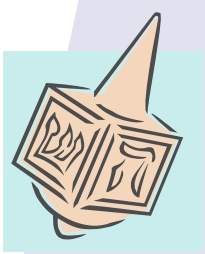
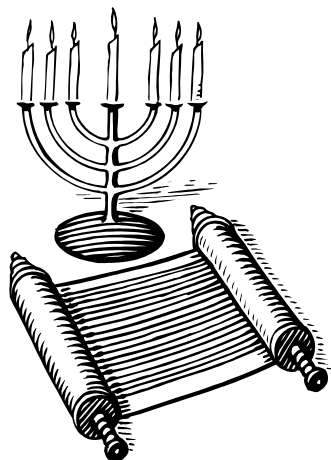


Hanukkah Spectacular

A Temple Isaiah collection of new ideas and ancient revelations to inspire a fresh look at a wonderful, old holiday.





Dear Congregants – 2

Happy Hanukkah to you and everyone you love. Recently, a small group of parents gathered in the social hall for an “Idea Swap,” sharing useful tips on everything from getting children to eat vegetables to issues of discipline. We began talking about what is often called, “The December Dilemma.” What are fun ways to celebrate Hanukkah at home? What is Hanukkah all about? Can a Jewish family have a Christmas Tree? It was clear that there is a need to know more about Hanukkah, more than latkes and dreidls. That conversation was the spark that inspired this collection of Hanukkah history, traditions, stories, games and much more. Think of it as a “Hanukkalooza.” I hope that you will find new ideas as well as ancient revelations to inspire a fresh look at a wonderful, old holiday. Hanukkah is sometimes called the Feast of Rededication. May we find ourselves this year rededicated to learning, growing and striving toward our highest ideals.

B'vracha merubah,

Rabbi Zoë Klein



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A Festival of Warmth and Light

This article was originally published in The Connecticut Ledger, December 24, 1997

The eight days of Hanukkah are like eight cups of hot cocoa when we come in from the cold. They are filled with warm moments and serene smiles, whether we find ourselves spinning dreidls for jellybeans, attending parties with the steady sizzle of potato pancakes on the stovetop, gazing at the dancing flames of candles, or singing cheerful Hannukah songs. Whether it is in snow-blanketed Connecticut, or sun-bathed Jerusalem, a window framed with the gentle light of a menorah is a loving beacon in these longest nights.

The December sky dons its frosty veil of winter and everywhere are evergreens draped in tinsel. Shadows lengthen and temperatures sink, as we near the darkest time of the year. And just as a dream surfaces out of the dark of sleep, Hanukkah appears out of the dark of winter solstice, the synchronized dream of the Jewish people.

Not only are the nights the longest during Hanukkah, but they are also the darkest. As the Jewish calendar is both solar and lunar, a full moon will never appear during the eight days of Hanukkah. In fact, it is one of the only Jewish holidays that does not have a full moon. Hanukkah embraces the last days of the moon's winter waning.

In the ancient world, the night was a terrifying time to be traveling. Bandits and beasts were lying in wait. One of the mitzvahs (commandments) of Hanukkah is that the menorah (Hanukkah lamp) should be placed in the window or by the doorpost. Its light proclaims a safe and welcoming refuge to any traveler who is caught off-guard by the early onset of evening. They are an ancient version of Lady Liberty's torch, a light unto the nations. The poetess whose immortal words are inscribed on the Statue of Liberty base, Emma Lazarus, also wrote of Hanukkah: *Kindle the taper like the steadfast star, Ablaze on evening's forehead o'er the earth, And add each night a luster till afar, An eight-fold splendor shine above thy hearth.*

"An eight-fold splendor..." The number seven remains in the realm of nature. There are seven days of the week, seven items we can hold in our short-term memory (that is why there are seven digits in a telephone number, or seven stacks in a game of solitaire), while the number eight is one step above nature. It already represents the realm of miracle.

On Hanukkah, the Festival of Light, we remember the miracle of the oil when the Maccabees overcame the Assyrian armies and purified the Temple. In the Temple they found only one cruse of oil for the eternal lamp, enough to last only one day. However, the oil continued to burn over the entire eight days it took for more oil to be found. Unlike the moon the eternal lamp never 'disappears,' but remains a beacon of hope, a reminder of God's loving presence even in our dreariest dark. Stars fade and empires crumble, but God is forever our constant.

Every Jewish holiday is ushered in with the lighting of candles. It is a powerful symbol. Light is never separated from its source, just as we are never separated from our Divine Source, though sometimes it may feel as if we have strayed quite far. Light is a symbol of inspiration,

just as a light bulb over the head of a cartoon character is an idea. And it represents understanding, as we say something is 'illuminating.' Light is also a symbol of righteousness, as it says in our prayers, "Light is sown for the righteous."

Light is a symbol of identity as well. 'To bring something into the light' is to identify it. Hanukkah also is a holiday of identity. When the Hellenized world came knocking on Jewish doors, it was very seductive. It came with the lure of exciting Olympia, intriguing philosophy and fashionable laurel, and many people were enticed.



Similarly today, our culture begs assimilation, and many of us sway and are tempted to surrender ritual and heritage to the comfort and approval of sameness. It is societal peer pressure. As the infamous assimilators of the Star Trek universe warn, “Resistance to the Borg is futile!” But Hanukkah remembers one star-fleet of Maccabees who did valiantly resist and set an example that self-identity is a precious treasure.

Hanukkah celebrated the first historical attempt to proclaim and champion the principles of religio-cultural diversity in a nation. Therefore, it holds a much broader human significance, as a festival of liberty and a tribute to freedom.

When it comes to identity, I think we can learn as much from the dark as we do from the light. We can learn much from blurred lines and muted colors. It is perhaps easier for us to talk about our common fears than it is to talk about a “common belief.” As all cultures have festivals involving light in the winter solstice, we are reminded of our common fear of the dark, and our fragility in the face of cold, long nights.

Hanukkah teaches us that the darkest nights bring the brightest dreams. Dreams of miracles. In these dreams, all people are spun from the same stardust, every soul is a beacon of that Original Light, and every being is created in the Image of the Holy One. And one day we will wake from the dream into the brilliant dawn of a perfect world, a world of miracles and joy, sweet as honey and pure as milk.

Happy Hanukkah!

The (Bloody) Story of Hanukkah

The Hebrew word Hanukkah 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 BCE and the subsequent liberation and “rededication” of the Temple in Jerusalem.

In the year 168 BCE, 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 the Jews were conversion, or death. Alters and idols were set up throughout Judea for the purpose of worshipping Greek Gods. Antiochus outlawed the study of Torah, Hebrew, the observance of Shabbat, the festivals, and circumcision.

On the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev in 168 BCE, the Temple was renamed for the Greek God Zeus. Pigs were sacrificed in the Temple. The Torah was splattered with pigs’ blood and then burned. Thousands of Jews chose to die rather than commit idolatry.

The Top Ten Antics of the Hanukkah Goblins

(And if you don’t believe that the Hanukkah goblins exist, see how many of the following antics they’ve played on you!)

- 10) They love to snuff out the match when we try to light the Shamash.
- 9) They endlessly frustrate our ability to spell Hanukkah, Channukah, Chanuka.
- 8) They stand on the dreidl in order to weight it in our opponent’s favor.
- 7) They wrap the Hanukkah gelt so tightly that we cannot open it without getting chocolate all over our hands.
- 6) While the oil the Maccabees used in the Temple lasted eight days, the Hanukkah goblins make the oil we use to make latkes stick to our gullets for at least eight weeks.
- 5) The Hanukkah goblins, wearing fire-retardant galoshes, love to dance in our latke pan and splash little flecks of burning oil at us.
- 4) They hide in our mouths and twist our tongues, making us sound like bumbling simpletons when we try to sing Rock of Ages.

Among these martyrs was a woman named Hannah whose seven sons refused to eat pork and were killed one by one, each one more gruesome than the next. Finally, the mother too died. Some people see the eight candles of the menorah as a symbol of the sacrifice of Hannah and her seven sons.

But slowly, a resistance movement developed against the cruelty of Antiochus, led by a priestly family known as the Hasmoneans, or Maccabees (which means ‘Hammers’. The head of the family was an elderly man named Mattathias. He and his five sons left Jerusalem, and

3) Though we light all the candles at the same time, and we use the same brand of candles at each lighting, the Hanukkah goblins make them gutter at radically different speeds. (They also loathe when we have nine matching candles on the last night of Hanukkah, so they see to it that we don't have enough of one shade.)

2) They love to move the holiday drastically around, sometimes in early December, sometimes late December, just to catch us off guard with our gift-purchasing and card-sending. (They also love to arrange for department store to have big sales some time in the middle of the holiday, when we've already bought all our gifts.)

1) Though we light the Hanukkah candles every single year, every single year the Hanukkah goblins confound our minds, making us totally forget which way to put the candles in and which way to light them. (We are supposed to put the candles in the menorah from right to left, and light them from left to right. Don't let those little rascals tell you otherwise!) Our first-night-candle foibles are a source of endless amusement to those mischievous Hanukkah Goblins.



took up residence in a small town north of Jerusalem, called Modin. 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, became the chief strategist and military leader.

Furious, Antiochus decided to destroy totally 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 BCE, the terror of Antiochus had ended. The Jews had won a victory for their land and their faith.

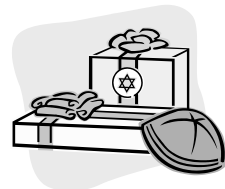
The idols were torn down, and, on the morning of the 25th day of Kislev in 165 BCE, the Temple in Jerusalem was re-consecrated, three years to the day after the original defilement. In celebration, the people of Jerusalem lit bright lights in front of their homes and decided to mark their deliverance with an annual eight-day festival. In the fighting, the people had not been able to celebrate eight day festival of Sukkot-Simchat Torah, and so Hanukkah is sometimes referred to by the rabbis as, “Sukkot in Winter.” It was called the Feast of Lights, the Feast of Dedication, or simply, Hanukkah.

The Miracle of the Oil/ (or: The Not Bloody Story of Hanukkah)

Originally, the eight day Feast of Lights, as we said, was intended to parallel the eight days of Sukkot. The Books of Maccabees make no mention of the beautiful legend concerning the jar of oil which has come to be so much a part of Hanukkah today. It was several centuries later (500 CE) that the story of the cruse of oil emerged as part of the Talmud.

The legend relates that when the Maccabees entered the Temple and began to cleanse it, they immediately relit the *Ner Tamid* (Eternal Lamp). 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. The rabbi of the Talmud, therefore, attributed the eight days of Hanukkah to the miracle of that little jar of olive oil.





The Seventh Night of Hanukkah - A Night of Tzedakka

Many Jewish families exchange gifts on the nights of Hanukkah.

Start a new tradition in your family, and this year, make one night a night of tzedakka. To create a new tradition in your family, make it the same night every year...for example, every seventh night will be the night of tzedakka. On this night, instead of giving gifts to each other do a fun project or activity together that helps someone else, helps shed light in dark places and chase away shadows. Perhaps you can visit an elderly hostel. Or make and color holiday cards to deliver to a children's hospital. Or bake cookies and cupcakes and bring them to PATH shelter (People Assisting The Homeless) on Cotner Avenue, near the 405 entrance. Use this night to count up the money in your tzedakka boxes and discuss where to donate it. Go to the pharmacy together and buy toothpaste, soap, diapers and shampoo and bring it to a battered women's shelter. Write a letter to soldiers overseas. Identify together someplace in the world where you believe people need light, and learn what can be done. For example, the survivors of genocide struggling in Sudan, the children fighting starvation in Niger, or people in our very own city. Find out the organizations like Progressive Chicken Soup and others that try to help. Temple Isaiah's Social Action Committee, Jewish Alliance, Menorah House, Project Talk to members of (or better yet, join!) Jewish World Watch Committee, or Caring Community.



The Real Miracle? – Tzedakka and Hanukkah

It has been asked, why do we light a candle on the first night of Hanukkah? What was the miracle of the first day? After all, the one cruse of oil was *supposed* to last one day. So what is the big deal?

I learned from Hasidic Rabbi Sammy Inrator that the miracle of the first day was in fact even greater than the subsequent seven days, because the first day *gave* of itself to illumine the rest. It is the act of selfless *tzedakka* which brightens and repairs the world.

A Blessing

The year is a vast menorah,
Each future a golden cup of oil.
Morning comes, the sun rises,
The world's gleaming shamash,
And ignites each day in burning brilliance.
The year is a vast menorah, 365 branches.
May your days be dancing and dazzling,
May there be miracle and happiness,
Music and love and health
All your wonder illuminated.
May your life be radiant to you,
May you be a miracle unto yourself,
May this be the year that you glow.



We just gave each other a few little presents and then we lit candles. Because of the shortage of candles, we only had them alight for ten minutes.

- Diary of Anne Frank,
December 7, 1942



Advertising the Miracle: Hanukkah Lights and Decorations

One of the traditional customs of Hanukkah is called in Hebrew *Pirsumei Nisa*, which means “Publicizing the Miracle.” Motel 6 advertises, “We’ll leave a light on for you.” Think of Hanukkah as the Motel 6 of holidays. Lights and decorations are a part of proclaiming the miracle and celebrating.

