

Dear Friends,

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Note that not every article was “edited” to change the spelling of Hanukkah for the many other forms (Channukah, Hannukah, Hanukkah, Hanukah.....)

Rabbi Dov Lerner

## **Blessings for Lighting the Hanukkah Candles/Lamps**

Instructions: The Hanukkah Menorah, or Hanukkiah, should be lit right after nightfall each night of Hanukkah. A candle is then added to the Hanukkah Menorah for each new night of the holiday. On the first night, you light only the Shamash (typically the higher candle) and one Hanukkah candle. Then by the eighth night, all the candles are lit.

Candles are placed in the menorah from right to left (same direction as Hebrew writing), but they are lit from left to right - lighting the candle of the newest day of Hanukkah first. Recite or sing the blessings, and then light the Hanukkah candle(s) using the Shamash. Also, it is customary to display the Hannukah Menorah in a window where it can be seen from outside, in order to publicize the miracle of Hanukkah.

Check for audio clips and other Hebrew texts at SiddurAudio.com:  
<http://sidduraudio.com/Hanukkah.html>

***Before lighting, the following blessings are recited:***

### 1. Blessing for lighting the candles

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

*Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik nei shel Hanukkah.*

Praised are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe, who has sanctified us with the commandments, commanding to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

2. Blessing for the miracles of Hanukkah

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם  
בְּזִמְנוֹ הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, she-asah nisim la-avoteinu bayamim haheim baz'man hazeh.*

Praised are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time.

3. 'Shehecheyanu' is added only for the first night:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיֵּינוּ וְקִיַּמָּנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוֹ הַזֶּה.

*Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higi-anu laz'man hazeh.*

Praised are You, Lord our God, sovereign of the universe, who has kept us in life, who has sustained us and enabled us to celebrate this moment.

מַעוֹז צוּר - ROCK OF AGES MAOZ TSUR

לְךָ נֶאֱדָה לְשַׁבַּח,	מַעוֹז צוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי
וְשָׁם תּוֹדָה נִזְבַּח,	תִּכּוֹן בַּיִת תִּפְלָתִי
מִצָּר הַמְּנַבֵּחַ,	לְעֵת תִּכּוֹן מִטְבֵּחַ
חֲנֻכַּת הַמְּזֻבָּח.	אֶז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מִזְמוֹר

*Ma'oz tsur yeshu'ati  
Lecha na'eh lescha be'eh'yach  
Tikon beit te-fi-la-ti  
Ve sham toda neza'beh'eh'yach  
Leh et tachin mat be-yach,  
Mi tsar ham'na be-eh-eh-ehyach  
Az egmor beshir mizmor  
Chanukat hamizbe'eh'yach  
(repeat last two lines)*

Rock of Ages let our song  
 Praise thy saving power  
 Thou amidst the raging foes  
 Was our sheltering tower.  
 Furious, they assailed us,  
 But thine armour veiled us.  
 And thy word broke their sword  
 When our own strength failed us.  
 (repeat last two lines)

אָזי בַּיַּמֵי חַשְׁמָנִים,  
 וְטַמְאוּ כָּל הַשְּׂמָנִים,  
 נַעֲשֶׂה נֵס לְשׁוֹשָׁנִים,  
 קִבְּעוּ שִׁיר וְרַנָּנִים.

יוֹנִים נִקְבְּצוּ עָלַי  
 וּפָרְצוּ חוֹמוֹת מִגְדָּלַי  
 וּמְנוֹתַר קִנְקָנִים  
 בְּנֵי בֵּינָה יַמֵי שְׁמוֹנָה

Y'vanim nikb'tzu alai azai bimei chashmanim,  
 ufar'tzu chomot migdalai v'tim'u kol hashmanim,  
 uminotar kankanim na-asah neis lashoshanim,  
 b'nei vinah y'mei sh'monah kav'u shir ur'nanim.

**הנרות הללו HANEROT HALLALU**

המלים: מן הסדור - המנגינה: א.ו. בינדר

Words: From the prayer-book - Melody: A.W. Binder

"Hanerot Hallalu", mentioned on the Talmud, Soferim 20:6, means "these lights." It is an ancient chant that is recited or sung after the candle(s) for the night have been lit.

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

*Hanerot halalu anachnu madlikin  
Al hanissim ve'al haniflaot  
Al hatshu-ot ve'al hamilchamot  
She-asita la'avoteynu  
Bayamim hahem, bazman hazeh  
Al yedey kohanecha hakdoshim.*

*Vechol shmonat yemey Chanukah  
Hanerot halalu kodesh hem,  
Ve-ein lanu reshut lehishtamesh bahem  
Ela lirotam bilvad  
Kedai lehodot leshimcha  
Al nissecha veal nifleotecha ve-al yeshuotecha.*

We light these lights  
For the miracles and the wonders,  
For the redemption and the battles  
That you made for our forefathers  
In those days at this season,  
Through your holy priests.

During all eight days of Chanukah  
These lights are sacred  
And we are not permitted to make  
Ordinary use of them,  
But only to look at them;  
In order to express thanks  
And praise to Your great Name  
For your miracles, Your wonders  
And your salvations.

