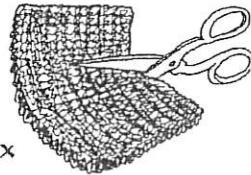
Instead of dipping candles, you can make rolled ones. This is a way to avoid working with hot wax. You can buy sheets of beeswax for this in a variety of colors.

### You'll need:

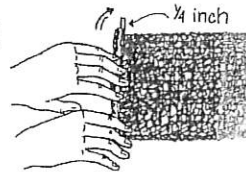
- sheets of beeswax
- wicks
- scissors

### Steps

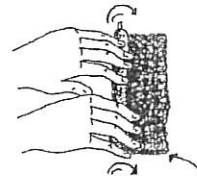
**1. Cut a sheet of beeswax** so it's about 3 or 4 inches long. You can use a pair of scissors for this.



**2. If the beeswax is very stiff**, hold it near a heater for a few moments to soften it. Then place it on a flat surface.



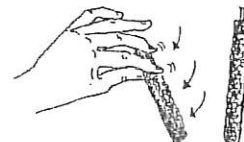
**3. Place a length of wick** along one edge so it's even at one end, but sticks out about ¼ inch at the other. Fold the edge of the sheet over the wick to hold it evenly. Keep the fold straight.



**4. Begin to roll.** The trick is to roll it tightly. How thick you roll it depends on the size of the holder you'll be using.

cut off any excess beeswax

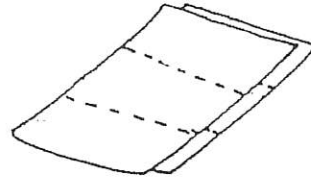
**5. When you've finished rolling**, press the edge of the beeswax so it sticks to the rest of the candle.



# Coupon Book

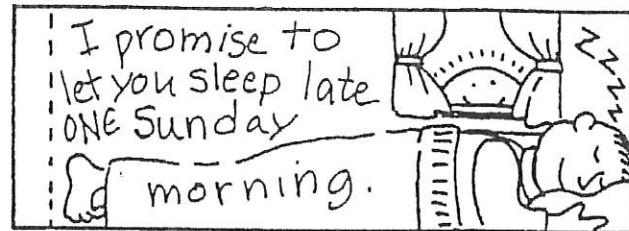
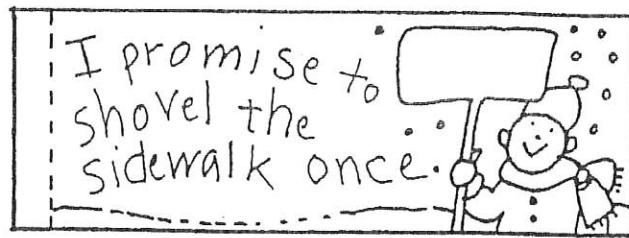
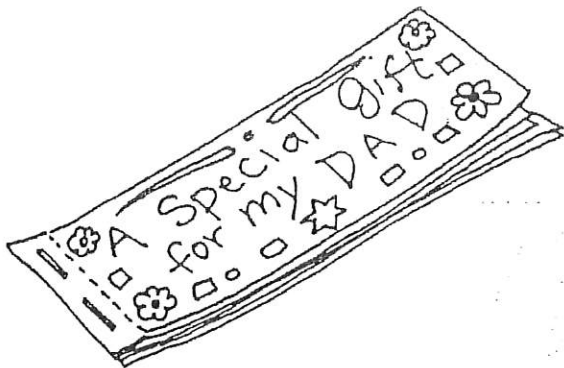
## Here Is What You Need:

Construction Paper  
Scissors  
Stapler  
Markers or Crayons



## Here Is What to Do:

1. Fold two pieces of construction paper in thirds and cut out. This is enough for five coupons and a cover.
2. Write or draw a promise on each coupon. Decorate the cover.