As the Reform Responsa Committee wrote in responding to the question of electric menorahs being displayed in condominium lobbies:

“Most of us have taken a public stand against the display of religious objects in government buildings or schools. We along with groups such as the American Jewish Committee have sought to minimize both Christmas and *Hanukkah* displays as well as religious displays at other seasons. Here we have a private dwelling and the owners of the condominium are interested in displaying a *menorah*... It is appropriate to display a *menorah* publicly, in fact the traditional statements about the *menorah* prescribe that the lights be visible from the outside (Shab 24a; *Shulhan Arukh* Orah Hayim 1.5). In the warmer lands of North Africa and the Near East, almost every *menorah* was designed to be placed on the outer wall of the home and lit there in the Jewish quarter. Publicizing the miracle is the intent and so there is no problem about displaying the *menorah* in a public setting of an apartment house lobby. The *menorah* itself is not a sacred item and there is no degree of sanctity connected with it. Of course, the ancient *menorah* in the Temple itself was a holy object, but it was lost after Titus transported it to Rome for his triumphal march through the city. Subsequently we hear no more about it. Every later *menorah* is purposely sufficiently different so that it does not imitate the original *menorah*. Most have eight arms rather than the seven of the ancient Temple. The *Hannukah menorah* has nine with the *shames*... In a condominium in which a large number of Jews live, it is appropriate to display an electric *Hanukkah menorah*. This would add to the festive nature of the holiday.”

It may surprise many Reform Jews to learn this, but it is traditional and appropriate and *Jewish* to decorate your homes for Hanukkah. Many Jews feel that these decorations look too much like Christmas, and I would agree that a “Hanukkah bush” is pushing it a little. However, historically, we Jews have given up many of our own practices because they looked Christian, for example, bowing or kneeling during services. Decorating your home for Hanukkah is in keeping with authentic Judaism. Colorful brightly lit dreidls, illustrations of the Maccabee story, stars of David, menorahs, dancing candles, blue and white streamers, are all a part of *Pirsumei Nisa*, “Publicizing the Miracle.”

Publicizing the Miracle – A Story – Rabbi Shraga Simmons

A father called his three sons (triplets) to see who should marry first. He said: “I have three barns. I want each of you to fill up a barn. Each of you should fill a barn as fully as possible. The first son collected all the paper he could get his hands on. White paper – clean, ready to be written upon and easy to compact together. Upon inspection, his father said, “Not bad. For the most part the barn is full.” The second son drilled a hole in the roof of the barn and filled it to the brim with sand. Upon inspection, his father said, “Excellent, the barn is as close to full as I can imagine.” Finally, the third son had a special idea. He went inside the barn and came out moments later. Skeptically, the father followed his son into the barn, to see a small, brightly lit candle sitting in the center. The father thought for a moment and said, “Son, the barn is completely filled with light. Congratulations. You will be the first to marry!”



The Half-Hour Shabbat

Traditionally we are supposed to cease all work while the Hanukkah candles are burning, making about a half-hour ‘Shabbat,’ where families can be together, sharing stories, singing, and enjoying each other’s company. I remember one Hanukkah night, my husband was not home from work and my daughter had fallen asleep. So my son and I lit the Hanukkah candles alone. I sat on the couch with him sitting on my lap, and we always turn our couch around to face the living room window during Hanukkah so we can watch the lights. The menorah we used was one I bought from our Temple Isaiah gift shop, and it actually is a music box as well. We sat in front of the dancing little candles, wound up the music box and listened to the soulful ancient-sounding melody of *Hatikvah*. It was the first time my son had heard the Israeli National Anthem. We could see our reflections in the window along with the candles looking back at us, when I realized that my son had tears running down his cheeks. I said, “Rachmiel, why are you crying?” And he said, “The music is just so beautiful.” We sat there together, talking about the music and how it made us feel until the candles guttered. It was such a short time, but I will always treasure it.

We are commanded not to put the Hanukkah candles to any useful purpose, maintaining their sacred task of being a beacon, proclaiming a miracle. How wonderful... a half hour to change your attitude, a tiny serene island in the midst of a sea of useful activities. For a half hour, be useless. Do nothing useful. Breathe. Be. Beam.



Hanukkah Home Ceremony

I am ready to light the first (second, etc) candle of Hanukkah and here I stand ready to rededicate myself to achieve higher levels of personal holiness and illumination in a world of shadows. Tonight's candle is dedicated to _____. (Enter your own value for the family or ask each person to dedicate it to their own personal value). *Chaya Kaplan-Gafni*

Candles are added to the menorah from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. (On the Shabbat of Hanukkah, kindle the Hanukkah lights first and then the Shabbat candles.) Light the *Shamash* - the helper candle set higher or lower than all the rest of the candles - first using it to kindle the rest of the Hanukkah lights; say or sing:

First blessing:

ברוך אתה יי אלהנו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנכה.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam asher kidshanu b'mitz-vo-tav v'tzi-va-nu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

We praise You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot and commands us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

Second blessing:

ברוך אתה יי אלהנו מלך העולם שעשה נסים לאבותינו/לאמותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam she-a-sa ni-sim l'avoteinu ba-yamim ha-hem bazman ha-zeh.

We praise You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who performed wondrous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

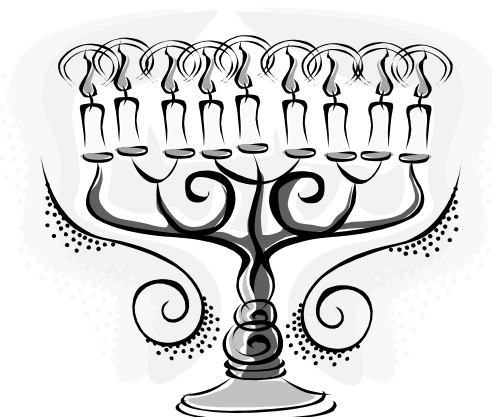
On the first night only:

ברוך אתה יי אלהנו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam she-hech-eyanu, v'ki-yimanu, v'higianu laz-man ha-zeh.

We praise You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

The nine-branched candelabra we use on Hanukkah is more correctly called a *Hanukkiya*, not a menorah. The word "menorah" more accurately refers to the seven branched candelabra that adorned the Temple in Jerusalem. The seven branched menorah is the seal of the State of Israel and on some of Israel's coins.



We think so much of the beautiful candles, but very little of the match which ignites it all and is quickly snuffed.

Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame. Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart. – Poetess Hannah Senesh

Lighting the Menorah: A Debate

A *Sephardic* tradition is that every member of a family lights his or her own menorah, and many *Ashkenazic* families light one menorah for the entire family.

The *Talmud* in Tractate Shabbat 21a records two distinct ways of lighting the *Hanukkah* candles: The school of Shammai ruled: *On the first day of Hanukkah, we light eight candles; each day after that, we diminish the lights by one.* The school of Hillel ruled: *On the first day of Hanukkah, we light one candle; each day thereafter, we increase the lights by one.*

The sages of the *Talmud* explained that Shammai related the decreasing lights to the decreasing number of sacrifices offered at the Temple each day of *Sukkot* (*Sukkot* is the biblical model for the holiday of *Hanukkah*). Hillel, on the other hand decided according to the belief that *one increases things of holiness, and does not decrease them.*

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin said, "This choice of counting up or down encapsulates two approaches to life: Are the blessings of life so finite – so that with each one bestowed our cup is diminished? Or are they as infinite as the Source from which they come? And even if they are finite; do we imagine a growing darkness as each is used up, or do we gather all the revealed ones together, basking in the light that grows with each new blessing? How we answer these questions colors the way we receive each new day and each new blessing..."

Hillel and Shammai: A Play for Families and Friends

Narrator: Once there were two little mice and they lived underneath the city of Jerusalem. It was over a thousand years ago, and they were deciding how the Mouse world should celebrate Hanukkah. At that time there were two Mouse leaders. One mouse was named Shammai:

Shammai: Hi!

Narrator: And the other mouse was named Hillel:

Hillel: Hello everybody.



Narrator: Hillel and Shammai had different opinions about everything.

Shammai: When one eats Swiss cheese, one should eat the holes as well as the cheese, so as not to waste anything.

Hillel: When one eats Swiss cheese, one should not eat the holes as well as the cheese, because they will turn you into an airhead.

Narrator: But the biggest disagreements they had were about Hanukkah.

Shammai: On Hanukkah when we use a menorah, the menorah should have all of the candles at different heights. This way, we can remember that life sometimes has its ups, and sometimes has its downs. But throughout it all, there



is always light, and hope.

Hillel: No, no, no. The lights on the menorah should all be the same height, to show that all of the days of Hanukkah are equally important. This also shows that we are all equal and should be equally nice to everyone.

Narrator: Who do we follow today? (Hillel)

Shammai: When we light the Candles, we should always light the oldest candle first... that way we give honor to the ones who come before us.

Hillel: No, no, no, we should light the newest candle first, because the new candle might be feeling a little nervous, just like when you go to a new school, and so we want to make him feel good.

Narrator: Who do we follow today? (Hillel)

Shammai: On Hanukkah, on the first night, we should start by lighting eight lights, and each night, light one less, until on the last night of Hannukah we light only one candle, to symbolize that God is one. And the one candle will also teach us about the beauty of unity.

Hillel: No, no, no, we should start with one candle and add one candle each night, because hope, and light should never decrease in this world, but only get bigger and brighter.

Narrator: Who do we follow today? (Hillel!)
Now, Shammai was feeling very upset because every suggestion that he had was not accepted, and every suggestion that Hillel had was accepted.

Shammai: I am so upset. I am going to go wake up a cat and offer myself as dinner.

Narrator: Shammai was so upset until he heard a voice from Heaven, and it was God speaking, and God said...

God: Shammai, the world is not ready for your suggestions yet. Right now, the world needs to have as much hope and as much light as it can get. But one day, in the perfect world, we will all light the menorah starting with eight candles and ending with one, because we will all be one and at peace.

Narrator: And this made him feel better.



A Different Light

A Different Light: The Hanukkah Book of Celebration edited by Noam Zion and Barbara Spectre is an extraordinary and gorgeous collection of all you need to know about Hanukkah. Rabbi Rachel Cowen wrote of it, “This is a book I have longed for each year at Hanukkah. It has, of course, the traditional focus on activities for children but it moves profoundly into the adolescent and adult realms as well: History, ethics, literature, politics, sociology, and poetry. Each year I will read it anew, and learn more.” It is a fabulous book to have, and I recommend it strongly, along with the companion volume *A Different Light: The Big Book of Hanukkah*. It can be ordered at Haggadahrus.com or Amazon. Remember, we have a link on the temple website to Amazon.com and if you order through that link it benefits the temple.

In their book, there are suggestions for gift giving, in fact a different way for each night. The following is excerpted from *A Different Light* page 156-7.

1st night: Everyone Gives/Receives From Everyone Else (including guests, children and adults) — In our family of eight (including parents, grandparents and children), for example, each member is assigned a different night and must prepare a round of gifts for everyone on that night...the principle is that everyone gives to everyone else at one’s own level. In other families there is a pre-assigned Grandparents’, Parents’ and Children’s night when all the gifts come from those designated givers.

2nd night: Homemade Gifts – Rather than “the best money can buy,” try a night of homemade and handmade presents whether they are art, jewelry, place mats, bookmarks or sweaters...

3rd night: “Secret Admirer” Gifts – This custom comes from the Israeli Scouts: Before Hanukkah or on the first night prepare a bag with all the names of the participants for a later night. Ask everyone to pick one name but keep it a secret. Then each one prepares a gift for up to a specified amount and wraps in nicely with the name of the recipient but not the name of the donor...Enjoy the mystery and the surprise.

4th night: Gelt Giving and Gambling as well as Tzedakah – Here is an original idea: David and Sheila Wiener...give everyone cash (gelt) but they make each recipient an intriguing offer: “Whatever portion of your gift you wish to donate to a tzedakah of your choice will be matched (and maybe doubled or tripled) by us.” This applies to donations made by children as well as by the guests (up to a certain amount). Alternatively everyone can be asked to bring cash to be used in a tzedakah “gambling” game of dreidl or cards. The winner chooses the beneficiary of the funds.

5th night: Grab Bag – Ask everyone to buy one or two gifts that are each less than \$5 and wrap them without names...

6th night: “Quality Time” Gifts – Often after a wonderful holiday celebration we wonder why we don’t spend more time together with friends and relatives. So this Hanukkah give each other a promise of quality time spent together. Prepare a nice greeting card with homemade coupons or certificates that promise such things as a long distance call, a night at the movies, a game of Monopoly, a walk on the beach...

7th night: Edible Gifts and Canned Goods for the Homeless – Make it a night to bring something tasty whether it is homemade or not...But also bring canned goods that are easily transported to shelters for the hungry or make a donation to *Mazon*, the Jewish fund for the hungry of the world.

8th night: Give of Yourself: Coupons to be Redeemed Later – On this evening all gifts must involve a promise of some future service. For example, “I promise to give my mother an hour of housecleaning without complaint” or “to give my brother a home-cooked meal” or “to read my child a whole book” or “to teach my friend to play guitar.”

What is a miracle?

The power of a candle:
Consider the king who has
lost a gold coin or a pre-
cious pearl in his house.
May he not find it by the
light of a wick worth no
more than a penny? – Song
of Songs Raba 1:1

Some definitions of a miracle include:

Any amazing or wonderful occurrence.

A marvelous event manifesting a supernatural act of God.

Intervention by God in the universe.

An event in the natural world, but out of its established order.

Do you believe in miracles? Have you ever experienced a miracle in your life? What is the difference between a miracle and magic? Have you experienced moments that are magical or miraculous but not both?