## Hanukkah DATES AND HISTORY

### Dates

<b>333 BCE</b>	<b>Alexander the Great conquers Eretz Israel</b>
<b>175 BCE</b>	<b>Antiochus Epiphanes comes to power</b>
<b>168 BCE</b>	<b>Antiochus Epiphanes in Jerusalem; desecration of the Temple; Antiochus' edicts Matityahu the Hasmonean leads the revolt against the Greeks</b>
<b>164 BCE</b>	<b>Judah Maccabee enters the Temple and reinstitutes the sacrifices; Reconsecration of the Temple</b>
<b>160 BCE</b>	<b>Death of Judah Maccabee</b>
<b>152 BCE</b>	<b>Jonathan the Hasmonean leads the people</b>
<b>142 BCE</b>	<b>Shimon the Hasmonean becomes ruler and high priest</b>
<b>135 BCE</b>	<b>Jonathan Hyrcanus (son of Shimon) - ruler and high priest</b>
<b>103 BCE</b>	<b>Alexander Yannai is king and high priest</b>
<b>76 BCE</b>	<b>Salome Alexandra (Shlomzion - Yannai's wife) comes to the throne</b>
<b>67 BCE</b>	<b>Civil war for control of Judea; Pompey, the Roman commander, conquers Jerusalem</b>
<b>37 BCE</b>	<b>Death of Antigonus, last of the Hasmonean kings</b>

## TOP TEN HANUKKAH PET PEEVES

article by adapted from Bangitout.com Illustrated by John Klossner

10. There's one name for the holiday in Hebrew, but eight ways to spell it in English.
9. Your non-Jewish friends constantly whine about you getting gifts for eight days.
8. The jelly inside your sufganiyot always squirts directly on your new clothes.
7. NO, I don't "Got milk!" That's a powder mustache from jelly donuts.
6. You celebrate for eight days without any weekdays off from school.
5. They don't make 100-calorie packs of donuts, latkes, and chocolate gelt.
4. Scraping last year's wax out of your menorah, your sister's menorah, your brother's....
3. Celebrating with anyone who sings every verse of Maoz Tzur.
2. When you spin the dreidel for fun, you always win, but when you play for chocolate, you always lose.
1. By the time you fill your menorah with eight candles, you're over the whole Hanukkah thing.

**WHY DON'T WE READ A SCROLL (Megillah) ON HANUKKAH?(1)**

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Rabbi Prof. David Golinkin

**Question:** The holiday of Hanukkah has many beautiful customs such as the dreidl, latkes, and sufganiyot, but there is one custom which we would expect to find on Hanukkah which seems to be missing - the reading of a scroll in public. After all, on Purim we read the Scroll of Esther every year in order to publicize the miracle. Why don't we read a scroll on Hanukkah in order to publicize the miracles which God wrought for our ancestors in the days of Matityahu and his sons? The result is that most Jews only know the legend about the miracle of the cruse of oil (Shabbat 21b) and not about the actual military victories of the Maccabees.

**Responsum:** The answer is that, in truth, there is such a scroll which was read in private or in public between the ninth and twentieth centuries. It is called "The Scroll of Antiochus" and many other names and it was written in Aramaic during the Talmudic period and subsequently translated into Hebrew, Arabic and other languages. (2) The book describes the Maccabean victories on the basis of a few stories from the Books of the Maccabees and Shabbat 21b with the addition of a number of legends without any historic basis whatsoever.

This scroll is first mentioned by Halakhot Gedolot, which was written by Shimon Kayara in Babylon ca. 825 c.e.: "The elders of Bet Shammai and Bet Hillel wrote Megillat Bet Hashmonay [=the scroll of the Hasmonean House]..." (Halakhot Gedolot, ed. Venice, 5308 [=Warsaw, 5635], fol. 141d). Rav Sa'adia Gaon (882-942) calls it "kitab benei hashmonay", the book of the sons of the Hasmoneans, and he also translated it into Arabic (3) Rav Nissim Gaon (North Africa, 990-1062) calls it in Arabic "the scroll of the sons of the Hasmoneans" (R. Nissim Ga'on, Hibbur Yafeh Meihayeshu'a, ed. H. Z. Hirschberg, Jerusalem, 5714, pp. 2-3).

Furthermore, we know that this scroll was read in public at different times and places. Rabbi Isaiah of Trani (Italy, ca. 1200-1260) says that "in a place where they are accustomed to read Megillat Antiochus [=The Scroll of Antiochus] on Hanukkah, it is not proper to recite the blessings [for reading a scroll] because it is not required at all" (Tosfot R"id to Sukkah 44b, catchword havit, Lemberg, 5629, fol. 31b).

In Mahzor Kaffa, which was published in the Crimea in 1735, the Scroll of Antiochus is printed in Hebrew and preceded by the following instructions: "It is customary to read Megillat Antiochus during minhah [the afternoon service on Shabbat] after kaddish titkabel [the reader's kaddish] in order to publicize the miracle [of Hanukkah]..." (quoted by Natan Fried, Sinai 64 [5729], p. 114).

Rabbi Yahya ben Yosef Zalih, who was the leading rabbi in San'a, Yemen ca. 1715, says "that some read Megillat Antiochus on Shabbat [of Hanukkah] after the haftarah. This is not required; it is only a general mitzvah to publicize the miracle among the Jewish people" (Tiklal Etz Hayyim, Vol. 1, Jerusalem, 5722, fol. 163a). But Rabbi Amram Zabban of G'ardaya in the Sahara Dessert viewed this public reading as a requirement. In his Sefer Hasdey Avot published in 1926, he states:

Megillat Antiochus according to the custom of the holy city of G'ardaya, may God protect her. The cantor should read it in public in the synagogue after the Torah reading on the Shabbat during Hanukkah. And he reads it in Arabic translation so that the entire congregation should understand [in order to] publicize the miracle which was done to our holy ancestors, may their merit protect us... translated from the Hebrew from Siddur Bet Oved of R. Yehudah Shmuel Ashkenazi [Livorno, 1853] (quoted by Fried, pp. 114-115).

This is a fascinating passage. Rabbi Zabban translated Megillat Antiochus from Hebrew into Arabic in 1926 so that the entire congregation would understand it. He seems unaware that Arabic translations already existed. He also presents this custom as a required activity, despite the fact that he seems to have made it up! Perhaps he had heard that this was an accepted custom in other communities and wished to imitate them.

The Jews of Kurdistan, on the other hand, used to read the Scroll of Antiochus at home during Hanukkah (Erich Brauer, *Yehudey Kurdistan*, Jerusalem, 5708, p. 273). Rabbi Yosef Kafah (1917-2000) reports that his grandfather Rabbi Yihye Kafah (1850-1932) used to teach it to his pupils in Yemen in the Aramaic original along with the Arabic translation of Rav Sa'adya Gaon (R. Yosef Kafah, *Halikhot Teiman*, third edition, Jerusalem, 1982, p. 38).