Taken from Jewish Holidays For Little Hands by Ruth Esrig Brinn

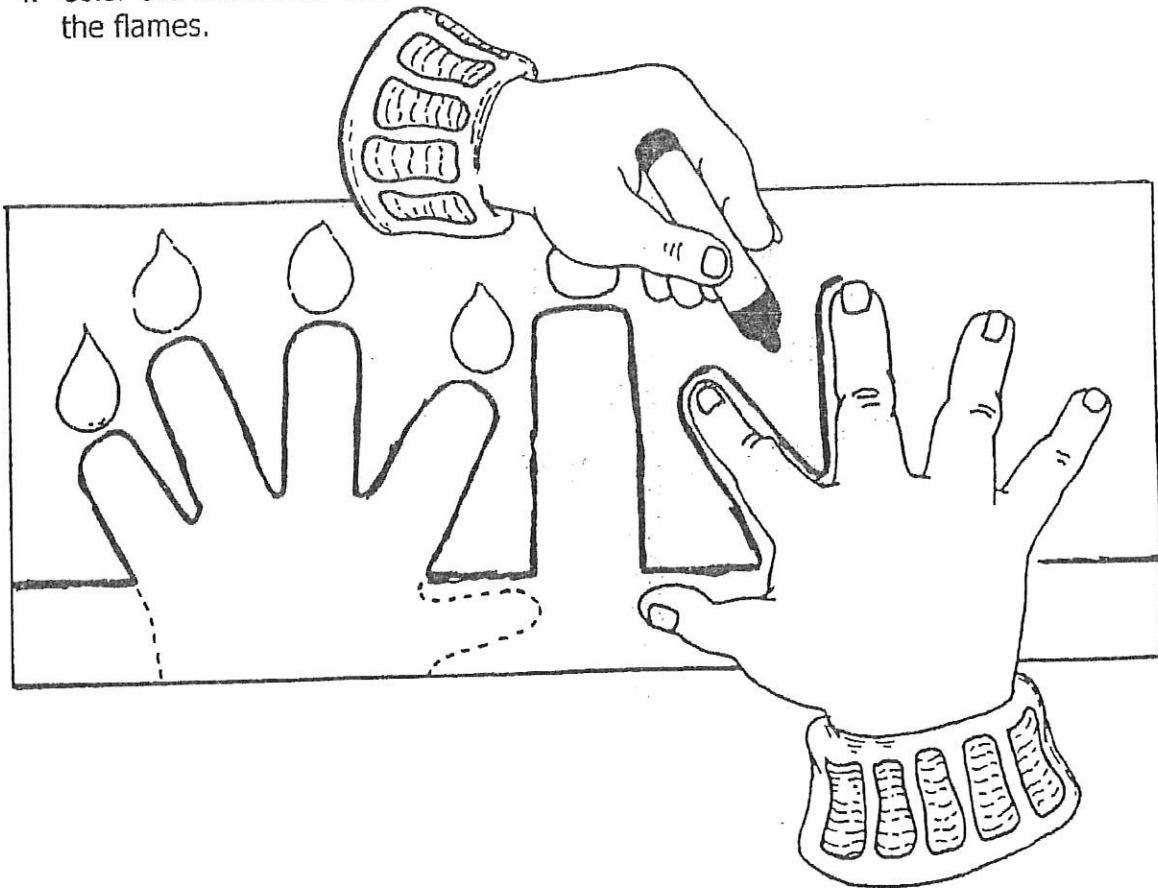
# Finger Menorah Fun

## Here Is What You Need:

Colored paper  
Yellow or Orange Tissue Paper  
Crayons or markers  
Glue

## Here Is What You Do:

1. Place your left hand on the left side of a sheet of paper so your wrist is even with the bottom. Spread your fingers. Start at the bottom and trace around your four fingers. Don't trace your thumb!
2. Put your right hand on the right side of the paper and trace around your four right fingers.
3. Draw a large "candle" in the middle and connect it to your "candle" fingers.
4. Color the Hanukkah and each of the candles. Glue bits of tissue paper for the flames.