The Temple Isaiah fourth graders get to hear our Religious school principal Ellen Goldberg share her and her husband Michael's amazing story about a lost menorah. Many would say it was a miracle!

Consider, perhaps, that there are miracles all around us. Consider the words of Rabbi Harold Schulweis who wrote, “Those, so readily bored, may find some light by turning within. Why am I bored? What fears block my engagement with the world? What anxieties dull my sensibilities? To find the world interesting lies at the heart of Judaism...to be a Jew of faith is to be anything but bored. To be a Jew is not to yawn away one's life, but to stand slack-jawed in amazement at the world of possibilities, and to rise with excitement toward its realization.”

Each a peach. Jump through a sprinkler. Watch the little particles of dust swirl into spinning galaxies in your breath, and know that God's fingerprint is there as well.

Hanukkah defends
our inalienable right to be
different. We have a right to be different.
I would add, however, that we do
not have a right to be *indifferent*.

The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord. ~ Proverbs 20:27



We Need Chanukah

Rabbi Robert T. Gan

We need Hanukkah these days. We learned from the time we were very little children about the beautiful, warm and bright glow that radiates from our hanukkiyot. We realized that, at the darkest time of the year, for eight days we added light to our homes and our lives. We read about the Maccabees, who lifted the veil of oppression from our people and rekindled hope with one small light.

We need Hanukkah these days because the darkness is creeping in, the darkness of incivility in the political process, the darkness of war, the darkness of religious intolerance, the darkness of terrorism and fear, the darkness of greed in the corporate world, the darkness of diminishing health care, the darkness of pensions lost.

We need Hanukkah these days to shed light on the darkness of increasing poverty, on the darkness of torture, the darkness of genocidal acts against the most helpless in Africa, the darkness of death from AIDS, from bullets, from bombs, from disease, from indifference, from the maldistribution of our resources.

We need Hanukkah these days. We need its light to shine on a planet with shrinking forests, melting ice caps, fouled air and fetid water. We need its light to illuminate the wounds we inflict upon the earth and upon one another.

We need Hanukkah these days. We need it to remind us that all is not lost. We need it to remind us that oppression can be defeated, that human suffering can be alleviated. We need Hanukkah's light to enlighten us, to remind us that a country afraid and locked up tight will extinguish the light of hope in the hearts of the tired and the poor, yearning to breathe free.

So light your lights when the night is dark. See the flame increase from night to night until the Hanukkiyah is ablaze with light.

We are the kindlers of light. We have the power to penetrate the darkness with will and strength and faith. With determination, conviction and courage we can diminish the darkness in the human heart, the darkness people visit upon one another, the darkness created by life's storms.

We need Hanukkah these days. We need it to see the wonder in our children's eyes. We need it to see that we have the power to change the world, to change lives.

We need Hanukkah these days. May it brighten our lives and our homes and dispel the darkness in stricken lives.

Blessed are you Adonai who has commanded us to light the Hanukkah lights.

This Hanukkah, join Jews around North America in 8 simple actions to help conserve energy, slow global climate change, and save you money!

Day 1: Replace an outdoor light fixture with one that has a motion-detector. Outdoor lights that are left on all night waste electricity, increase your energy bill, and add to night-time "light pollution." A fixture with a motion-detector will turn on only when needed. **Day 2:** Make a plan to decrease your car use. Automobiles emit greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂ and NO_x) and contribute to U.S. dependence on foreign oil. Examine your driving habits and see if you can tele-commute, walk, bike, take public transit, or combine errands to reduce the amount you drive. **Day 3:** Make your own Hanukkah gifts! Take a photo and design a frame for it, knit a scarf for the winter, or make a set of beeswax candles. Use recycled materials if you can. You can find lots of great books about homemade gifts in your local library. **Day 4:** Eat less meat and buy organic, locally grown foods. Large-scale meat production uses a huge amount of natural resources, particularly grain, topsoil, and water. Eating organic food is better for your health since it reduces your exposure to pesticides and antibiotics. Buying food grown close to home supports family farms and reduces the amount of energy used to prepare and transport food. **Day 5:** Give your furnace a tune-up. Forty percent of home energy use is for heat. An inefficient heating system can waste 30-50% of the energy it uses. Oil furnaces should be serviced annually and gas furnaces every two years. A heating technician can do the tune-up for \$50-100. **Day 6:** Save paper by sending environmentally-friendly Hanukkah e-cards. To create an e-card, visit care2.com. Or, if you're feeling artistic, make your own paper cards with recycled paper. **Day 7:** Wash a full load of clothes and use cold water for the rinse. Washing machines use 32-59 gallons of water per cycle, so waiting until you have a full load of clothes will save both water and energy. A warm water wash and a cold rinse will clean nearly all clothes well. **Day 8:** Question: What three things can you give, which once you give them, will give back to you at least as much and perhaps more of what you gave? Answer: Knowledge, light, and love. (from www.coejl.org)

Oil, Hanukkah and Us: What Happens on the Ninth Day?

The Hanukkah story tells of a tiny amount of oil that was sure to run out, and the miracle of it lasting 8 days. What would have happened on the 9th day? Recently, Steve Fox who leads “Steve Fox and Friends,” the jazz band that enhances our Shabbat services once a month, came to me as a member of the Temple’s Green Team and showed me a power point presentation on his computer. These are some of the facts it showed: It took 300,000,000 years for earth to form the oil we will pump out in about 240 years. We’ll pump it out 1/1,000,000 the time it took for earth to generate it. It was not until the industrial revolution and its development of the means of mass production and not until we had the fuel to power the industrial and transportation engines that the ever growing “we” on this earth embarked on an ever increasing spiral of consumption that threatens our planet’s sustainability.

We cannot merely wait for a miracle. We cannot convince ourselves that what little is left will miraculously expand, or that the damage we are doing to our environment by using oil will miraculously be repaired. The world is God’s sanctuary, and we are its stewards. Like the Maccabees, we must cleanse our sanctuary, purify it, and rededicate ourselves to its care.

Temple Action

Our Green Team is actively “greening” our temple. They initiated our recycling program. We are taking steps to convert our energy to renewable energy like wind power. We print our newsletter on recycled paper. The Green Team has been converting our light-bulbs, and most recently has been working to install a solar panel so that our *Ner Tamid*, our Eternal Lamp is solar power. This is a meaningful way to rededicate our synagogue, powering our holy light with clean, renewable energy so it emits nothing harmful, making it truly sacred and in harmony with the world God created. We are one of only a few congregations in North America to do this.

Please let the temple know if you would like to join the Green Team and/or receive their eco-newsletter online.

The following are excerpted from the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life’s website, www.Coejl.org. I am a board member of Coejlsc, and if you would like more information about getting involved, please talk with me.

Driven By Values - Clean Car Campaign

America burns 8 million barrels of oil every day just to fuel our cars, SUVs, and trucks. Where this oil comes from and where it goes are both major problems. Much of our oil comes from the Middle East – even from such nations as Iraq... Our dependence on imported oil also results in pressure to drill for oil in environmentally threatened places. Where does the oil go after it is burned? Into the atmosphere – where it is causing global warming and other air pollution problems. In fact, *every gallon of gas burned releases twenty pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere!*

Which Values Are at Stake?

Stewardship: Judaism calls on us to serve as responsible stewards of God’s creation. As Psalm 24 teaches us, “The Earth is the Eternal’s and all that is in it.” We are instructed “to till and to tend the garden” (Gen 2:15) in which we live. Global warming threatens to bring rising seas, weather and agricultural disruptions, floods, refugees, and migrating diseases which will most harm the planet’s poor and vulnerable. This is a clear violation of our stewardship responsibility.

Shalom – Peace is central to Judaism. And issues of war and peace are very much on our minds these days. The war on terrorism is inextricably intertwined with our dependence on oil from the Middle East. The fact that the United States now imports more than 50% of its oil, almost one quarter of which comes from the Persian Gulf and from regimes which have historically been autocratic, corrupt, or violent, imposes unnecessary limitations on our pursuit of peace and stability.

Tzedek – Justice is a fundamental Jewish obligation. We are commanded to “defend the poor and the orphan; do justice to the afflicted and the needy” (Ps 82:3) and consider the impact of our activities “for perpetual generations” (Gen 9:12). Yet the petroleum-fueled automobiles now being built and marketed will bring disastrous pollution to peoples of developing nations.

How You Can Help!

Choose an alternative to driving:

Next time you need to get to the grocery store or to work, ask yourself if you can get there by walking, bicycling, or taking public transportation.

Purchase with prudence:

When you find yourself in the market for a new automobile, remember that buying a car is a moral choice. Consider buying a fuel-efficient car that conserves energy and does the least damage to the environment.

Speak your mind - and heart:

If you are willing to do your part to reduce the harmful effects of global warming, shouldn't automakers and political leaders meet you half way?

It’s not just about vehicles, it’s about values.

OTHER BENEFITS OF REDUCING RELIANCE ON OIL

There are many benefits to reducing our use of oil in addition to increased security:

Reduce air pollution and save lives: Emissions from vehicles are a major source of air pollution. Smog, soot, and toxic chemicals from burning oil cause and exacerbate respiratory illnesses which harm and kill tens of thousands of Americans each year. **Save consumers money:** More fuel efficient vehicles save consumers money. Though some efficiency technologies, such as hybrid-electric motors, may increase the price of a vehicle, fuel savings will more than offset the increased costs over the life of the vehicle, sometimes by substantial margins, even while saving energy. **Address global climate change:** Burning oil is a leading source of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions which are causing global climate change - which has already begun to affect ecosystems around the world and threatens to cause great harm to people, particularly poor people, if left unchecked. **Protect fragile habitats and unique ecosystems:** Dependence on oil increases pressure to drill in environmentally sensitive areas that serve as critical habitat to endangered species and are unique ecological areas - such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, roadless areas in National Forests, and shorelines.

Recommended reading: **Out of Gas**, by Professor David Goodstein

0 Source of Light, by Your light we see light. ~ Psalm 36:10

Dreidl – How we Play

Children of all ages can play this game. Give each child an equal number of pennies, beans, etc. Each player puts one in the center before starting. Each one spins the dreidl then follows the directions: We like to play for healthy food too!

Hebrew letter *Nun* – Take nothing – (In Yiddish: *nicht* means ‘nothing’)

Hebrew letter *Gimmel* – Take all – (In Yiddish: *ganz* means ‘everything’)

Hebrew letter *Hay* – take half – (In Yiddish: *halb* means ‘half’)

Hebrew letter *Shin* – take nothing but put in the amount agreed upon at the beginning of the game – (In Yiddish: *shtell* means ‘put in’)

Instead of using pennies or beans, have questions or activities assigned to each letter. For example, when it lands on *Nun*, the player has to answer a trivia question. When it lands on *Gimmel*, the player has to share an unknown fact about him or herself. When it lands on *Hay*, the player has to ask someone a question, and when it lands on *Shin*, the player has to do a little dance, or a dare.



“In Israel, in order to be a realist, you have to believe in miracles.”

~ David Ben Gurion,
First Prime Minister of Israel

Dreidls in Israel

A dreidl is called a *sevivon* in Hebrew. Our dreidls have the letters *nun*, *gimmel*, *hey*, *shin*, which stand for: *nes gadol haya sham*, which means, “A great miracle happened there.” In Israel, the dreidls have the letters *nun*, *gimmel*, *hey*, *peh*, which stands for: *nes gadol haya po*, meaning, “A great miracle happened here.”



Dreidl – Why we Play

It is commonly taught that the reason we play dreidl on Hanukkah is because during the Assyrian oppression, Jews were not allowed to study Torah. The little spinning top was easy to carry around and Torah students could talk about Torah and pretend to be playing games of chance so that the guards wouldn’t suspect them of learning. It is said that men would keep a dreidl and gelt nearby to pretend to be playing a game whenever a soldier walked by. In that way, the dreidl is a symbol of safety, protecting lives and beliefs.

The dreidl seems like an insignificant little toy, but some load it with great meaning, saying it symbolizes the whole history of the Jewish people, with the four sides representing four oppressors, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome, all of which have fallen. The hand that spins the dreidl is symbolic of Divine influence.

The dreidl, being a game of change, also reminds us of the playfulness and unpredictability of life. You never know what life will deal you, so you must learn to make the best with the hand you got.

A silly aside: I love listening to my daughter sing: “Rock-a-bye baby in the treetop. When the wind blows the dreidl will rock...and down will come baby, dreidl and all!” It is just too cute to correct!

Answers to Hanukkah trivia on page 29: 1.B, 2.B, 3.C, 4.C, 5.B, 6.A, 7.C, 8.A, 9.C, 10.C, 11.A, 12.C, 13.B, 14.A, 15.C, 16.B, 17.B, 18.B, 19.A

Other Games and Activities for Families

- Pin the candle on the menorah, the sword in the Maccabee's hand, or the tail on the elephant (the 'tank' of the Assyrians.)
- Buy sheets of wax and wicks at a craft store and roll your own candles. It is very easy and fun.
- Hide gelt and little gifts and have a treasure hunt, or play "hot and cold."
- Have contests to see who can spin their dreidl the longest.
- Invite friends and your children's classmates over one night of Hanukkah and invite them each to bring their own menorah. It is very beautiful to light so many menorahs all at once. Maybe someone can bring their guitar or you could play Hanukkah music and eat latkes.
- Download Hanukkah coloring pages and mazes online
- Make Maccabee shields out of paper plates
- Use your children's favorite stuffed animals, dolls or toys and use them to make a puppet show behind the couch depicting the miracle of the oil
- Carve potatoes into stamps



Fun with Light

Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights. The Festival of *Lights*, y'all! So, do things that involve different kinds of light.