It would seem that there is no point in reviving the specific custom of reading the Scroll of Antiochus in public, because that work is legendary in nature and not a reliable source for the events of Hanukkah. But we do possess such a source for those events -- the First Book of Maccabees, which was written in Hebrew in the Land of Israel by an eyewitness to the events described therein. (4) Therefore, we should thank Rabbi Arthur Chiel and the Rabbinical Assembly who published the First Book of Maccabees, Chapters 1-4 as a separate booklet thirty years ago under the title *Megillat Hanukkah (The Scroll of Hanukkah)*, New York, 1980). It is intended for reading in public or in private during the holiday. We should adopt this beautiful custom and begin to read those chapters in public every year on the Shabbat of Hanukkah after the haftarah. By so doing, we will be reviving the custom of reading a "scroll" on Hanukkah but, more importantly, we will thereby disseminate the oldest surviving account of the "miracles and triumphs" which God performed for the Jewish People "in those days at this season".

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14 Kislev 5771

#### NOTES

1. This responsum is based on my article "Hanukkah Exotica" which appeared in *Conservative Judaism* 53/2 (Winter 2001), pp. 41-50 and in my book *Insight Israel: The View from Schechter*, second series, Jerusalem, 2006, Chapter 7. An abbreviated version appeared in Noam Zion and Barbara Spectre, eds., *A Different Light*, 2000, pp. 177-182.

2. There is a vast literature regarding this scroll. See *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 14, cols. 1045-1047 and the literature cited there; the critical edition of the Aramaic text published by M. Z. Kaddari in *Bar Ilan* 1 (5723), pp. 81-105; the Hebrew and English versions in Philip

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Birnbaum, ed., Daily Prayer Book, New York, 1949, pp. 713-725; Natan Fried, Sinai 64 (5729), pp. 97-140, which was reprinted with additions in: Daniel Sperber, Minhagey Yisrael, Vol. 5, Jerusalem, 1995, pp. 102-120.

3. Rav Sa'adia Gaon, Sefer Hagaluy, quoted by Fried, p.109, note 68. For Sa'adia's preface to his Arabic translation, see PAAJR 14 (1944), pp. 1-23.

4. Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 11, cols. 656-658. Cf. the magnificent new Hebrew edition of The First Book of Maccabees, ed. Uriel Rappaport, Jerusalem, 2004.

**SHEDDING NEW LIGHT ON Hanukkah**

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Judith Hauptman

The cruse of oil story that explains the origins of Hanukkah has fallen into disrepute. Many people feel that it appeals to children only, because Hanukkah for adults is about a military victory against overwhelming odds. The Babylonian Talmud, they say, composed the story to downplay the Maccabean triumph. But they are wrong. If we read the cruse of oil story in context, we will see how “authentic” it is, and what purpose its authors intended it to serve.

After the Babylonian Talmud notes which oils and wicks are appropriate for Shabbat lamps, it segues into a discussion of Hanukkah lamps and how they are used (Shabbat 21b). For example: each home needs to light at least one lamp on each night of Hanukkah; the lamp must be placed outside the door or, if the dwelling is upstairs, in a window facing the public way; one may not benefit from the light of a Hanukkah lamp; it must be lit during the evening “rush hour.” The Talmud then asks, “What is Hanukkah?” and launches into the famous cruse of oil story: when the Hasmoneans overpowered the Greeks and rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem, they found only one cruse of ritually pure oil, sufficient to burn in the Temple menorah for one day only, but — miraculously — lasted for eight. And so we celebrate Hanukkah for eight days.

If we continue reading the Talmud’s discussion of Hanukkah, we are surprised to find, just one page later (22b), another menorah story. It first appears in Sifrei Bemidbar (sec. 59), a midrashic text that predates the Talmud. Unlike the cruse of oil story, this one is little known. The Talmud asks, “Why does God need a menorah burning continuously in the Temple?” and answers that it informs all inhabitants of the world that the Shechinah, God’s presence, rests upon the people Israel. How is this so? Because every night the designated kohen would pour the same amount of oil into all seven branches of the Temple menorah. By the next morning, six of the flames would have gone out. But the seventh, called the Western lamp, would remain lit until the following evening when the kohen would come back to light the menorah. He would use the one remaining flame to kindle the six others. That is, the oil of the Western lamp lasted twice as long as it should have.

It cannot be a coincidence that two such similar stories about the Temple menorah appear so close to each other in the Talmud. It seems much more likely that, with just a little tweaking, the “miraculous menorah” story morphed into the Hanukkah

story, which speaks of the same menorah and the same phenomenon of “burning on empty.” If the cruse of oil story is an altered version of an older one, then we now have to ask: why did the rabbis do this? Why did they adapt the older story and add it to the report of the military victory?

A very likely reason for the rabbinic rewrite was to fight assimilation. The Babylonian Jews lived among Zoroastrians and hence saw everywhere, in this darkest month of the year, Zoroastrian holy fire, a key feature of that religion. By consciously adapting the old Jewish legend of a continuously burning Western lamp, by requiring Jews to place their Hanukkah lamps on public display, and by forbidding them the use of the lamps for a practical purpose, the rabbis gave Babylonian Jews a way to light their own holy fires, at a time when the Zoroastrians were kindling theirs. For these Jews, Hanukkah assumed added importance.

This new understanding of the cruse of oil story should resonate with Jews living in a Christian culture today. There is no denying that Christmas, with its twinkling lights and exchange of gifts, exerts a strong pull on many American Jews. Ramping up Hanukkah with presents, songs, a chanukkiah for each person in the family, and even an electric menorah in the window, are contemporary responses to living in an open society. Some look askance at these new practices. But taking our cue from the rabbis of the Talmud, we should celebrate, not denigrate, the transformation of Hanukkah from a minor to a major holiday. The cruse of oil story, therefore, is as “true” today as it was back then. No need to be embarrassed to tell it to our children and grandchildren, of whatever age.