Taken from Jewish Holidays For Little Hands by Ruth Esrig Brinn

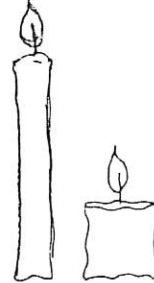
# Hanukkah Puzzles

Try to answer these Hanukkah puzzles! Answers are on the back.

## CANDLE PUZZLES

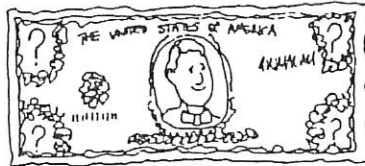
You have four Hanukkah candles. Can you add six more and just have five?

Which burns longer, the tall thin candle, or the sort fat one?



## HANUKKAH GELT

For Hanukkah Dina got \$11, all in U.S. paper bills, and none of them were \$1 bills. What were they?



## HANUKKAH ANAGRAMS

Rearrange the letters in each group, using all the letters, and form a Hanukkah word or name.

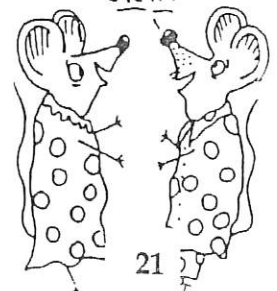
1. RIDDLE E
2. HERMAN O
3. AA HUNH KK
4. LAND EC
5. FIG T

## HANUKKAH RIDDLES

1. What time is it when you sit in a burning candle?
2. How can you light a Hanukkah candle without a match?
3. Why did the foolish cook run out of the house when he was making latkes?
4. What has four sides, spins and hops?
5. Why won't the candle maker make candles any longer?
6. If a candle and a half need a wick and a half, how long would it take a candle maker to make a candle using noodles and soup?

CAN I MAKE SURGANIYOT  
IN MY PAJAMAS?

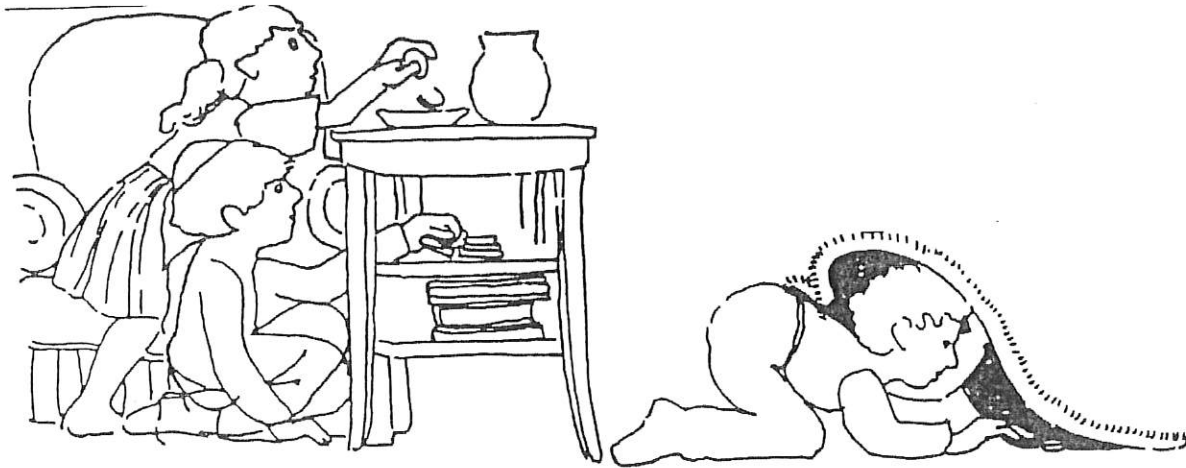
NO. YOU NEED AN  
OVEN!



Taken from The Kids' Catalog of Jewish Holidays by David A. Adler

# Treasure Hunt

Hide pennies or chocolate Hanukkah gelt around the house. Give each player a bag, set a time limit, and see who can collect the most gelt.