- Roast marshmallows in a fire pit in your backyard. Or over your stove.
- Serve hot chocolate in front of the crackling fireplace.
- Have a candlelit dinner.
- Have a treasure hunt for gelt in the dark using flashlights.
- Go to a place away from city lights, take a telescope, and stargaze.
- Catch fireflies.
- Sit around in a circle with family and/or friends, each with an unlit candle. The first person lights his/her candle and share a blessing that is in their life, then ignites the next person's candle until everyone's candle is lit and blessings are shared.
- Get a strobe light, turn up some rock and roll, and have a family dance party.
- Identify the different kinds of lights in your home... flashlights, nightlights, fish tank light, street light, smoke alarm light.
- Ask children to explain the difference between: The

sun is shining/Sarah is a sunshiny. The lamp is too bright/Jacob has bright ideas. The fireworks were brilliant/Your essay is brilliant. Candles light up the cave/Your smile lights up the room. The fire was radiant/The performance was radiant. Lighten the room/lighten the load/lighten up.

- What does it mean to be a "light unto the nations?"
- Look at the different candles in Judaism and talk about what each of them mean: The Hanukkah candles, the Shabbat candles, the braided Havdalla candles, and a Yahrzeit candle.
- How can you be a light in the world? How can a person be like a Shamash?
- Make shadow puppets. Use flashlights and a white sheet to make a shadow theater. Act out stories.
- Get glow in the dark stars for the ceiling.
- Have a party and give everyone glowsticks.
- Go to the aquarium and look at the phosphorescent jellyfish.
- Play red light/green light.
- Eat outside under paper lanterns.
- Light sparklers.
- Make a punched-tin lantern.
- Get in a spotlight and sing karaoke.
- Use prisms or the garden hose to make rainbows.
- Talk about why you think God in the Torah created light first? If you were a light, what kind of light would you be?

The Christmas Tree and the Jewish Home

Congregants have often expressed the sentiment to me that Christmas has become a national, even secular holiday, and therefore it is alright to have a Christmas tree in a Jewish home. Behind this sentiment is also a fear, not only that the children will be “left out” of the gala celebrations around them, but that the adults too might feel “left out.” It is the same feeling that non-Jewish boys and girls often have when their Jewish friends are going through bar/bat mitzvah, which has resulted in a whole new market for non-Jews to have what they call “faux mitzvahs.” They argue that since bar/bat mitzvah has lost its sacredness and is all about the party, why can’t we have it too. That reasoning is insulting to the many for whom the sacredness is actually central.

Dr. Max Nussbaum wrote, “There are personal, Jewish, American and universal holidays which a Jew can legitimately celebrate; and there are others, basically Christian or Moslem holidays, which belong to the sacred repository of other religions and have, therefore, to be left alone by the conscientious Jew.”

Dr. Nussbaum goes on to say that there is a simple criterion to test whether a holiday should be embraced by a Jewish family, and that is whether you would feel comfortable if that holiday was embraced by the synagogue. I think it is a good criteria. The Shabbat of Fourth of July we often sing, “America the Beautiful” as our closing song, and it does not feel inappropriate. My son who is in Jewish day school at a Temple learned all about pilgrims and native Americans and then had a Thanksgiving party, and it was wonderful. We do special programming around Martin Luther King Day, Labor Day, Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day. All of these are appropriate in an American synagogue because they are born of the shared historical experience of our country and speak of universal truths.

But how would you feel if there was a Christmas tree on the *bema* in the sanctuary? Or in our Temple lobby? Or if we sang “Deck the Halls” as our closing song at services? A Jewish home is no less sacred than a synagogue, in fact many consider the dining room table in a Jewish home to be as the holy altar when the temple existed. It is where Shabbat meals are served, words of Torah shared, and stories passed on. Therefore, it is what we call a *mishkan me’at*, a little sanctuary.

Rabbi Henry E. Kagan wrote on the subject: “Christmas is not the 4th of July or any other secular American holiday and it would be an insult to my Christian friends to regard it as anything but what it is – *the most important Christian Holy Day*. Since it celebrates the birth of the Christian world’s Messiah and since Jews do not accept Jesus as Messiah, Christmas cannot come within the area of Jewish celebration.”

Congregants will often tell me that the Christmas tree itself is originally a pagan tradition, and not really Christian. To be perfectly honest, the same can be said of almost all of our traditions, Jewish as well as Christian. Hanukkah, Christmas and the newer Kwanzaa all have their roots in Winter Solstice. The shaking of the lulav on Sukkot is reminiscent of rain dances. For devout Christians, the tree represents the miraculous blossoming of the forests at Christmastime. The triangular shape of evergreens represents the Trinity, according to Saint Boniface. The holly wreath represents the crown of thorns Jesus wore, with the red holly berries representing drops of blood. Eight days after the celebration of Jesus’ birth is the celebration of his entering the covenant through circumcision, which we call New Year’s.

I think it is important to explore as a family why there is the jealousy of neighbors having trees, and the desire to emulate them. Of course, Christmas can be beautiful. The neighbor’s crèche sparkles and their trim dazzles with electric icicles. It is beautiful, entrancing and fun. It is a very seductive holiday, and you cannot escape its joy. Suddenly there are sleigh bells on your favorite radio stations, all the store windows are sprayed with fake frost, and Old Navy scarves are on sale. It is not wrong to want to participate. It is not wrong to join neighbors when you’re invited to help trim their

tree. My family enjoys that a lot. It is also not wrong for children to see a line of excited children and lots of lights and mechanical reindeer, and to beg and tug your sleeve because they *too* want to get on that line to meet the funny guy in a red suit.

But what *is* troubling is the desire to bring it all into your own home, and it is important to explore where that comes from. I would suggest that perhaps it comes from a dissatisfaction with how the Jewish holidays are embraced in a home. For example, if a family spends a lot of fun time together making paper chains and stringing cranberries and popcorn to decorate their Sukkah, and then sits in it for dinners throughout the week, inviting friends, dancing under flickering lanterns, Christmas trees are not as seductive. We invite our Christian neighbors to our house for Sukkot, Passover and for our children's *upsherens* (traditional first haircut), and we in turn have joined them for tree-trimming and their children's baptisms. Each of us share in each others celebrations in the spirit of neighborliness and friendship, but my husband and I don't sprinkle water on our children, and our neighbors don't eat matzah at home.

It is interesting to note that the struggle many Jews feel with the beckoning brilliance of Christmas all around is similar to the struggle the Jews under Syrian rule in the Maccabee's age felt, as they were being wooed by this new religion, complete with laurel wreaths, Olympics, philosophy and art. The difference, however, is that the Jews of that age were punished with death for not worshiping the grand and powerful Zeus, whereas we are not punished at all. In the age when celebrating Jewish holidays was suddenly forbidden, they suddenly became so precious to the people that many were willing to die to preserve them. Hannukah commemorates the Maccabean resistance against Hellenistic civilization. We celebrate the heroes of monotheism, which does not seem congruous with celebrating another religion's festivities.

One of the biggest problems facing Jewish families today, I believe, is that the Jewish holidays are perceived as *difficult* to celebrate at home. I think this is the root of why so many Jewish families struggle with wanting to bring in Christmas trees. It is fun, but more importantly, it is *easy*. But I want to emphasize, that the Jewish holidays which are your heritage can be light, easy and magical as well. On Rosh Hashanah, the birthday of the world, it is fun, easy and magical to bake a cake and sing happy birthday to the world, with streamers and noise-makers. The holidays do not have to be heavy or burdensome. They can be playful and wondrous. On Purim, we wear costumes at temple, but there are things one can do at home too. It is traditional to make little baskets of goodies and bring them to neighbors and friends, kind of like a reverse-Halloween. I loved last Purim when a little girl dropped by with a homemade brownie from a still-warm tray she had baked with her mother. Of course on Passover there are so many ways to turn the *seder* into a loving and cherished experience for all ages. And every single week in the Jewish calendar is punctuated with Shabbat. Lighting candles...Begin Shabbat dinner with simply asking everyone around the table to share something special about the week that has past. Every Shabbat our children know we have different clothes, there will be a nice lunch usually with guests and friends to play with, there will be singing, story-telling, long walks and hopefully naps, and it all ends with a very simple ceremony of *havdalah*, with spices, a braided candle and grape juice. The children grab instruments from the instrument box, tambourines, maracas, bells or drums, and we sing a few songs and each share what we hope for the coming week. When the Jewish holidays are embraced as a family, children and adults are less likely to feel 'left-out' when other religion's holidays come around, and more likely to recognize the beauty of being part of a sacred community, for all people.

Hanukkah has ample opportunity for joy and magic, and I hope this collection will help your family find new and old ways to celebrate our Festival of Lights.

The Christmas Tree and the Interfaith Home

The Christmas tree question is not so clear cut in a family where one parent is Christian. Christmas for people who grew up putting out cookies for Santa and waking to find only a few crumbs left, and stockings filled with glorious goodies is a very big sacrifice to give up. The season is filled with so much nostalgia, warmth and love, and it is difficult not to share that with one's own children.

In Rabbi Eric Yoffie's address to the Houston Biennial this past month, he said to the five thousand Reform Jews gathered there: "It sometimes happens that when an identifying Jew marries an identifying Christian, the couple will bring both religions into the family. They tell themselves that 'if one religion is good, then two religions are better.' But what this does is cause confusion for a child, who recognizes at a very young age that he cannot be 'both,' and that he is being asked to choose between Mommy's religion and Daddy's religion. Virtually all psychological experts agree that interfaith couples should choose a single religious identification for their children. And the great majority of children in this situation report growing up lacking any sense of belonging. Nonetheless, some parents, desperate to avoid conflict with each other, insist on passing the conflict on to their children by asking them to decide for themselves."



That being said, the decision to raise a child in a religion other than the one you were raised in is often a difficult and emotional decision. In terms of Christmas, there are some things that I have seen Interfaith families do with success. Many families will go to their Christian grandparents' Christmas celebration instead of bringing into their own home. Others will

have a tree and perhaps some decorations in their home, but in both cases I have found that the students I work with who are children of Interfaith families who have the healthiest sense of themselves are very clear about who they are, and it is reflected very maturely in their language. Students will say to me, "We are joining my mother in *her* celebration of Christmas," or "We are joining my grandparents in their celebration of Christmas," instead of, "We are celebrating Christmas." These children display enormous respect and love to their non-Jewish parent while also having clarity about the faith in which they are being educated and raised.

In Rabbi Eric Yoffie's address he also praised those non-Jewish spouses with these profound words: "When a spouse involves herself in the activities of the synagogue; offers support to the Jewish involvements of husband or wife; attends Jewish worship; and, most important of all, commits to raising Jewish children, he or she is deserving not only of welcome but of our profound thanks. These spouses are heroes—yes, heroes—of Jewish life. While maintaining some measure of attachment to their own traditions, and sometimes continuing to practice their religion, they take on responsibilities that, by any reasonable calculation, belong to the Jewish spouse. And very often they do all of this without recognition from either their Jewish family or their synagogue."

Rabbi Janet Marder wrote this blessing for non-Jewish spouses who raise their children Jewish as well: "You are the moms and dads who drive the Hebrew school carpool and bring the refreshments to Shabbaton. You help explain to your kids why it's important to get up on Sunday morning and to learn to be a Jew. You take classes and read Jewish books to deepen your own understanding, so you can help to make a Jewish home. You learn to make kugel and latkes; you try to like gefilte fish; you learn to put on a Seder; you learn to put up a Sukkah. You join your spouse at the Shabbat table – maybe you even set that Shabbat table and make it beautiful. You come to services, even when it feels strange and confusing at first. You hum

along to those Hebrew songs, and some of you even learn to read that difficult language. You stand on the *bima* and pass the Torah to your children on the day of their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, and tell them how proud you are and how much you love them, and how glad you are to see them grow into young Jewish men and women. We know that some of you have paid a significant price for the generous decision you made to raise Jewish children. You have made a painful sacrifice, giving up the joy of sharing your own spiritual beliefs and passing your own religious traditions down to your kids. I hope your children and your spouse tell you often how wonderful you are, and that *their* love and gratitude, and *our* love and gratitude, will be some compensation, and will bring you joy...May God bless you; may God keep you; May the light of the Holy One shine on you; And may God grant you the precious gift of peace.”

You can go to <http://urj.org/outreach/honoring/> and find other sermons, blessings and writings, including a wonderful essay entitled, “My Experience as a Jewish Father and a Christian Man,” for more information and ideas.

One of my colleagues always talks about “Interfaith with Integrity.” If you are an Interfaith family trying to figure out how to handle the “December Dilemma,” try to keep in mind that the holidays, whether it be Christmas or Hanukkah, are about creating sacred moments with family and/or community. Make sure that the common thread in all you do includes respect for one another, charity toward others, and integrity before God.

Poetry for Hanukkah — unknown author

For the first night:

The first of all the little candles
Helps us call to mind
That there is one God in the universe
Who loves all humankind.

For the second night:

The second little candle
Is a good reminder, too:
We think of the commandments
That God wrote on tablets two.

For the third night:

Three lights now shine and each of
them
Inspires us with great awe:
They’re pillars of our faith;
Good deeds, prayer and law.

For the fourth night:

And now four candles lighted are;
What shall we say they’re for?
Why, they’re the seasons of the year
We study Jewish lore.

For the fifth night:

Five little lights are burning bright,
And in their flame one sees
The five great Books of Moses
And five brave Maccabess.