Judith Hauptman is professor of Talmud and Rabbinic Culture at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

**MIDRASH BEN IS HAI: Sefardi Hanukkah Customs**

Hanukkah means dedication. It is also an acronym for Heth Neroth WeHalakha KeBeth Hillel (eight candles and the law according to the House of Hillel). This refers to the famous difference of opinion Between the Houses of Shammai and Hillel. The House of Shammai said that we should light eight candles on the first night and reduce one every subsequent night. The House of Hillel said that we should light one candle on the first night and increase the amount by one every day. We light in accordance with Beth Hillel.

The word Mashiyah (Messiah) is an acronym for Madliqin Shemonah Yeme Hanukkah (we light throughout the eight days of Hanukkah). What is the significance of this? By lighting the Hanukkah we perform three Miswoth (precepts) together, as follows:

When one enters one's home the Mezuzah is on the right, the Hanukkah is lit on the left, and the man who enters has Sisiyoth (fringes) on his Tallith Qatan. The Acronym for Sisith, Mezuzah and Hanukkah is Semah, who is the Mashiyah.

During the eight days of Hanukkah we kindle lights in commemoration of the "miracles, deliverance, mighty deeds salvations, wonders and solace" that our Heavenly Father performed for us in those days, at this time.

It was then that the suppressive and tyrannical rule by the Greeks was overturned in battle and the Beth Hammiqdash (Temple) was rededicated by the Hasmoneans.

There are different opinions as to why, when they entered the Temple and found only one cruse of pure oil for the Menorah (sufficient for only one day), they required eight days to make new oil. One opinion is that they were defiled from war and had to wait to be purified before making it.

In any case, as is well known, this solitary cruse lasted for eight days and in memory of this miracle the festival of Hanukkah was established for eight days.

On each night of Hanukkah, from when the time for lighting arrives, we are not permitted to eat or even study Torah till the lights are actually kindled.

The choicest way of performing the precept of the lighting of the Hanukkah lights is through the use of olive oil. However two types of lights may not be mixed (such as olive oil and wax candles) as it should not appear that two people lit them.

In accordance with the teachings of Sephardi Hakhamim, z"l, only the head of the household may light Hanukkah lights in each household. The other members of the family stand beside him and watch.

It is good, however, to allow one of the children to light the additional candle - referred to as the Shammash - in order to train them in the performance of the Miswoth. The Shammash, which is generally considered to have some Miswah attached, should be lit last and should not be used to light the other lights.

This is in accordance with the Sephardim. Ashkenazim have the Minhag of having each child light his own Hanukkah.

In any case, each one must do in accordance with the teachings of his forefathers and may not change.

One may not make use of the lights during the time that they are required to burn and even though some hold that the light of the Shammash may be used, according to the Qabbalah (Jewish Mysticism) it may not.

After the recitation of the benedictions of Lehadliq Ner Hanukkah, She'asa Nisseem, (followed by Sheheheyenu on the first day), Hanneroth Hallalu the kindling of the lights and Mizmor Shir Hanukkath Habbayith, it is considered to be a good omen to recite Wihi No'am and Yosheb Besether.

The Ashkenazi Minhag is to follow the lighting with the singing of the hymn Ma'oz Sur, a traditional European song. Sepharadim have different songs for Hanukkah, but do not have the custom of singing them after the lighting.

The story of Yehudith, daughter of the Kohen Gadol (high Priest) Yohanan, bears some similarities to the events that are commemorated in Hanukkah, and is also remembered during these days.

As is written in "Hemdath Yamim", the cruel Greek ruler desired Yehudith and had her brought before him. She fed him with dairy foods and wine till he fell asleep and then severed off his head. At the sight of their leader's decapitated head, the enemy soldiers fled.

For this and other reasons, Hanukkah is of specific importance to women. It is important, therefore, that they do no Melakha (work) while the lights are burning each night, - i.e. for the half hour that they are required to be alight. It is appropriate also, for a woman whose livelihood does not depend on it, to abstain from doing any Melakha on the first and last days of Hanukkah.

In the memory of the afore-mentioned story of Yehudith, Sephardim (and some Ashkenazim) partake of dairy foods during the Holiday. The Ashkenazi custom is to eat foods fried in oil, in memory of the miracle of the cruse of oil. In general, Sepharadim have not adopted this custom.

On Shabbath Hanukkah and on Rosh Hodesh - and especially if they fall on the same day - one should eat more and sing Shbahoht (songs of praise) such as Wethismah Bakh Attah Malka.

On 'Ereb Shabbath Hanukkah one must be particularly careful to pray Minha before lighting the Hanukkah lights. And these, in turn, must be kindled before those of Shabbath.

At the close of the Shabbath, Sepharadim light the Hanukkah in the synagogue prior to Habdalah, but at home the order is reversed. Ashkenazim have differing customs concerning this.

May we merit to see the Hanukkah (dedication) of the third Temple, speedily in our days. Amen.

### MY HANUKKAH CHECKLIST

Every night, when lighting the Hanukkah lights, I recite:

- 1) Lehadiq Ner Hanukkah. (Not Ner Shel Hanukkah - according to the Sod. This is the custom of most Sephardim). Ashkenazim (most) say Ner Shel Hanukkah.
- 2) Hanneroth Halalu.
- 3) Mizmor Hanukkah Habbayith.
- 4) Wihi No'am (7 times).
- 5) Yosheb Besether 'Elyon.

Ashkenazim conclude the lighting with the hymn Mao'oz Sur. Sephardim do not have the custom of concluding the lighting with songs of praise. However there are specific songs for Hanukkha, such as Y-a Hassel Yona [Wethismah Bakh Atta Malka], Yasa Limlokh, Yabbi'oon Sephathai Shirah and Yithro'a'oo.