## Hanukkah Puzzle Answers

CANDLE PUZZLE



HANUKKAH CANDLES

Neither. All candles burn shorter, not longer.

HANUKKAH GELT

Dina was given 3 two-dollar bills and 1 five-dollar bill.

HANUKKAH ANAGRAMS

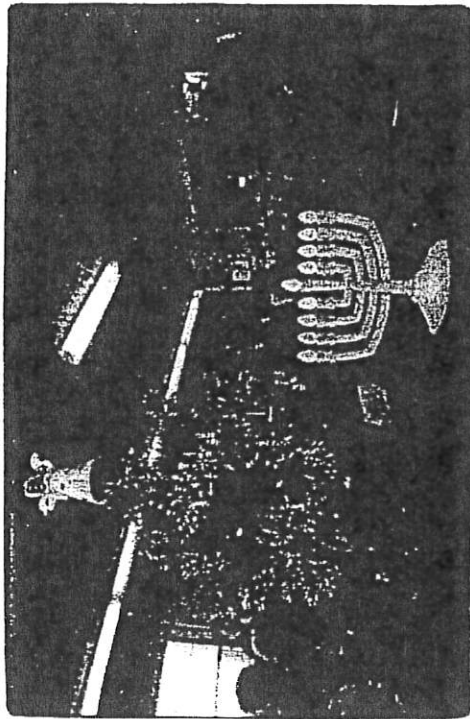
1. DREIDEL 2. MENORAH 3. HANUKKAH 4. CANDLE 5. GIFT

HANUKKAH RIDDLE ANSWERS

1. Springtime. 2. Take one candle out of the box and the box will become a candle lighter. 3. Because the recipe said, "Take one egg and beat it." 4. A dreidel with hiccups. 5. Because the candles are long enough. 6. DO you give up? So did the candlemaker.

Taken from The Kids' Catalog of Jewish Holidays by David A. Adler

Schools have become more sensitive to Jewish holidays, but most parents still have to deal with the "December dilemma" and the media blitz that accompanies Christmas.



## The December Dilemma: Christmas

While it may be possible to compromise on Halloween since it is a folkloric observance rather than a religious one, Christmas simply cannot be reconciled with being Jewish. There is no way around it, Christmas celebrates the birthday of the Christian savior. That theology is in no way conducive to our own. It is therefore important to explain this fact to your children at an early age to fortify them, so to speak, against the annual bombardment in public places, on television, and so on. As for the nod toward Hanukkah which has become a custom in recent years in the media, schools, and even public places—although motivated no doubt by a well-meaning desire to be equitable if not a giving in to pressure from Jewish groups—it tends to create the impression of Hanukkah as the "Jewish Christmas." Jewish parents thus find themselves truly on the horns of a dilemma that requires patience and firmness, especially with very young children. In a family where there is a clear consensus between the parents, the conundrum is fairly easy to overcome. The real problem arises in interfaith families in which parents are indecisive and pulled in conflicting directions.



## Interfaith Families and the December Dilemma

by Nancy Maides

THEY CALL IT THE DECEMBER DILEMMA and it usually goes something like this:

She: "Well, should we have a Christmas tree or a menorah?"

He: "If we have both, will it confuse our children? If we have neither, are we depriving our kids of their history?"

She: "What will our parents think?"

Making room for two traditions under one roof is never more of a challenge than during the holiday season, when differences that seem inconsequential during the rest of the year suddenly become acute.

"The holiday season calls to the surface tensions, struggles, and issues related to the intermarriage," says Rabbi David Abrahamson, former spiritual leader of B'Nai Abraham in Beverly, Massachusetts. "They're more acutely felt during the holidays. Issues of how children will be raised or how a childless couple is going to conduct their religious life need to be talked about."

December is not the best time to start talking, because emotions are so intense. The intensity of feeling catches a lot of people by surprise.