For the sixth night:

The little lights, so bright and gay,
Now number six, and they
Remind us of the days of each week
We spend at work and play.

For the seventh night:

And now the seventh candle wick
Is kindled and then blessed,
To teach us that the seventh day
Was made for prayer and rest.

For the eighth day

We kindle now the eighth and last,
And with it we are done;
For there are only eight days
To this feast of light and fun.



A Letter from a Jewish Convert to Her Christian Mother
The Reconstructionist, December 28, 1951

My Dear Mother: Last summer before I took the final steps to be converted to Judaism, how earnestly we tried to reassure each other that the problems of different religions, which so often confound and dismay, surely could not build barriers between a mother and a daughter who love each other dearly. But at the same time we agreed that there would arise many questions which would seem difficult to solve. And now we come for the first time to the question of Christmas.

It seems that a quest for the real and deep meanings of life can sometimes involve people who love each other in very poignant situations; but perhaps a test of the loving is in the grace with which these situations can be met. To feel that I am hurting you hurts me more than you could know and that is why I want to write this letter to try to tell you how I feel about not having Christmas for the children.

I know you think I am being extreme and even stubborn about Christmas. The other day you said that Christmas does not even seem like a religious holiday and it occurred to me that as a Christian I would have said the same thing – which is a very sad commentary upon the way that we have been Christians for a long time. Actually, Christmas is the most profoundly religious day in the whole Christian calendar, the moment for the deepest avowals of faith and belief...

To be Jews all year except at Christmas time is the sort of a compromise of which I would not be proud; it is the sort of action that would symbolically nullify the meanings of both Judaism and Christianity. I know what you are thinking – that children understand nothing of meanings so how could it be serving any good purpose to deny them the happiness that Christmas brings?

It is of their happiness that I am thinking – not a momentary or a seasonal happiness but the kind that is built into a life...

I do hope that the season of Christmas and Chanukah can be a truly joyous one for all of us in which we can share without restraint the beauties that are implicit in both of these religious holidays, each of which was conceived as a part of the human avowal of God.

Your loving daughter,
 Deborah



Christmas is a kind of checking point where one can stop and view oneself on the assimilation route. – Anne Roiphe

Excerpt from a letter from a Christian neighbor to a Jewish friend:

I ask myself what meaning the tree has for you. It cannot be a Christian religious symbol, since you have told me often that as a Jew you do not accept Christ. For you, it must then be no more than a pretty decoration. How can I help feeling resentful when you take my sacred religious symbol and make it a mere decoration?



In our town, Hanukkah is no longer a Jewish holiday; it's a major competitive winter sport. – Grace Goldin suburban parent 1950

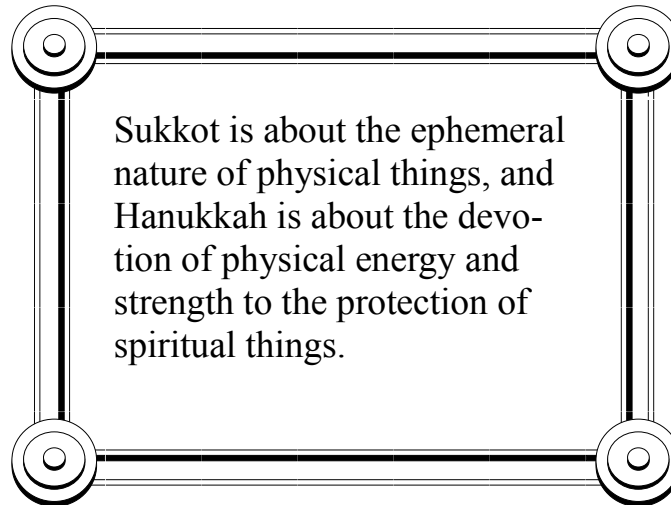


Hanukkah and Sukkot

The connection between Hanukkah and Sukkot goes beyond Hanukkah being “Sukkot in Winter.” The central message of Sukkot is the ephemeral nature of physical things. We gather for meals in booths with a palm frond roof. It would be a sorry shelter in a storm. In contrast with the sukkah being such a rickety house, Hanukkah is about the triumphant return to the House. The Temple with its high stone walls, deep chambers and grand courtyards sitting on its mountaintop once again became the House of Adonai instead of the House of Zeus.



But even this fortress, which had fallen once before would fall once again. When we call Hanukkah “Sukkot in Winter,” we aren’t just remembering that the Maccabees and their followers had missed celebrating Sukkot. We are reminding ourselves that no structure we build around ourselves is infallible, whether is be of huge limestone blocks or palm fronds and sticks. There is always a bigger, badder wolf that can blow it down. But that does not mean we should be afraid. It is to remind us that when we build our houses in space, we are vulnerable to change, but when we build our palaces in time, we weather Eternity.



The New Colossus — Emma Lazarus, on the base of the Statue of Liberty

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
 With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
 Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
 A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
 Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
 Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
 Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
 The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
 “Keep, ancient lands, your stories pomp!” Cries she
 With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
 Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
 Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

How is the statue of Liberty like a Shamah? How is the message of The New Colossus similar to the themes of Hanukkah? In what ways do you think we are not fulfilling the words of this poem? In what ways do you think we are?

When we place our menorah in the window, it is like we are lifting our lamps beside the golden door.



Hanukkah and Purim: “Minor Holidays”

The three Pilgrimage holidays in Judaism are Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot. These are the holidays that until the Babylonian exile, Jews would gather at the Temple in Jerusalem for celebration, as commanded in the Torah. Hanukkah is not mentioned in the Torah. It is a post-Biblical holiday, like Purim, and considered of secondary importance. Because they are not found in the Torah, Hanukkah and Purim are called “Rabbinic Holidays.” Hanukkah has gained popularity and significance not only because it falls during our “gift-giving” season, but the establishment of the state of Israel and subsequent struggles parallel many of the religious and military themes of the Maccabees’ story.

Hanukkah and Purim share a number of similarities. They both commemorate human victories over an anti-Semitic oppressor, where the Jews overcame forces against great odds. They speak of the power of our own actions, and the success of the few over the many. They also have women as central champions of the cause. On Purim, we read the story of Esther, and on Hanukkah, many of us remember the story of Judith. Both women became close with leaders. Esther, of course, became Ahashuerus’ new queen and was able to influence his decree over a banquet, using her feminine wiles. Judith wins the affection of Holofernes, the commander in chief of the Syrian army, and well, uh, kills him in a most gruesome way.

In some communities of Spanish origin the seventh night of Hanukkah is dedicated to women. They are honored for their bravery during the Maccabean war. North African Jewish women and girls fill the synagogue at Hanukkah. As a rule [in Orthodox synagogues], women may not remove the holy scrolls from the ark, where they are kept. This is only for men to do. But on the seventh day of Hanukkah an exception is made. Women may remove the scrolls and kiss them. The rabbi then blesses the women. – *Light Another Candle: The Story and Meaning of Hanukkah* p. 69

JUDITH
JUDITH

(Not for the Faint of Heart!)

The Book of Judith dates from Second Temple times and is included in the Septuagint (the oldest version of the ‘Old Testament’), and in the canons of the Catholic and Greek churches in the Bible, but is excluded from the Jewish canon, just as the two Books of the Maccabees are excluded. They, along with many other books that are not canonized are called the “Apocrypha.”

The story tells of the Jews living under the cruel dictatorship of King Nebuchadnezzar of the Assyrians. Holofernes was chief commander of his armies. Judith was a Jewish widow who had heard of the impending attack, and knew that her countrymen had lost hope. Many were planning to surrender. You will notice when you read excerpts below from her story how different she is from Esther. Esther enters into the palace of the non-Jewish King and hides her Jewishness from everyone. Judith does not hide her Jewishness at all, in fact, she even packs her own dishes to keep kosher! The following excerpt takes place after the period of mourning her husband has ended:

She laid aside the sackcloth which she had put on, and divested herself of her widow’s garb, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with costly ointment, and vamped up the hair of her head, and put upon it a tiara, and clad herself in her gayest attire, with which she had been wont to be garbed in the days while Manasseh her husband was alive, and she took sandals for her feet, and put on anklets and bracelets and rings and her earrings and all her finery, and adorned

herself gaily so as to beguile the eyes of as many as should behold her. And she gave her maid a leathern bottle of wine and a cruse of oil, and filled a pouch with barley and a cake of figs and loaves of fine bread, and she carefully wrapped all her dishes and put them upon her...

And they went straight on in the vale, and an outpost of the Assyrians met her. And they arrested her and demanded: "Of what folk art thou, and whence hast thou come and whither dost thou go?" And she said: "A daughter of the Hebrews am I, and am fleeing from them because they are about to be given to you for fodder. And I am on my way to the presence of Holofernes, the chief captain of your army, to tell to him words of truth, and I will show him a way whereby he shall go and master all the hill country, and there shall not be lost of his men one person or one life." When the men heard her words and remarked her face, her beauty was in their eyes exceedingly great, they said to her, "Thou hast saved thy life by hastening to come down to the presence of our lord. And now draw nigh to his tent, and some of us will accompany thee until they deliver thee into his hands..."

Some time later...

And Judith came in and reclined, and the heart of Holofernes was delighted to ecstasy at her, and his soul reeled, and he was exceedingly eager to lie with her; and he had been biding his time to deceive her from the day when he had first seen her. Holofernes said to her: "Drink, I pray thee, and make merry with us.: And Judith said, "Indeed, yes, my lord, I will drink, because my life hath been exalted today to a height beyond that of all the days since my birth." And taking, she ate and drank before him what her maid had prepared. And Holofernes was enraptured with her and drank exceeding much wine, more than he had ever drunk in one day since he was born.

But when the hour had become late, his slaves made haste to withdraw...and Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes was prone on his bed, for he was fair swimming in wine... And taking her stand by his bed, Judith said in her heart, "God of all power, look down with favor in this hour upon the works of my hand for the exaltation of Jerusalem; because now is the time to come to the aid of Thine inheritance and to carry out my designs for the shattering of the enemies who have risen up against us." And going to the bedpost which was at Holofernes' head, she took down from it his sword, and nearing the bed she seized hold of the hair of his head and said, "Give me the strength this day, God of Israel." And with all her might she smote him twice in the neck and took his head from him. And she rolled his body from the couch and took the canopy from the poles, and a moment later she went out and gave Holofernes' head to her maid, and she put it in her pouch. And the two went forth together...

When they arrived in the gates of her Jewish countrymen, she drew the head out of the pouch and proclaimed:

Behold the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the army of Assyria, and behold, the canopy under which he lay in his drunken stupor. And God smote him down by the hand of a female...

HANNAH

(Really Not for the Faint of Heart!)

Seriously, dear congregant, I am really warning you. This is a gruesome bloody story, worse by far than the rest, so maybe you shouldn't read it...The story of Hannah can be found in the Book of II Maccabees, chapter seven.

It happened also that seven brothers, with their mother, were arrested and tortured with whips and scorpions by the king, to compel them to partake of eating pork, forbidden by the Law. One of them made himself their spokesman, and said: "What do you intend to ask and to learn from us? It is certain that we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our fathers."

The king in his rage ordered that pans and caldrons be heated red hot. They were heated at once, and he ordered that the tongue of the spokesman should be cut out, that they should scalp him in the Scythian manner and cut off his extremities, while the rest of his brothers and his mother were looking on. When he had been reduced to a completely useless hulk, he ordered them to bring him, while he was still breathing, to the fire, and to fry him in the pan. As the vapor from the pan grew more dense, the children with their mother encouraged each other to die nobly, saying:

"The Lord God is watching, and in very truth will have compassion on us..."

When the first one had died in this way, they brought the second to be mocked. Then they tore off his scalp with the hair and asked him: "Will you eat the pork, or else have your body dismembered limb from limb?"

He however replied in the mother tongue, and said: "Never."

For this reason he too underwent the same order of torture. But with his last breath, he said, "You accursed wretch, you may release us from our present existence, but the King of the universe will raise us up to everlasting life because we have died for His laws..."

And thus each of the sons were murdered until there was one son left. The King offered the last son not only to spare his life if he ate the pork, but also that he would make him very rich if he would abandon Judaism. Finally the King brought the mother to speak with her last son, hoping she would convince him to eat the stuff, for Pete's sake! The mother said:

"My son, have pity on me, who carried you in my womb for nine months. For three years I nursed you, reared you, brought you to this stage of your life, and sustained you. I beg of you, my child, to look up to heaven and earth and see all that is therein, and know that god did not make them out of things that were already in existence. In the same manner, the human race came into being. Do not be afraid of this executioner, but show yourself worthy of your brothers. Accept death, that in God's mercy I may receive you back again along with your brothers..."

Finally after her sons, the mother also died.

The Victory of the Spirit – by Louis D. Brandeis

Hanukkah, the Feast of the Maccabees, celebrates a victory – not a military victory only, but a victory also of the spirit over things material. Not a victory only of external enemies – the Greeks; but a victory of the many over the ease-loving, safety-playing, privileged, powerful few, who in their pliancy would have betrayed the best interests of the people, a victory of democracy over aristocracy.

As part of the eternal world-wide struggle for democracy, the struggle of the Maccabees is of eternal world-wide interest. It is a struggle of the Jews of today as well of those of two thousand years ago. It is a struggle in which all Americans, non-Jews as well as Jews, should be vitally interested because they are vitally affected.