If I am Sephardi, I do not use the Shammash to light the other candles, but instead, I use matches or a separate candle to light them. I then light the Shammash last. If I am Ashkenazi, I light all candles with the Shammash. (Click here for an explanation of the lighting of the Shammash).

If I am Sephardi, we only light one Hanukkah (Hanukkah Menorah) in my home, which is lit by the head of the household. All other members stand by and watch. (There is a difference in ruling between Sepharadi and Ashkenazi Hakhamim). If I am Ashkenazi, the children light too.

I eat special foods on Hanukkah. Sephardim eat dairy foods all through Hanukkah in memory of the miracle occurred through dairy foods at the hand of Yehudith. Ashkenazim eat foods fried in oil, such as donuts and potato pancakes, in memory of the miracle of the cruse of oil. This is not the Sephardi custom.

I eat more during Hanukkah, and especially on Shabbath and Rosh Hodesh of Hanukkah and sing Shbahoht (songs of praise).

The children are trained in the Miswah of giving money in charity. Ashkenazim have the minhagh of giving Hanukkah money [and presents] to the children. Although there is a source for it, this is not the prevalent custom among Sephardim.)

Women abstain from Melakha (servile work) at least during the time that the lights are required to be alight.

**DEALING WITH CHRISTMAS ENVY AT HANUKKAH:  
Parents Must Teach Kids to Negotiate the Holiday Minefield**

By Sarah Wildman

‘It’s comin’ on Christmas / They’re cuttin’ down trees / They’re putting up reindeer / And singing songs of joy and peace....’ I grew up obsessed with Joni Mitchell’s “Blue” album, lustily singing along with every track, mournfully noting how sad it was that she made her baby cry, during Christmas of all times. So I didn’t mind the lyrics of “River.” The song was not at all like the Christmas carols I was forced to sing in chorus (“For the Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!”), which made me stand, indignant, and wonder if I should remain silent rather than mouth the word “Christ.” It didn’t make much sense to reject one and embrace the other, but such is life in the holiday season, in America.

Of course, at home back then, we had no Christmas, and we still don’t today.

Related

The Real Truth About Santa Claus

Coming Out: It’s the Jewish Thing to Do At Hanukkah

Buñuelos: A Curious Christmas and Hanukkah Connection

The other night, my 2.5-year-old daughter, Orli, and my partner, Ian, went to a friend’s house; the family has two boys — one about 3, the other about 5 — and the kids were all excited to tell Orli they had sat on Santa’s lap that day, in a Virginia mall. “Santa?” Orli said as she looked to Ian, somewhat uncertainly. And then the parents of the two boys lit candles, something they apparently do, occasionally, for dinner parties. Now this was something Orli understood. “Candles are for Shabbat!” she cried.

When Ian came home we laughed about it, but then we wondered: How do we explain Christmas? She’s young enough that some of the consumerism can be blocked (but with difficulty — already we’ve gotten a dozen catalogs from companies like American Girl and Target and One Step Ahead, promising Christmas treats). But how do we teach her to respect it and yet reject it, or if not reject it, not need it or want it? How do we discuss Hanukkah without making it an alternative to Christmas? For a girl named for light, it shouldn’t be too hard, and yet it stumps me.

I put out a query to a few other families, asking for advice and to see how they handle the three Cs — Christ, Consumerism and Consciousness — during the holidays.

“I hate it, frankly — I hate that they get so acquisitive and that I don’t have the energy to take a stand,” said Elana Matthews, an English professor in Madison, Wis., who worries that her children feel deprived during the holiday season. “I mean, we’re pretty actively Jewish... but I think that for my kids, Hanukkah is basically an inadequate Christmas with candles.” Matthews said that her children — Ezra, 5, and Lily, 8 — don’t really query, yet, about Christmas. They just get that it’s a season for gifts. “We go full-on with admiring Christmas trees in stores and people’s houses, and ooh and ahh over lights; we cast it as a sort of art installation that everybody can appreciate because it’s cool to look at,” she said.

Amy Harrison Kotulski and Leslie Harrison Berland, sisters who live in New York and my cousins, also weighed in. “My 6-year-old daughter, who lives her life through the lens of glitter and excess, wants to know why Christmas seems to be the embodiment of both and [why] she can’t be in the middle of it all,” Amy said. “My default [answer] always seems to be that we get eight days of presents! Not the most strategic and thoughtful approach. Oh, and I leave the whole Jesus part out of it. We do discuss that people believe in different things, but mainly because they are stumped as to why their nanny does not have Shabbat dinner. Oy.”

Leslie, on the other hand, tries to “create a rocked-out Hanukkah, so my son never feels there is something lacking.” Jacob, 5, is too young, she explained, to know what Christmas is, but he understands that Jews also have, for example, Passover and Sukkot, festivals that he loves and that not everyone else has. Leslie said she tries to be positive in response to questions about Christmas: “Christmas trees? Yes, it’s part of Christmas. Isn’t it beautiful? You’re so lucky you get your own menorah for Hanukkah.” Being in New York City does make it easier, she said: “Next to any Christmas decoration, there is usually a menorah planted right beside.”

In Orli’s gan, or kindergarten, class, ostensibly there are non-Jewish children, but most are Jews. Debra Perlson-Mishalov, the mother of Jonah, 3, runs a yoga studio in Washington, D.C. “Jonah’s at an age where things are still so regulated, so it is super easy to avoid TV hype, shopping malls and Christmas glitz,” she said. “We do celebrate seasonal changes and talk about shifts in nature, though, and we do have Hanukkah and menorah lightings.... Last year we bought some Hanukkah gifts, but he was so into the candles and making latkes that they were not all given to him. It was a good lesson for us.” She and her husband work on recognizing that, sometimes, an adult’s ideas of want and need are bigger than a child’s.