### Source:

Jewish Family and Life: Traditions, Holidays, and Values,  
Yosef Abramowitz & Rabbi Susan Silverman

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It certainly was a surprise for Margie Benea of Peabody, Massachusetts, who was raised in a traditional Jewish family and has been married for 20 years to Frank Benea, who grew up in an equally traditional Catholic family. Margie remembers their first Christmas together, when she went out and bought a tiny six-inch Christmas tree for her new husband. "The tree didn't last very long in the house because it made me feel very uncomfortable," says Margie.

"I think that the Christmas tree in an interfaith home very tangibly brings out that whole question of the religious future or religious identity of the family," says Rabbi Abrahamson. "Also, even for a Jewish family—two Jewish parents with Jewish children—a Christmas tree is a stereotypical symbol of assimilation."

Today, Margie and Frank raise their 10-year-old daughter and 14-year-old son as Jews. They don't have a Christmas tree at home, but they still celebrate the Catholic holidays with their father's family. "The kids always give him a present on Christmas morning too, because they understand that it is Dad's holiday," says Margie.

"Our kids really look forward to going to their grandparents' house to help decorate their tree," Margie says. "It's a very special night for them. It isn't difficult for them because it's all they've ever known. We told them that Dad's family believes in God in a different way."

The bright lights of a Christmas tree can be a hard thing for the more low-key Hanukkah menorah to compete with, says Lauren Gaudette of Peabody, Massachusetts. "When my children saw my in-laws' Christmas tree last year, they immediately wanted one of their own," says Gaudette, a Jewish mother of three toddlers, whose husband was raised Catholic. "It was very difficult to explain to my three-year-old twins why they couldn't have the beautiful tree. Kids are impressionable, and the tree, lit up, was impressive."

Gaudette says she strives to play up the Jewish holidays for the children so that they won't ever feel that they are missing out on something. The family practices only Judaism at home and the children attend preschool at a Reform synagogue. Allowing a Christmas tree in the house, Gaudette says, would send a confusing, mixed message to the children.

Explains Dr. Samuel Migdole, a psychologist in Beverly, Massachusetts, "No matter how you think about Christmas, it is a religious holiday with special significance for Christians. If you've grown up Christian, it has tremendous meaning for you."

Hanukkah comes at about the same time of year and is a festive holiday with gift giving, but there is a major difference. Hanukkah is a minor holiday in the Jewish calendar that has taken on major proportions because of its proximity to Christmas.

Marriages between Christians and Jews have been steadily increasing since the 1950s. "The fear of estrangement from community and family may have been an effective disincentive to intermarriage a generation ago," says Abrahamson. "As recently as 25 years ago, it has been estimated that only one Jew in ten married someone who was not Jewish. Now some estimates are as high as 50 percent."

Migdole agrees that the social stigma attached to interfaith marriage has lessened considerably. But, he says, there are still important issues a couple and their extended families need to work out well before that first holiday season comes around.

"It is very important that a couple be united in their decisions about their religious home life," says Migdole. "The trouble starts when a couple says, we're in love and it doesn't matter, because it really does matter."

At the very least, says Migdole, a couple should come to a decision about religion at home before they have children. "Within the boundaries of the nuclear family, a child may clearly understand that he or she is Christian even though one parent is Jewish," says Migdole, "but the child will still have an extended family of Jewish relatives."

"Even when the parents decide to go one way with their children, you cannot pretend that an interfaith marriage is not an interfaith marriage," says Migdole, adding that parents need to explain the differences in a gentle and respectful way. "You can say to your child, 'We're Jewish and we don't have a Christmas tree, but Grandma and Grandpa are Catholic and we respect that. Let's help them celebrate their holiday,'" says Migdole.

For couples who are experiencing tension from one or both sides of an extended family for not living up to certain holiday traditions, a united front is an absolute must, Abrahamson says. "You won't dictate to the extended families what they should do, but you have to decide where you will draw certain lines in terms of your own children's involvement. As with any other aspect of relationships—you have to negotiate."

Nancy Mades lives near Boston with her husband, John Alabiso, and their two children.