The Maccabees' victory proved that the Jews – then already an old people – possessed the secret of eternal youth; the ability to rejuvenate itself through courage, hope, enthusiasm, devotion, and self-sacrifice of the common people. This will bring a Jewish Renaissance.

The Hanukkah Lights - A Story by Sadie Rose Weilerstein

Everybody loved the Hanukkah lights. Daddy loved them. He said a blessing, a "Thank you God for the..." and Mother and Daniel said, "Amen." The Shamash candle - you know, the candle Daddy lights the other candles with - it loved the Hanukkah lights, too. It kissed them with its flame. It sang to them:

Rise on tip toe,
Lift you light
Up and up and up!
Flicker, flicker,
Shine and shine,
It's Hanukkah tonight.



Mother sang songs about the Hanukkah lights. Baby Judith clapped her hands to show she loved them too. Even the wind loved the shining little flames. It crept through a crack in the window. It called to each of them.

Sway and dance,
Dance, little light;
Up and up and up!
Whirl and flicker,
Flicker and whirl;
It's Hanukkah tonight.

And the lights rose on tiptoe and swayed and danced.

Once a light laughed too, a tiny sputtery laugh. It laughed until it cried. Big wax tears slid down its cheek, and Daniel cried, "Quick, Daddy! Shut the window tight, or the candle will cry itself away." Then Daniel, too, sang a little song to the lights. He made it up out of his own head, but Mother and Daddy helped.

Hanukkah light, we love you so,
Do be careful, or out you'll go.
Slow and steady,
Steady and slow!
We're not ready to let you go.
Tomorrow I'll sit and watch your brother,
And next to him there'll be another
Then there'll be three, four five six seven,
I wish that there might be eleven;
Last, eight bright candles in a row.
Hanukkah lights, I love you so.



Children's Hanukkah Book Reviews!

Below are some of our favorite Hanukkah books.

Latkes, Latkes Good to Eat: A Chanukah Story by Naomi Howland reads like a classic fairy tale. A girl does a kind deed for an old woman, who gives her a magic pan that will fry up latkes. Her brothers overhear the secret words that will start the pan cooking, but not those that will stop. The writing is luscious and the pictures folksy and beautiful. Ages 5-8.

Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins by Eric A. Kimmel and illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman is a story of holiday-hating, hill-dwelling hobgoblins to ruin Hanukkah. But they didn't count on clever as Hershel of Ostropol showing up. This fabulously creative adaptation of the ancient Hanukkah story in which the Syrians forbade the Jews to worship as they wanted, keeps the spirit of the original while adding a spine-tingling twist. Winner of many awards, this book is warm, humorous and captivating for young and old. Ages 4-8

When Mindy Saved Hanukkah by Eric Kimmel, illustrated by Barbara McClintock is about little tiny people, no bigger than mice, who live behind the walls of the famous Eldridge Street Synagogue in New York City at the turn of the century. On the day before Hanukkah, Papa ventures out to "borrow" a candle from the synagogue so it can be melted down into tiny candles for the family's miniature menorah. But the synagogue's new cat is a huge and frightening problem. This is a remarkably rich book with many references to other holidays as well. For example, when young Mindy volunteers to save Hanukkah she climbs a *lulav* (a palm branch left over from Sukkot) in order to find the candles.

The Christmas Menorahs: How a Town Fought Hate by Janice Cohn, DSW, illustrated by Bill Farnsworth tells the true story of the Schnitzer family in Billings, Montana who in 1993 had a rock thrown through their son Isaac's bedroom window during Hanukkah. His Christian friend, Teresa Hanley, decided to do something brave so the Schnitzers could celebrate without fear. She and all the Christian families in their town put pictures of menorahs in their windows with messages of love and support to Isaac. It is a beautiful book, richly illustrated, which tells the Hanukkah story in caring detail along with the wonderful tale of a town that fought hate with love.

There are many more wonderful Hanukkah stories for you to share with your families during the candles' flickering this year. Enjoy!



In the Sanctuary we have the Eternal Light...

...in the Self we have the Internal Light.

Hanukkah Trivia (answers on page 16)

1. The evil King in the Hanukkah story was:
 - A. Ivan the Terrible
 - B. Antiochus
 - C. Antipasta
2. Antiochus was the King of:
 - A. Iran
 - B. Syria
 - C. Russia
3. Antiochus made everyone worship the god
 - A. Thor
 - B. Elvis
 - C. Zeus
4. Antiochus made the Jews sacrifice non-kosher animals on the altar. Which one of the following animals is not kosher?
 - A. Turkey
 - B. Whitefish
 - C. Eagle
5. Why isn't the eagle a kosher animal?
 - A. Because it is endangered
 - B. Because it is a predator bird
 - C. Because it is the national bird of the United States
6. The name "Maccabee" means:
 - A. Hammer
 - B. Rock
 - C. Bunt Cake
7. The father of the Maccabees was named:
 - A. Jeremiah
 - B. Solomon
 - C. Mattathias
8. How many sons did Mattathias have?
 - A. 5
 - B. 12
 - C. 3
9. The five Maccabee brothers were named Eliezer, Simon, Jonathan, John and:
 - A. Jason
 - B. Joshua
 - C. Judah
10. The word 'Hanukkah' means:
 - A. Candle
 - B. Victory
 - C. Dedication
11. One of the laws of Hanukkah is to put the lit menorah:
 - A. In the window
 - B. On the kitchen table
 - C. In a public square
12. Why are we commanded to do this?
 - A. To prevent a fire
 - B. Because the reflection is pretty
 - C. To remind everyone who passes by of a great miracle
13. What do the four letters of the dreidl stand for?
 - A. Ding dong the witch is dead
 - B. A great miracle happened there
 - C. Let's open presents
14. Fill in the blank words of the prophet Zechariah: Not by might, not by power, but by _____ alone shall we all live in peace!
 - A. Spirit
 - B. Weapons
 - C. Love
15. There is another Hanukkah story about a brave woman who crosses over the Syrian encampment and manages to trick the commander chief and chop off his head. Her name was:
 - A. Betty
 - B. Bat-Sheva
 - C. Judith
16. Beside potato pancakes, a popular food to have on Hanukkah is:
 - A. Gefilte Fish
 - B. Jelly Donuts
 - C. Fruit Cake
17. You win all of the gelt in the pot if your dreidl lands on:
 - A. Hey
 - B. Gimmel
 - C. Shin
18. The candle that lights all of the other candles is called the:
 - A. Shemesh
 - B. Shammash
 - C. Shooshan
19. All of the candles on the Menorah have to be:
 - A. The same height
 - B. The color white
 - C. Dripless



(Adult supervision in the kitchen necessary.)

Potato latkes

- 4 large potatoes
- 1 teaspoon grated onion
- 1 egg
- 2 heaping tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- dash pepper
- 1 teaspoon baking powder

Grate potatoes on fine grater; pour off a little of the water; add onion, egg and remaining ingredients. Drop by spoonfuls onto hot, well greased frying pan. Fry until crisp and brown on each side. Serve with sour cream, strawberry jam, apple sause, or cinnamon and sugar.

Corn Latkes

- 1 can cream style corn
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 heaping tablespoons flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt

Mix all ingredients together. Drop by spoonfuls on hot, well greased frying pan. Brown on both sides and serve hot. May be served with maple syrup.

Latke Batter

Mix and sift 1 1/3 cups of flour, two teaspoons of baking powder, ¼ teaspoon of salt, and add 2/3 cup of milk or water gradually, and one egg, well-beaten. For fruit batter add a little sugar, for vegetables, pepper and salt.

Apple Latkes

Choose four sour apples; pare, cure and cut them into small slices. Stir into latke batter and fry in boiling hot fat or oil. Drain on paper; sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

Pineapple Latkes

Soak slices of pineapple in sherry or white wine with a little sugar, and let stand one hour, drain and dip slices in batter and fry in hot oil. Drain on brown paper and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Orange Latkes

Yolks of two eggs beaten with two spoons of sugar, stir into this the juice of ¼ of a lemon and just enough flour to thicken like a batter; add the beaten whites and dip in 1 slice of orange at a time, take up with a large kitchen spoon and lay in the hot oil or butter substitute and fry a nice brown. Sprinkle with sugar on top.

Sephardic Jews (Jews from Spain and Portugal) don't make latkes because they did not have potatoes in Spain until the sixteenth century, almost 100 years after the Jews had left Spain and Portugal because of the Inquisition. – From *Chocolate Chip Challah and Other Twists on the Jewish Holiday Table*, p.58

I like shredded zucchini in my potato latkes, and my colleague Rabbi Mark Lipson's wife made cottage cheese latkes which he says are amazing...what kind do you make?

Jelly Doughnuts

Jelly doughnuts are called *sufganiyot* in Hebrew. This recipe is a lot of work, but a lot of great fun with little children. And the results are SO yummy. Yields 18-24 doughnuts.

1 ounce fresh yeast
 ½ cup lukewarm nondairy creamer
 ½ cup flour
 pinch of salt
 ½ cup margarine
 3 egg yolks
 1 ½ tbl spoons sugar
 ½ cup lukewarm nondairy creamer
 2 ¾ cups flour

Filling:

Jam
 1 pound solid shortening
 ½ cup confectioners' sugar



In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in ½ cup lukewarm nondairy creamer. Pour ½ cup flour in a large bowl. Make a well in the flour and pour in dissolved yeast and a pinch of salt; mix well. Cover bowl with a towel and let stand in a warm place until sponge is double in bulk, about 1 hour.

While dough is rising, melt margarine in top of double boiler over boiling water. Remove from flame and pour margarine into a large bowl and allow to cool 15 to 20 minutes. When cool, add egg yolks one at a time and mix. Add sponge to egg yolk mixture and beat well for 10 to 15 minutes.

Add sugar and ½ cup of lukewarm nondairy creamer, stirring continuously. When completely mixed, add 2 ½ cups flour a little at a time, continuing to stir mixture. Once all the flour has been added, continue kneading until dough detaches from sides of the bowl. Cover bowl with a towel and let rise in a warm place until double in bulk, about 1 ½ hours.

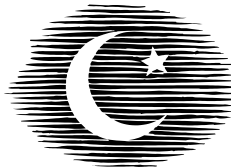
Sprinkle remaining ¼ cup of flour over board and place dough on it. Gently roll out with a rolling pin to ¼ inch thickness. With 2 inch cookie cutter cut out twenty-eight circles.

On fourteen circles, place one teaspoon of jam. Moisten edges with finger dipped in a glass of water. Cover pastry with remaining fourteen circles. Press edges together tightly. Cover doughnuts and let rise one hour.

In a 4-quart pot, melt 1 pound solid shortening. Deep-fry each doughnut ½ minute on each side. Remove with slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Once cool, sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

Healthy Stuff

Try making Maccabee Mushroom Burgers, or 'spinach balls' which are rolled spinach, parmesan cheese, breadcrumbs and eggs...things that will make little warriors strong like Judah Maccabee.



Hanukkah and the Moon

Some scholars note that we eat primarily round foods on Hanukkah, including latkes, jelly doughnuts and gelt. Some suggest that this is because Hanukkah has no full moon and the nights are so dark and long, people were praying the moon would come back.

Hanukkah and Tisha B'Av: Harmony

During the darkest season of the year we have our brightest festival on the calendar, the Festival of Lights. During our brightest season of the year, during the long dazzling days of summer, we have our darkest and most somber holy day, *Tisha B'Av*, the Ninth of Av, which generally falls in August. Tisha B'Av commemorates and mourns the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem, which occurred on the same dark date in the years 586 BCE and 70 CE. It is the saddest day of the year. Much like the Yin-Yang symbol which depicts a speck of bright in the darkest dark, and a speck of dark in the brightest bright balancing one another, our calendar harmonizes with itself.

Tisha B'Av is devoted to remembering the destruction of the Temples, while Hanukkah remembers the cleansing of the Temple and its rededication.

In Talmud (*Midrash Tanchuma, Kedoshim*) it is written: "As the navel is set in the center of the human body, so is the land of Israel the navel of the world. . .situated in the center of the world, and Jerusalem is the center of the land of Israel, and the sanctuary in the center of Jerusalem, and the holy place in the center of the sanctuary, and the ark in the center of the holy place, and the foundation stone before the holy place, because from it the world was founded."

Based on these words we can understand that the sorrow of Tisha B'Av is not only the loss of the Temple building, but the severing of the umbilical cord at the navel of the world, the loss of that nourishing channel between us and God. Hanukkah is not only the celebration of the Temple being rededicated and her altars being purified, but the miraculous reattachment between us and God.

Now that there is no longer a Temple in Jerusalem, the rabbis say that the only sacred building that exists today is the one within each of us. In Exodus 25:9 God says, "Make for Me a dwelling place that I may dwell within you." The rabbis comment that the verse would have made more logical sense had it said, "Make for Me a dwelling place that I may dwell *in it*." They conclude that what God is really saying is that more important than the Temple itself is that we each transform a place inside ourselves into a *mikdash*, a sacred space, and that there God will reside.

What we mourn on Tisha B'Av is the fragility of that sacred space inside. How vulnerable it is to temptation, greed, and numerous vices. What we celebrate on Hanukkah is the revelation that we can repent, return and fan that sacred spark.

Arthur Wasow wrote, "The single bottle of oil symbolized the last irreducible minimum of spiritual light and creativity within the Jewish people – still there even in its worst moments of apathy and idolatry. The ability of that single jar of oil to stay lit for eight days symbolized how with God's help that tiny amount could unfold into an infinite supply of spiritual riches. Infinite, because the eighth day stood for infinity. Since the whole universe was created in seven days, eight is a symbol of eternity and infinity."