But some are simpler in their approach. David Baltaxe, a Virginia-based father of three, tells his son that Santa simply doesn’t come to their house. “I think it’s yet another part of life where the response is, ‘We’re Jewish; we don’t do that; that’s what Christians do.’ ... We are conscious to not make it a judgment, [but] Christmas is when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus.... Cue next conversation.”

For now, at least, we can plan our menorah lighting and our gifts, if we do them, and we can talk about lighting up the night, and sing about the Maccabees and play dreidel. And we’ll teach Orli to respect the people around us, and admire their trees, and hope that she feels not lack, but pride.

Sarah Wildman writes about the intersection of culture, politics and travel for The New York Times and for the Guardian.

Read more: <http://www.forward.com/articles/147113/#ixzz1gqa50Df7>

**MIDDLE ISRAEL: HANUKKA AND THE MEDIA CRISIS**

By AMOTZ ASA-EL

Like seasoned advertisers, the sages made an effective sale by twisting the truth.

The sages could not possibly foresee TV, radio or even just billboard ads, but in their stated quest to “advertise the miracle” they still got right all of modern advertising’s essentials.

In ruling that the hanukkia’s candles should face the street and not be placed too high, lest their visibility be compromised, they foresaw the principle of the “sweet spot,” the modern advertiser’s quest to position an ad where it is most noticed. In ruling that the candles should not be lit after pedestrians clear the public domain, they foresaw the “prime time” concept. And in decreeing that the candles must not be lit even one minute before sunset, the sages provided an effective advertisement’s measure of contrast – in this case, between darkness and light.

The link between Judaism and advertising is exclusive to Hanukka. No other tradition or duty is so obsessive with Judaism’s presence in the public sphere. The High Holy Days are marked within synagogues, the Pessah Seder happens in the depth of dining rooms, praying needs a quorum but is not meant to be seen or heard by anyone besides God, and the succa, while its ceiling can only be that distant from its own floor, can be as distant from the street level as a skyscraper’s rooftop, where no one will see it but pilots and birds.

Not Hanukka. This holiday, like advertising itself, came to the world in the wake of a competition and is designed to reclaim the Jewish public sphere, which had come under attack, first by Greeks, then by Romans and finally by Christians.

As advertisers, the sages were some 2,000 years ahead of their time.

Modern advertising not only crowds the public domain, it has come to define it, if not legally then at least atmospherically, for in our civilization places with no advertisements, like the sea, the desert, the North Pole and the moon, are invariably places the masses shun.

Unfortunately, the sages emulated modern advertising not only in its tactics, but also in its essence. Advertising is like the saleswoman who sprays us with perfume at a

department store's threshold while insisting that hers is the best, strongest and cheapest brand, not because it is any of that that, but because it is the one that paid her. Yes, not all advertising is manipulative, and historiography is never fully impartial. Yet advertising is out to provoke people's senses rather than stimulate their minds, and while at it, if necessary, ignore the truth, and even twist it. That is also what the sages did with Hanukka.

THE TRUE Hanukka story is political and military. Like numerous other tales of national resistance, this one was about a clash between a regional power and the guerrillas who defeated it in a quest for independence. This is how the story was initially chronicled in I Maccabees, which was written in Hebrew in the decades immediately after the Hasmoneans' victory.

And yet, several centuries later this entire historical setting was ignored by the Talmud, where the sages drowned one telegraphic quip about power, "The Hasmonean dynasty defeated the Greeks " (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b), in a sea of laws about how to light Hanukka's candles, which they now turned into the main thing about this holiday. Not only did the sages diminish the real story, they emerged with a story – that the original historiography did not mention – about a miraculous appearance of some missing jug of oil.

Why the sages suppressed Hanukka's military side is unclear. Some suggested they were settling scores with the Hasmonean kings who later massacred religious scholars; others argued that they actually admired the Maccabees' heroism, but were politically compelled to hide their nationalist sentiments; others noted that the sages did not read history and may have therefore innocently misunderstood the story of the Maccabees; and some noted that the Hasmoneans' military action was belittled from the onset by the Jews of the Diaspora, as is evident in II Maccabees, which was written in Greek by a North African Jew called Jason of Cyrene.

What is clear is that beyond the midwinter warmth and the nighttime light in which the sages shrouded Hanukka lurked a story about swords, shields, helmets, daggers, arrows and spears crowding bloodstained battlefields that were quaking under the weight of combat elephants, phalanx battalions and thousands of casualties – an incredible commotion that took place right here, and which they, the sages, consciously or not, set out to replace, and perhaps suppress, with a tale about a jug of oil.

JUDGING BY the results, the sages' visitation with advertising was ingenious. Not only did they get their message across, Hanukka's candles now sprout in piazzas and storefronts the world over and illuminate gentile seats of power from the White House to the Kremlin.

And so, the question that the Talmud once asked rearises now with equal force: What is Hanukka? Is it Zionism's celebration of Judea's military victory over the Seleucid Greeks, is it the Diaspora's commemoration of Judaism's victory over Hellenism or is it about universal spirituality, light, doughnuts, dreidels and snowflakes, as American department store decorators contend?

Well, holidays are not the products of a committee's brainstorming, but what the people make of them, and as such keep changing. That is what happened to Hanukka until now. What will happen to it next I wish I knew, but one narrow implication does cross my mind. It's about journalism.

It is no secret that in recent years newspapers have reached the brink of collapse. Without getting into the details of this industrial crisis, suffice it to say that like Hanukka, this one, too, is about the troubled relationship between advertising and chronicling. For what has brought the newspaper to the brink of bankruptcy is what once made it rich: the ad. The half-a-trillion-dollar industry that financed journalism since the 19th century has now moved with the readers to the Web, and thus dehydrated the newspaper.

With newspapers as venerable as Le Monde taking government handouts, while the Chicago Tribune goes bankrupt, and with The New York Times's share plunging in less than a decade from more than \$50 to less than \$8, it is time the writers of history's first draft reconsider their product's relationship with advertising. The formula has ceased to work. It was convenient while it lasted, but now it is only a matter of time until news organizations voluntarily end this unholy alliance, and start from scratch as nonprofits.

