



2023 *CHANUKAH* 5784

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Home Guide

First Chanukah Candle: Thursday, December 7

Eighth Chanukah Candle: Thursday, December 14

Chanukah, the Feast of Rededication, lasts for eight days and begins on the twenty-fifth of Kislev. Light the first candle this year on December 18. The "Rededication" refers to the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 165 B.C.E. This festival came after victory was attained by the small forces of Judah Maccabee over army detachments sent by King Antiochus of Syria. Antiochus had attempted to force foreign worship (the Hellenistic-Oriental worship of Zeus) on the Jewish people. This was part of his strategy to unite his subjugated nations for a final war with Rome. Most of the Jews assimilated and accepted Antiochus' demands. But the Maccabees would not assimilate. That small band achieved the spiritual victory of remaining Jews and the military victory of defeating the Syrian Greeks.

The story of Chanukah is not found in the Bible but in the Apochryphal book of Maccabees, part of our post-Biblical Jewish literature.

We celebrate Chanukah because some of our ancestors would not give up their Judaism. If it had not been for them, Judaism likely would have disappeared. If we do not continue with our traditions, assimilation will overtake us in our own day. We remember the courage of the Maccabees as we light our menorahs and celebrate our story of survival.



The *Shammash* candle (servant candle) is used only to light the other candles. The individual candles are put in place starting with the right-hand side of the Menorah. The *Shammash* is lit first. Then the candles are lighted from left to right, i.e., the last one placed in the Menorah is the first to be lit. One on the first evening; two on the second, until the eighth night of Chanukah eight candles are lit.

The Chanukah candles must burn for at least half an hour each night. On Friday eve, the Chanukah lights are kindled before the Sabbath lights. As the lights are lit, the blessings are sung or recited.

THE BLESSINGS:

(To be recited and/or sung each night.)

*The candles are placed in the Menorah from right to left,
and kindled from left to right*

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

*Baruch ata Ah-do-nai Eh-lo-haynu Melech Ha'olam, asher kid'sha-nu
b'mitz-vo-tav vetzi-va-nu- l'had-lik nayr shel Chanukah*

Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who hallows us with His Mitzvot, and commands us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים
לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזְמַן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch ata Ah-do-nai Eh-lo-haynu Melech Ha'olam, she'asa ni'sim
la'avotaynu ba'ya'mim ha'haym ba' zman ha-zeh*

Blessed is the Lord 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

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחֵינּוּ
וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזְמַן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch ata Ah-do-nai Eh-lo-haynu Melech Ha'olam, she-he-che-ya-nu,
v'ki'y'ma'nu, v'hi-gi-a-nu la'zman ha-zeh*

Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

♦ ♦

(After the blessings it is customary to sing "Rock of Ages")

MA-OZ TSUR

Ma-oz tsur ye-shu-a-ti,
le-cha na-eh le-sha-bei-ach;
ti-kon beit te-fi-la-ti,
ve-sham to-da ne-za-bei-ach.
Le-eit ta-chin mat-bel-ach,
mi-tsar ha-me-na-bei-ach,
az eg-mor, be-shir miz-mor,
cha-nu-kat ha-miz-bei-ach.

מעוז צור

מְעוֹז צוֹר יְשׁוּעָתִי,
לְךָ נֶאֱהָ לְשִׁבְּחִי
תִּכּוֹן בֵּית תְּפִלָּתִי,
וְשָׁם תּוֹדָה נִזְבְּחִי
לְעֵת תִּכְיִן מִטְּבִיחִי,
מִצָּר הַמְּנַבְּחִי
אֶז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מִזְמוֹר
חֲנוּכַת הַמְּצִיבִיחִי

ROCK OF AGES

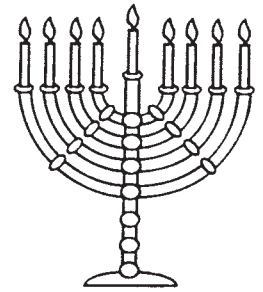
Rock of ages, let our song
Praise Your saving power;
You, amid the raging foes,
Were our sheltering tower.