As long as we have a spark of Jewish *neshama*, soul, inside us, we can bloom into wholeness. Arthur Green wrote, "Every Jewish soul is kosher enough to be a candle in God's menorah! This is our holiday, one that became sanctified only because of our actions, not by original divine intent. For this sort of holiday, no one needs to feel inadequate or insufficiently holy to participate."

Dear congregation...the Temple is not in Jerusalem made of stone. The Temple is in you, made of flesh. Take this to heart.





The Light of Hope and the Dark of Despair

A number of us at the temple have been studying Jewish Mysticism with Rabbi David Seidenberg every other Friday in our library. Anyone is welcome to join us. One session, he taught us about the Hasidic Rebbe Nahman of Braslav, whom scholars believe to have suffered from depression, for he so often spoke of sadness and despair. Rabbi Seidenberg told us that the Hasidic teaching say that we much move from sadness to having a broken heart. Many of us were a little confused by this. Why is having a broken heart better than being sad? He said, "Sadness is like a bowl turned upside down, and nothing can fill it. But a broken heart is a bowl right-side up, ready and hoping to receive love once again." For this reason, Rebbe Nahman of Braslav taught that there is no motion in despair, and one must get out of it as quickly as possible. That brokenness is at least a step toward repair, whereas despair is a swallowing darkness. May all who find themselves trapped in deep sadness begin to see the tiny glimmer of hope, a single candle, a beacon, in a village whose soul has gone dark.

Light in the Darkness

Rabbi Shawn Fields-Meyer has been leading an Ozreinu group here at Temple Isaiah once a month. Ozreinu means "our help" and it is a support group for families with special needs children. They study Jewish sources together as they share.

Rabbi Fields-Meyer wrote an essay (pp 164-165) in her book *A Day Apart: Shabbat at Home*, called "Light in the Darkness" in which she talks about raising an autistic child.

First she shares the midrash: *The first man was created on the eve of the first Shabbat, before nighttime and then he fell asleep. The next morning he awoke and again saw daylight. But as the hours went on, and night began to fall, he became terrified. He did not know what darkness was, and felt himself becoming enveloped in a sea of blackness. So he screamed. He cried out. He groped in the darkness and begged for God's help.*

In the end of her wonderful essay, she returns to the midrash and writes: "What did God do, when God heard Adam's cry? How did God respond to the human's terror, his utter paralysis in the enveloping darkness of

the Garden of Eden? This is the God we know because we have read the rest of the Tanakh, the God who can send plagues and part the waters and cause the sun to stand still. So what does God do for the man stumbling, frightened of the black night? Does God perform a miracle? Turn day into night? Lighten the horizon? No.

"Instead, God says to the man: Feel around you. See, there are two flints by your feet. Take those flints, and rub them together until you see a spark. Eventually you will create a flame, and with that flame you will light up the darkness and stop stumbling.

"God long ago created all the miracles-to-be. They are out there. Now, God points us to the tools, the ones often in our own gardens, that help us light the sparks that dispel our darkness. That is what we celebrate when we kindle the Havdalah candle at the same time of the week when God first taught Adam to light his own fire and to begin to do his own labor of dispelling the darkness each week."

If you would be interested in joining our Ozreinu group, please contact the temple's Program Director, Julie Munjack.



The Other War: Maccabees vs. Rabbis

We have mentioned that the Books of the Maccabees was not canonized into the Jewish Bible. In many ways, Hanukkah has been an historic battlefield between the rabbis and the Maccabees, between Intelligent Judaism and Muscular Judaism.

The rabbis emphasized the verse from Zechariah which says, “Not by might and not by power, but by Spirit...”, and in the Talmud the rabbis introduced the story of the miraculous jug of oil, hundreds of years after the Maccabean uprising. They were attempting to move the holiday away from concepts of martyrdom and murder to a more spiritual and symbolic message. It is written in *A Different Night: The Big Book of Hanukkah*: “The Rabbis were not happy with the Maccabean approach to Jewish life. They were writing in the period when similar revolts against Rome had been systematically and brutally smashed by the iron fist of Rome. Only the rabbinical kind of power – the power not of rock but water, fluid and soft from moment to moment and yet irresistible over the long run – had survived.”

Of course, the rabbis also had the hindsight to see what became of the Maccabees and their guerilla approach. They saw the bloodiest civil war erupt in Israel and two hundred years after the Maccabee’s success, the country was conquered by Rome.

It is interesting to note that the Maccabean approach has been resurrected in recent history. The early Zionists drew much inspiration from the story of the Maccabees. A popular Hanukkah song was sung and is still sung today in Israel which proclaims, “No miracle befell us, no cruse of oil did we find...” The message of the song sung by children and adults is a polemic against the Rabbinic way of thinking. The song is saying, no, it was not God, and there were no miracles...it was the work of our hands. The early Zionists were saying, it was our own blood, sweat and tears that rebuilt this nation, that fought off a sea of Arab nations who wanted to annihilate us. We did that with our breath and body, and don’t you dare say it was God.

For the Zionists, the story of the Maccabees with their makeshift weapons and wit surrounded by the Assyrians in armor, towering over them on elephants, was a perfect parallel to their victory against the far better equipped and populated Arab armies. In many ways, Hanukkah in Israel became more the Holiday of Freedom over Passover which speaks of the Israelite slaves being liberated from Egypt. On Passover, we thank God for our deliverance. On Hanukkah, Israelis would argue, we celebrate the work of our own hands.

An early Zionist folksong changed Psalm 106 which reads, “Who can retell the mighty acts of the Eternal,” to “Who can retell the mighty acts of Israel, who can count them? In every age a hero or sage rises to save the nation.” The Zionist version is one we still sing today in the song, *Mi Y’Malel*.

In more recent history, the Zionist Hanukkah has been mostly replaced with *Yom HaAtzmaut*, Israeli Independence Day. Still, just outside the Knesset in Jerusalem, stands proudly an eight foot menorah carved with images depicting the history of a nation.



A great light streamed out from the menorah. The eyes of the children flashed, but what our good friend saw was the kindling of the light of the nation. –
Theodor Herzl

Poems

Candles Flickering

Candles flickering
 Must hold the wick or be
 Blown out quick by a
 Gust of wind.
 Protect the divine spark
 In each of us
 From bleakest dark
 And luckless gusts
 Heal us heal us heal our sick
 Close the drafty door
 Protect us,
 Make the unwell well,
 Let us suffer no more.

Candles Flicker, Gutter, Fade

Candles flicker, gutter, fade,
 And poof, a wisp of smoke,
 Are gone. Loved ones also pass away,
 It is sad, but sorrow can also be sweet,
 How grateful are we to have loved them,
 If for a moment, a thousand moments,
 An innumerable treasury of time,
 They are our eternal lamp.
 The light of an extinguished star
 Travels far and far and far...

A Poem, for the Sabbath After Hanukkah

Should old acquaintance be forgot
 This gentle winter eve Shabbat,
 Upon a gale of eventide
 Pleased to meet you, Sabbath Bride.
 Hanukkah candles now a distant wisp,
 The groom leans toward the bride to kiss.
 All of us guests at a cosmic wedding
 And Sabbath bride is radiantly heading
 Down the heart's red carpeted aisle
 Beneath a huppah of flowers wild.
 The Sabbath candles say the week is done,
 The candles two, but speak of one.
Lecha Dodi, welcome bride,
 I've cleared my soul, so dwell inside.



8 Ways to *Light Up* Your Family's Hanukkah

This article appeared in Reform Judaism Magazine, Winter 2005, listing 8 ways to “Light Up” your family’s celebration. They were created by Nancy Bossov, Rabbi Marla Feldman, Rabbi Edythe Mencher, and Rabbi Sue Ann Wasserman.

Candle #1 HONOR YOUR FATHER & MOTHER

Host a Hanukkah party honoring parents and/or grandparents. Create activities around the symbolism of Hanukkah: 8 things my mom/dad do for me that I appreciate. By the light of the candles, parents and children can write to their parents or grandparents or draw a picture for them.

Candle #2 MIRACLES IN MY LIFE

The miracle of one day’s supply of sacred oil lasting eight days can be a metaphor for our lives today. Sometimes we have enough of something, even when we think we don’t. Sometimes we have within us the capacity to overcome great obstacle, even though we believe we don’t. Engage in a family discussion about prevailing in times of adversity. You may discover that you possess strengths and abilities, like courage and tenacity, that you didn’t know you had....

Candle #3 BE OPEN TO NEW FRIENDSHIPS

Invite a family that has never celebrated Hanukkah to share “the full holiday experience.”

Candle #4 BRIGHTEN UP THE SPIRIT OF A PERSON WHO IS ILL

On the fourth night, after you’ve lit the candles, gather your family together in the kitchen or den to create a “Hanukkah Mural.” Have on hand art supplies...Brainstorm together about your concept for the mural...and decide where you’d like to deliver the finished work: A Jewish nursing home, women’s shelter, hospital, temple, early childhood programs, etc. (Check beforehand to be sure that the mural would be welcomed and that the materials you use are within institutional regulations.)

Candle #5 SHARE THE HANUKKAH GLOW

WITH AN ENGAGED/NEWLY MARRIED COUPLE Think of a new couple with whom you can share the light of Hanukkah. If you don’t know of anyone, call your temple office to inquire about contacting a newly-married couple, an engaged couple, or a new couple in the community. Create a Happy Hanukkah card from you family to their or make them a “drop

mat” for their menorah. Using markers or crayons , simply design pictures, blessings and symbols on a large piece of think paper...The reverse side can be a greeting card. When you’re finished, cover with clear contact paper or have it laminated.

Candle #6 PRACTICE LOVE & KINDNESS

Link with Jewish families throughout North America who are donating the value of the gifts (or the gifts themselves) that they would otherwise exchange on this sixth night of Hanukkah. A tezedakah program of the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism, “*Ner Shel Tzedakah — A Candle of Righteousness*” is bringing thousands of Jews together for this common purpose. Discuss a group where you’d like the funds to go, and consider organizations, working on behalf of children — to end child hunger, support abused and neglected children, advocate for children’s healthcare, or educate low-income children. For more information, go to www.urj.org/csa/projects/ner_shel_tzedakah

Candle #7 HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE IN MOURNING

On this night, choose one of the family’s favorite recipes...and make an extra portion for an individual or a family that has recently lost a loved one. Check with the temple office for names and addresses, and before you light the seventh candle, know that you have nourished a person’s body and soul through your kindness.

Candle#8

A TIME OF REFLECTION As you light the final candle, reflect on the previous seven. Of all the wonderful activities you did together as a family, which was the most meaningful? The most fun? Why? Write down one way in which you can rededicate yourself to a mitzvah in the coming year and seal it in an envelope with your name on it. Encourage everyone to participate, and store the family’s envelopes in a container labeled: “To be opened on Hanukkah.” And be sure to place the container where you’ll easily find it next year!

Hidden Light

In the first chapter of Genesis, on the first day of Creation, God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. The text says that the light was good. The rabbis believe that that original good light was hidden away for the messianic age. The Hasidic rabbis often talk about this hidden light, and how whenever we fulfill a *mitzvah* (commandment) or *gemilut hasidim* (good deeds), we “raise the sparks” of that hidden light, releasing its goodness into the world.

How will you, between this Festival of Lights and the next, release more sparks of goodness into the world?



A Latke is a Pancake

A latke is a pancake, a golden pancake treat.
And inside it is snowy white and very good to eat.
On anukah, on anukah, a latke is a treat. (2x)

Al Hanisim

Al hanisim v'al hapurkan, v'al hagvurot v'al hatshu'ot
V'al hamilchamot she'asita la'voteinu,
Bayamim hahem bazman hazeh.

Ani S'vivon

Ani S'vivon, Ani S'vivon *(I am a dreidl,*
Ani ratz ratz ratz ratz *I run*
El Hayeladim ba'anukah *to the children on anukah*
Ani ratz ratz ratz ratz. *I run).*

Eight Little Candles (D, A7)

1 little 2 little 3 little candles, 4 little 5 little 6 little candles,
7 little 8 little 9 little candles, In my Hanukkah lamp.

The 1st night, 1 little candle, the 2nd night 2 little candles,
The 3rd night, 3 little candles, In my Hanukah lamp.

The 4th night, 4 little candles,
The 5th night, 5 little candles,
The 6th night, 6 little candles, In my Hanukah lamp.

The 7th night, 7 little candles,
The 8th night, 8 little candles,
The Shammos makes 9 little candle,
In my Hanukah lamp.

Hanukah (C,F, G7)(Hebrew: L. Kipnes)

Hanukah,anukah, Hag yafeh kol-kach
Or Haviv, mi saviv, gil l'yeled rach
Hanukah,anukah, Sevivon sov sov,
Sov sov sov, sov sov sov, ma na'im vatov

Hanukah,anukah ein halon b'li esh
L'vivot migdanot, b'chol bayit yesh.
Hanukkah, Hanukkah, hag haviv m'od,
Shiru na, zamru na, utz'u lirkod

Hanukah, anukah, Holiday so gay,
Kindly light, shining bright, it's a time for play.
Hanukah, anukah, make the dreidl spin
Spin spin spin, how it whirls, fun for boys and girls.

Hanukah, anukah, happy holiday
Hanukah, anukah, dance and sing so gay
Hanukah, anukah, spin the dreidl 'round
Spin spin spin, spin spin spin, spin the dreidl 'round.