And once this is accomplished, perhaps a generation from now, tomorrow's chroniclers and historians will look back and ask how their crafts, which seek to restore the truth, could ever have coexisted with advertising, which – as Hanukka attests – is prone to twist it.

**Latkes and loot: Is Hanukkah for grown-ups?**

By Suzanne Kurtz St. Louis Jewish Light

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- My catalogue-stuffed mailbox was the first reminder that Hanukkah, or rather the season of shopping, was fast approaching.

Years of Hebrew school had taught me, despite its proximity to Christmas, that Jews were not supposed to commemorate the miracle of a small jar of oil by collecting lots of loot.

Still my family photo albums are filled with pictures of my brother and me posing with our loot, smiling (or not, depending on the loot), near a plate of latkes as the chanukiyah glowed just off to the side. Those were happy days.

For centuries, Jews celebrated Hanukkah surrounded by an "atmosphere of play," says Hasia Diner, professor of American Jewish history at New York University. The tradition of "giving gelt to children has an old and long pedigree," she adds, and the transition "from giving coins to [giving toys]" is an example of an old tradition taking a new form.

To get some insight into contemporary Hanukkah giving traditions, I recently posted a query online to friends. Based on the responses, I sensed some things have not changed much: Be it gelt or toys, there will be lots of smiling Jewish children posing with their loot this holiday.

Yet I wondered, without the anticipation of gifts, would the festival of lights still be as festive for grown-ups? Does the atmosphere of play still surround the chanukiyah of those over the age of consent?

For Deborah Brooks of Falls Church, Va., the answer is yes.

When her parents, her two sisters, their three husbands and combined four children get together for a "Hanukkah Harry" gift swap, each person gets a present -- and something from a wish list they provided.

"We decided gift giving wasn't just for the kids, and it is fun for the kids to give gifts to the parents, too," says Brooks, 41.

For those who have given Hanukkah gifts to someone for decades, it might be difficult to come up with new ideas for that wish list.

Gifting a shared experience is a great way to celebrate Hanukkah, says relationship expert Andrea Syrtash.

"If you've been with the same person for years, give a gift that's something new you can do with your partner," Syrtash suggests.

Harris Lewin, 60, says his "standard Hanukkah gift" to his wife of 38 years was a gift certificate to a spa. It was so well received that she reciprocated.

"Now I get one in return and we go together, as a couple," says Lewin, an educator from Cheltenham, Pa.

Not everyone, however, has the family nearby to swap wish list gifts or a willing partner with whom to experience a shared spa gift certificate.

Rabbi Joui Hessel of the Washington Hebrew Congregation says Hanukkah can be a great time to "join and form community as a way to honor and celebrate our traditions."

Without a family unit under their roof, "for so many people, the holidays can be very hard," Hessel says. "It underscores the importance of community, to feel connected to people as well as to the traditions and faith."

As an only child with parents in Florida and unmarried, Alexis Rice says Hanukkah for her "is about the parties" and a chance to network with other young professionals.

Rice, 32, a communications director for a nonprofit in the Washington area, says she will "partake in a lot of latkes" and attend "at least three" Hanukkah parties and happy hours during the holiday.

"I would be less likely to light the candles if I just went home after work," she says. "And I just love latkes!"

Hanukkah parties for grown-ups only aren't just for the happy hour crowd, either.

Empty-nester Susan Stone, 61, a school librarian and storyteller in Evanston, Ill., says that before her two children -- now in their 20s -- left home, Hanukkah was "always about the kids." After her son and daughter grew up and moved out, lighting the menorah with only her husband wasn't the same.

"Just the two of us -- it wasn't exactly festive," she says.

Stone decided to host a big open house for friends and members of her synagogue. She made latkes, scattered gelt about the house and hung an old Happy Hanukkah sign. Someone brought over a guitar and the 50 or so guests, all adults, lit multiple

menorahs and said the blessings together in her living room.

"It was low key, but a chance to be at home with friends for the holiday," says Stone, who is planning another party this year.

Rabbi David Komerofsky, executive director of the University of Texas Hillel, says that while he encourages adults to celebrate and still enjoy the visceral rituals of Hanukkah, he urges a grown-up understanding of the historic significance of the holiday as well.

It is believed that 2,200 years ago, Hanukkah actually was Sukkot celebrated a few months late, he says. After the Hasmonean revolt against King Antiochus and the Temple in Jerusalem was rededicated, the Sages were uncomfortable commemorating a military victory and the miracle of the oil was born.

"There's no reason not to celebrate Jewish particularism at Hanukkah," Komerofsky says. "It wasn't the first time Jews fought against assimilation, and it won't be the last. But we have survived over overwhelming odds."

That is a much greater miracle than a small jar of oil lasting eight nights or any amount of loot on a wish list.

### **Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel**

By Sybil Kaplan, Special to the Jewish Light St. Louis Jewish Light

"I have a little dreidel, I made it out of clay,

And when it's dry and ready, then dreidel I shall play!" S'vivon, sov, sov, sov (spinning top, turn, turn, turn) Hanukkah hu chag tov (Hanukkah is a good holiday).

Both of these songs underscore the most popular game for Hanukkah-dreidel (Yiddish) or s'vivon (Hebrew), which means spinning top.

In "Hanukkah: Eight Nights, Eight Lights," Malka Drucker writes that the game evolved 2,000 years ago when the Hanukkah story took place, at a time when Antiochus ruled over Judea in ancient Israel.

"Groups of boys who had memorized the entire Torah would secretly study together until they heard the footsteps of the Syrian soldiers. Then they would quickly pull out spinning tops... and pretend to be playing games," she writes.

Whether this is true or not, we do know that by the Middle Ages, the game became more complicated, as rules were borrowed from a German gambling game. According

to the Encyclopedia Judaica, during the long nights of Hanukkah, while the lights were burning, it became customary to pass the time by spinning tops and playing the ancient "put and take" game. This was in fulfillment of the commandment that the Hanukkah lights should not be used for any utilitarian purpose; "they are only to be seen."