Furious, they assailed us,
But Your arm availed us,
And Your word
Broke their sword,
When our own strength failed us.

Kindling new the holy lamps,
Priests approved in suffering,
Purified the nation's shrines,
Brought to God their offering,
And His courts surrounding
Hear, in joy abounding,
Happy throngs,
Singing songs,
With a mighty sounding.

Children of the Maccabees,
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.

READ AFTER MENORAH IS LIT



Chanukah Candle Lighting Daily Readings

FIRST NIGHT: We light the candle for the first night of Chanukah as a dedication to kindness, *hesed*. Let us always be kind to other people and animals by trying to understand their feelings and by helping them. This will help make us and the whole world more compassionate.

SECOND NIGHT: We light the candle for the second night of Chanukah as a dedication to fairness, *tsedeq*. Let us always be fair to others by sharing with them and treating them with respect. This will help fill the world with justice.

THIRD NIGHT: We light the candle for the third night of Chanukah as a dedication to love and friendship. Let us always be thankful for the love of our family and friends. From the roots of their affections, we help fill the world with love, *'ahavah*.

FOURTH NIGHT: We light the candle for the fourth night of Chanukah as a dedication to each of us being a good, responsible citizen of our community and of the world. Let us always work to improve our school and our neighborhood, and also contribute to help others in places farther away. We are all human and all family, *mishpahah*.

FIFTH NIGHT: We light the candle for the fifth night of Chanukah as a dedication to freedom, *herut*. Like many other people, our ancestors struggled many times for freedom. So let us value the liberties and opportunities such struggles have allowed us to enjoy, and let us work together to help others who are less free. This will help fill the world with freedom.

SIXTH NIGHT: We light the candle for the sixth night of Chanukah as a dedication to peace, *shalom*. Chanukah was first celebrated after a battle as our ancestors began to rebuild after the destruction and suffering and death caused by war. Every day, we can help rebuild the world with peace with our Chanukah values - by being kind and fair, loving and responsible, and by helping to spread freedom.

SEVENTH NIGHT: We light the candle for the seventh night of Chanukah as a dedication to life. We can help all to enjoy a good life by working together to create a world of compassion and justice, a world of love and mutual responsibility, a world of freedom and peace. As we hope and work for these ideals, we dedicate this Chanukah candle "to life" - *l'-haiyim!*

EIGHTH NIGHT: We light the candle for the eighth night of Chanukah as a dedication to the improvement of the world, *tikkun-olam*. May our dedication to our Chanukah goals inspire us and light our way all year round. Each and every day, may we help to heal the world's suffering and sickness, to repair its brokenness, and to help create what in Yiddish we call a *a besere un sheynere velt*, "a better and more beautiful world."

MI YIMALEIL

Mi yi-ma-leil ge-vu-rot- Yisreal, o-tan mi-yim-heh?
Hein be-choi dor ya-kum ha-gi-bor, go-eil ha-am.
She-ma! Ba-ya-mim ha-heim ba-ze-man, ha-zeh,
Ma-ka-bi mo-shi-a u-fo-deh.
U-ve-ya-mei-nu kol am Yisrael yit-a-cheid,
ya-kum le-hi-ga-eil!

Who can retell the things that befell us,
Who can count them?
In every age a hero or sage
Came to our aid.

Hark! In days of yore, in Israel's ancient land,
Brave Maccabeus led his faithful band.
And now all Israel must as one arise,
Redeem itself through deed and sacrifice!

מי ימַלֵּל גְבוּרוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל
אוֹתוֹן מִי יִמְנֶה?
הוּן בְּכָל דּוֹר יָקוּם הַגִּבּוֹר,
גּוֹאֵל הָעָם.

שְׁמַע! בְּיָמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְן הַזֶּה
מִכְּבִּי מוֹשִׁיעַ וּפּוֹדֵה.
וּבְיָמֵינוּ כָּל עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְתֵאֵחָד יָקוּם לְהַגְאֵל.