Hanukah, anukah, a merry holiday
Candle light, clear and bright shining on each day.
Hanukah, anukah, we love our games and toys,
Tops spin 'round, 'round and 'round, happy girls and boys.

Hanukkah Blessings--trans. Ben Aronin

Baruch Ata 'h, E-heinu Melekh HaOlam,
Asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu
L'hadlik ner, shel anukah.

Barukh ata 'h, E-oheinu Melekh HaOlam,
She'asa nisim la'voteinu,
bayamim hahem, bazman hazeh.

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(1st night only) Barukh ata 'h, E-oheinu Melekh HaOlam,
Shehehiyanu, v'kiymanu, v'higiyanu, lazman hazeh.

Be blessed Eternal our G-d,
Be Thou blessed O King of creation
Who sanctified us by Divine Command
And commanded that we light, lamps of dedication.

Be blessed Eternal our G-d
Be Thou blessed O King of creation
For wonders wrought before our father's eyes
Be Thou blessed forever more, for Israel's salvation

Be blessed Eternal our G-d
Be Thou blessed O King of creation
That Thou has brought us, to this season
In joy and veneration.

Hanukah Marching Song

1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4, Come along and sing a song with me.
1 2 3 4 1 2 3, Eveyone can be a Macabee.

His Name is Judah The Macabee

Chorus His name is Judah, the Macabee (2x)
He fought for our people
So that they would be free
His name is Judah the Macabee.

Years ago in our ancient land, there did come a king.
Out of the land of Syria, great armies did he bring.

He brought with him his pagan gods,
"You Jews must believe!
If not I'll tear your temple down"
And the people they did grieve. (Chorus)

Then up arose a priestly man, Mattathias was his name.
With him were his five sons, for our G he did exclaim.
His third son's name was Judah,
Like a hammer he would be.
That's why the people looked to him,
To lead the Macabees (Chorus).

Up in the hills and the valleys below,
The Macabees did roam.
Protecting the people of Israel, and fightin' for their home.
Though many years have passed and gone,
Our people have lived and died.
We all must strive for freedom and peace,
For mankind must survive.

Song-sheets created by Rabbi Jonathan Klein.
Thanks, sweetie!

How Many Candles?

How many candles (3x) do we light
On our anukiyah (2x)
The [1st, 2nd, . . . 9th] anukah night?
(1,2,3,etc.)(5x)!!! (1,2,3,etc.) candles burning (2x)
The (1st, 2nd, etc.) anukah night.

I Am a Latke (Debbie Friedman)

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 the flour
And the cook is scouting oil in town
I sit here wondering what will come 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.

Chorus: I am a latke, I am a latke,

And I am waiting, for anukah to come (2x)

Every holiday has foods so special,
I'd like to have that same attention too.
I do not want to spend life in this blender,
Wondering what I am supposed to do.
Matzah and Haroset are for Pesah,
Chopped liver and Challah Shabbat.
Blintzes on Shavuot are delicious,
And gefilte fish no holiday's without (Chorus)

It's important that I have an understanding
Of what it is that I'm supposed to do.
You see there are many who are homeless
With no jobs, no clothes and very little food
It's so important that we all remember
That while we have most of the things we need
We must remember those who have so little,
We must help them, we must be the ones to feed (chorus)

I Have a Little Dreidl (D, A7)

(Words: S. S. Grossman, Music: S.E. Goldfarb)

I have a little dreidl, I made it out of clay
And when it's dry and ready, then dreidl I shall play.
Oh dreidl, dreidl, dreidl, I made it out of clay.
Oh dreidl, dreidl, dreidl, now dreidl I shall play.

It has a lovely body, with legs so short and thin,
And when it is all tired, it drops and then I win.
O dreidl dreidl dreidl, with legs so short an thin,
O dreidl dreidl dreidl, it drops and then I win.

My dreidl's always playful, it loves to dance and spin,
A happy game of dreidl, come play now lets begin.
O dreidl dreidl, dreidl, it loves to dance and spin,
O dreidl dreidl, dreidl, come play now lets begin.

Israel Reborn!--Tune of "Tzena Tzena" (Ben Aronin?)

When the bombs and shells were falling
All the Hayalim were calling
"Give us food to eat!
39 We can beat those Arab nations
If you give us proper rations, Give us food to eat!

Chorus: "Latkes, latkes, they will give us muscle
Latkes, latkes, make the Palmach hustle
Latkes, latkes, Give us more and more
And our homeland we'll restore."

When the cabinet assembled,
All the Arab nations trembled.
Said Ben Gurion:
"We need airships, tanks and cannon
But the U.N.'s put the ban on
All but this alone." (Chorus)

Light One Candle Peter Yarrow (Peter, Paul, and Mary)

Light one candle for the Maccabee children,
Give 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.
Light one candle for the wisdom to know
When the peacemaker's time is at hand.

Chorus: 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 foe.
Light one candle for those who are suffering
The pain we learned so long ago.
Light one candle for all we believe in,
Let anger not tear us apart.
Light one candle to bind us together,
With peace as the song in our heart. (Chorus)

What is the memory that's valued so highly
That we keep alive in that flame?
What's the commitment to those who have died
When we cry out, "They've not died in vain?"
We have come this far, always believing,
That justice will somehow prevail.
This is the burden, and this is the promise,
And this is why we will not fail!! (Chorus)

Ending: Don't let the light go out (3x)

Maoz Tzur

Ma'oz Tzur y'shuati, l'cha na'eh l'shabe'ah
Tikon beit t'filati, v'sham todah n'zabe'ach
L'eit tachin matbe'ach, mitzar hamnabe'ach
Az egmor, b'shir mizmor, Hanukat hamizbeach (2x)

Rock of Ages let our song, praise Your saving power
You amidst the raging foes, was't our sheltering tower.
Furious, they assailed us, but Thine arm availed us.

Children of the Macabees, whether free or fettered,
Wake the echoes of the songs,
 where you may be scattered
Yours, the message cheering, that the time is nearing,
Which will see, all men free,
 Tyrants disappearing.

Kindling new the holy lamps,
Priests approved in suffering.
Purified the nation's shrine,
Brought to G their offering.
And his courts surrounding,
Hear, in joy abounding,
Happy throngs, singing songs,

With a mighty sounding.

Mattathias B/Old

Mattathias b/old, 5 great sons had he
Eliezer, oldest son, Simon, John, and Jonathan
And Judah Maccabee (2x)

Mi Y'malel / Who Can Retell

Mi y'malel g'vurot Yisra'el, Otan mi yimneh?
Hen b'chol dor yakum hagibor, go'el ha'am.
Sh'ma! Bayamim hahem bazman hazeh,
Makabi moshia ufodeh,
Uv'yameinu kol am Yisra'el
Yitached yakum l'higa'el.

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

Mi Y'malel / Who Will Deny-(Ben Aronin)

Who will deny the king of the fry,
The latke precious?
Who can withhold all glory and gold
From such as he?

Hear!
Hear my friends the stirring history
Of a people struggling to be free.
Matzah is the food of liberty,
Latke is the food of bravery.

Tzimmes and fish and kugel and knish
And blintze blessings,
Tagelech and schnapps are surely the tops
For Shabbes joy.

Hear!
Hamentaschen for festivity,
Kreplach are the food for piety,
Honey for New Year's prosperity,
Latke is the food for bravery.

Not By Might (Debbie Friedman)-Based on Zech. 4
40 Not by might and not by power,
 But by spirit alone, shall we all live in peace (2x)
The children sing, the children dream
And their tears may fall, but we'll hear them call
And another song will rise (3x)

Ending: Not by Might, Not by Power, Shalom!

O Hanukkah O Hanukkah (Dm, Gm / Em, D7, G)

YIDDISH:

Oy Hanukkah oy Hanukkah,
A yomtov a sheiner
A lustiger a frelecher,
Nito noch azoiner.
Alle nacht in dredlech, sh'piln mir,
Zudik hese latkes, est on a shir.
Geshvinder, tsindt kinder,
Dee dininke lichtelech ohn.
 Zingt "Al Hanisim,"
(2x) loibt G-tt far di nisim,
 Un kumt giher tantsn in kohn.

ENGLISH:

Oh Hanukah oh Hanukah, come light the menorah.
Let's have a party, we'll all dance the horah.
Gather round the table, we'll give you a treat.
Sevivon to play with, and l'vivot to eat.
And while we are playing, the candles are burning low.
One for each night, they shed a sweet light,
 to remind us of days long ago. (2x)

Oh Hanukkah Oh Hanukkah A time to remember,
A jolly jolly holiday That comes in December.
Every day for 8 days, dreidls will spin
Crispy little latkes, tasty and thin.
And nightly, so brightly, The candles of Hanukkah glow.
One for each night, They shed a sweet light
 To remind us of days long ago. (2x)

Oh Hanukkah Oh Hanukkah Come light the menorah.
Lets have a party, We'll all dance the hora.
Gather 'round the table, We'll give you a treat
Lots of spinning dreidls And latkes to eat.
And while we are playing, The candles are burning bright.
One for each night, The Shammash we light
 To remind us of days long ago.
One for each night They shed a sweet light
 To remind us of days long ago.

SPANISH:

Oh, Jánuca, oh Jánuca, Prendamos la menora
Hagamos fiesta, Bailemos la jora
Vengan a la mesa, Todos a comer
Alegres celebremos Con mucho que hacer.

Durante la fiesta, Pensemos en la libertad
 Cantemos las odas
(2x) De los que sirvieron
 Batallando por la verdad

Each Hanukkah We Glorify--tune of "Oh Hanukah"

(By Ben Aronin)
Each Hanukkah we glorify Brave Judas 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

Chorus: You may not guess, but it was the latkes
 That gave brave Judah a soul (2x)

The Syrians said, "It cannot be That old Mattathias
Whose years are more than 83 Will dare to defy us!"
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, (Chorus)

Now this is how it came about
 This gastronomic wonder
 That broke the ranks of Syria
Like flaming bolts of thunder.
Mrs. Maccabeus wrote in the dough
Portions of the Torah, then fried them so.
They shimmered, they simmered,
 Absorbing the olive oil.
 (Chorus)

Now these little latkes, 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 latke, two latkes, And so on into the night. (Chorus)

S'vivos Sov Sov Sov (Words: L. Kipnes)

S'vivos Sov Sov Sov, anukah hu hag tov
 anukah, hu hag tov, S'vivos sov sov sov.
Hag Simha hu la'am, Nes Gadol Hayah Sham
Nes Gadol Hayah Sham, Hag Simha hu la'am

Utzu Eitza V'tufar

Utsu eitza v'tufar, dabru davar v'lo yakum (2x)
Ki imanu E-l.

We Shall Overcome

We shall overcome (2x)
We shall overcome some day.
 Deep in my heart, I do believe,
 We shall overcome some day.
We'll walk hand in hand. . .
We shall live in peace. . .
The Lord will see us through. . .
We are not afraid. . .today. . .

Chanukah Chumbra (Cantor Alan Leider)

Lots of latkes (3x)
41 Lots! (Let's all eat 'em up!)

S'vivos sov sov (4x)

Macabee (6x) Mac (8x)
Macabee (6x) Mac (3x)

The Chanukah Song(Adam Sandler, L. Morton, I. Maxstone-Graham))

Put on your yarmulke, Here comes Chanukah
So much funukah, To celebrate Chanukah
Chanukah is the festival of lights
Instead of one day of presents, we have eight crazy nights

When you feel like the only kid in town without a Xmas tree
Here's a list of people who are Jewish just like you and me
David Lee Roth lights the menorah
So do Kirk Douglas, James Caan and the late
 Dinah Shore-ah

Guess who eats together at the Carnegie Deli
Bowser from Sha Na Na and Arthur Fonzerelli
Paul Newman's half Jewish, Goldie Hawn's half too
Put them together, what a fine lookin' Jew

You don't need "Deck the Halls" or "Jingle Bell Rock"
'Cause you can spin a dreidel with Captain
 Kirk and Mr. Spock-both Jewish

Put on your yarmulke, It's time for Chanukah
The owner of the Seattle Supersonics
Celebrates Chanukah

O.J. Simpson, not a Jew
But guess who is? Hall of famer Rod Carew-he converted
We got Ann Landers and her sister Dear Abby
Harrison Ford's a quarter Jewish--not too shabby

Some people think that Ebenezer Scrooge is
Well he's not, but guess who is
 --All three Stooges
So many Jews are in showbiz
Tom Cruise isn't, but I heard his agent is.

Tell your friend Veronica
It's time to celebrate Chanukah
I hope I get a harmonica
On this lovely, lovely Chanukah
So drink your gin and tonica
And sing this silly songikah (**and smoke your marijuanikah**)
If you really, really wannakah
Have a happy, happy, happy, happy Chanukah
Happy Chanukah

Macabees Keep on Winnin'--To the tune of "Proud Mary"
by Creedence Clearwater Revival,
Lyrics by Roger Horowitz

Had a life in Modiin,
I was just a regular human bein'
My People always saw the good side of the city
Until Antiochus took it all away

CHORUS:

Big Dreidel keep on spinning,
Maccabees keep on winning,
Spinning, winning, Spinning and winning

My family moved to the mountains,
We'd come down to fight the Assyrians

4) We fought to keep our land and our religion
Same as they had Always been (Chorus)

Finally we did the winnin',
purified the Temple, Found the oil,
Lasting for 8 days,
our Spirits were raised;
Along with the oil, we survived all the toil. (Chorus)



All text unless otherwise noted written by Rabbi Zoë Klein
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