I HAVE A LITTLE DREYDL

I have a little dreydl,
I made it out of clay;
And when it's dry and ready
Then dreydl I shall play.

O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
I made it out of clay;
O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
Now dreydl I shall play.

It has a lovely body,
With leg so short and thin;
And when it is all tired,
It drops and then I win.

O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
With leg so short and thin;
O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
It drops and then I win.

My dreydl is always playful
It loves to dance and spin,
A happy game of dreydl,
Come play, now let's begin.

O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
It loves to dance and spin,
O dreydl, dreydl, dreydl,
Come play, now let's begin.

DREIDEL

The most popular Hanukkah game is dreidel. The dreidel is a spinning top. Its name in Yiddish means "turn." The Hebrew word for dreidel is *sevivon*.

There are four letters on the dreidel: נ ג ה ש

They stand for the words, *Nes Gadol Hayah Sham*, which means "A Great Miracle Happened There."

Dreidels in Israel have these letters: נ ג ה פ

They stand for the words, *Nes Gadol Hayah Peh*, which means "A Great Miracle Happened Here."

Rules for playing dreidel:

Everyone starts with an equal number of nuts, raisins, or Hanukkah gelt. Each player puts one of these in the middle. The first player spins the dreidel. If it lands on:

- נ Nun—the player does nothing
- ג Gimmel—the player takes everything in the middle
- ה Hey—the player takes half
- ש Shin—the player puts one in

An easy way to remember is:

- נ N = nothing
- ג G = get
- ה H = half
- ש SH = share

Before the next player spins, everyone puts in another piece.

DREIDEL VARIATIONS

- See who can keep a dreidel spinning the longest. Time the spins with a stop watch.
- Try spinning the dreidel upside down.
- Let everyone spin a dreidel. Those whose dreidels land on the same letter get a point. Play to a specified number of points.
- Hebrew letters stand for numbers: Nun is 50; Gimmel is 3; Hey is 5; and Shin is 300. (On an Israeli dreidel, Pey is 80.) Take turns spinning the dreidel, and after each spin, record each player's score. See who can get to 1,000 first.
- Dreidel hunt: One player leaves the room while the others hide a dreidel. The player returns to hunt for the hidden dreidel, while the rest sing a Hanukkah song. As the searcher comes closer to the hidden dreidel, the singing grows louder; as he or she moves away, the singing gets softer.

We typically eat Latkes on Chanukah because they are cooked in oil and thus remind us of the miracle of the single jar of oil which lasted for eight days. In Israel, it is a tradition to eat jelly doughnuts for the same reason. Whichever you choose, these customs give us all a reason to forget about calories and fat grams!

BASIC POTATO LATKES

2 lbs Idaho potatoes, well scrubbed, unpeeled
1 medium onion
2 eggs
1/4 cup matzah meal or flour
salt and black pepper to taste
vegetable oil for frying

1. Grate potatoes alternately with the onion. (This keeps the potatoes from darkening.)
2. Drain potatoes and onions.
3. Mix eggs, then matzah meal or flour. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Pour oil into a skillet to a depth of 1/4 inch and heat. Oil should be hot but not smoking.
5. Using a large tablespoon, form round or oval pancakes about 3 inches across, flattening them with the back of the spoon. Fry on both sides. Drain them on paper towel, and serve as soon as possible.
6. Pancakes can be reheated in a 400-degree oven about 10 minutes.
Yields about 24 pancakes.

CHANUKAH BOOKS

For the very young child: Zalben, Jan Breskin. Beni's First Chanukah. H. Holt, 1988.

For the young child: Kimmel, Eric. Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins. Holiday House, 1989.

For the older child: Brodmann, Aliana. The Gift. Simon and Schuster, 1993.

For Adults: Goodman, Philip. The Hanukkah Anthology. Jewish Publication Society, 1976.
Waskow, Arthur. Seasons of our Joy. Beacon Press, 1982.