Playing cards and games were prohibited by the rabbis over the years and were deplored as frivolous because they took away from Torah study, however, the custom continued.

In Medieval Germany, dice were used for the game, and they were inscribed with N, G, H, and S. N stood for nichts or nothing; G stood for ganz or all; H was for halb or half; and S meant stellein or put in. All players would hold an equal number of nuts, raisins or coins. Each player put one in the middle, and the first player would spin the dice. Each letter stood for a move in the game-putting in or taking out nuts, raisins or coins, according to where the dice landed.

Later, boys carved tops or dreidels out of wood or poured hot lead into a form to make a spinning top. The letters were then changed to Hebrew and said to stand for nun, gimmel, hey and shin. The rabbis were less reluctant for boys to play because the letters were interpreted to stand for the phrase, Nes Gadol Hayah Sham-a great miracle happened there.

In modern Israel, the Hebrew letter shin is replaced by a peh, standing for poh, meaning here-a great miracle happened here.

The rabbis felt even more comfortable about the game when it was also realized that when the Hebrew letters, which had numerical value, were added together, they totaled 358, the same number of letters as the word for Messiah. (Nun is 50, gimmel is three, hey is five and shin is 300.) The letters of the word Messiah or mashiach in Hebrew are mem, which is 40, shin which is 300, yud which is 10 and chet which is eight. Since the Jews are still waiting for the Messiah, this would show the way for a miracle.

Another mystical interpretation of the Hebrew letters is described by Philip Goodman in "The Hanukkah Anthology." He writes that nun stood for nefesh (Hebrew for soul); gimmel stood for guf (Hebrew for body); shin stood for sechal (Hebrew for mind); and hey stood for hakol (all) implying all the characteristics of man.

The origin of the song was the subject of an interesting article a few years ago in the Hadassah Magazine by Melanie Mitzman. She wrote that Professor of Music and Jewish Studies at Northeastern University, Joshua Jacobson, claimed the song was originally in Yiddish and the opening line was "I made it out of lead."

Samuel Grossman is said to have penned the English lyrics, and Samuel Goldfarb, a Jewish liturgical composer employed by the Bureau of Jewish Education between 1914 and 1929, wrote the melody for the English version. Goldfarb's granddaughter, Susan Wolfe, recalls telling her public school class that her grandfather had written "The Dreidel Song," but they did not believe her.

**MY DREIDEL**

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

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel  
I made it out of clay  
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel  
Now dreidel I shall play

It has a lovely body  
With a leg so short and thin  
And when it gets all tired  
It drops and then I win!

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,  
With a leg so short and thin,  
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,  
It drops and then I win.

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

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PR-z3OEKME>*

**THE HANUKKAH SONG LYRICS – PART I (ORIGINAL 1994 VERSION)**

By Adam Sandler

Intro: There's a lot of Christmas songs out there, but not too many about Hanukkah, so I wrote a song for all those nice little Jewish kids who don't get to hear any Hanukkah songs. Here we go...

Put on your yarmulka, it's time for Hanukkah  
Its so much fun-akkah to celebrate Hanukkah,

Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights,  
Instead of one day of presents, we have eight crazy nights.

But when you're the only kid in town without a Christmas tree, here's a list of people who are Jewish, just like you and me:

David Lee Roth lights the menorah,  
So do James Caan, Kirk Douglas, and the late Dinah Shore-ah

Guess who eats together at the Carnegie Deli,  
Bowzer 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! [Esus]

You don't need Deck the Halls or Jingle Bell Rock  
Cause you can spin a driedel with Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock - both Jewish! [Esus]

Put on your yalmulka, its time for Hanukkah,  
The owner of the Seattle Super sonic-ah celebrates Hanukkah.

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. [Esus]

So many Jews are in show biz  
Tom Cruise isn't, but I heard his agent is. [Esus]

Tell your friend Veronica, its time to celebrate Hanukkah  
I hope I get a harmonica, on this lovely, lovely Hanukkah.

So drink your gin-and-tonic-ah, and smoke your mara-juanic-ah,  
If you really, really wanna-kah, Have a happy, happy, happy, happy  
Hanukkah... HAPPY HANUKKAH!

**THE HANUKKAH SONG LYRICS – PART II (1999)**

By Adam Sandler

Put on your Yarmulka  
Its time for Hanukkah  
So much funnaka  
To celebrate Hanukkah

Hanukkah is the festival of lights  
Instead of one day of presents  
We get eight crazy nights

When you feel like the only kid in town  
Without a Christmas tree  
Here's a new list of people who are Jewish  
Just like you and me

Winona Ryder,  
Drinks Manischewitz wine  
Then spins a dreidel with Ralph Lauren and Calvin Klein

Guess who gives and receives  
Loads of Hanukkah toys  
The girls from Veruca Salt and all three Beastie Boys

Lenny Kravitz is half Jewish,  
Courtney Love is half too  
Put them together  
What a funky bad ass Jew

We got Harvey Keitel  
And flash dancer Jennifer Beals  
Yasmine Bleeth from Baywatch is Jewish  
And yes her boobs are real

Put on that yarmulka  
Its time for Hanukkah  
Two-time Oscar winning Dustin Hoffmanaka  
Celebrates Hanukkah

O.J. Simpson  
Still not a Jew  
But guess who is,  
The guy who does the voice for Scooby Doo

Bob Dylan was born a Jew  
Then he wasn't  
But now he's back,  
Mary Tyler Moore's husband is Jewish  
'Cause we're pretty good in the sack.

Guess who got bar-mitzvahed  
On the PGA tour  
No I'm not talking about Tiger Woods  
I'm talkin' about Mr. Happy Gilmore.

So many Jews are in the show biz  
Bruce Springsteen isn't Jewish  
But my mother thinks he is.

Tell the world-amanaka  
It's time to celebrate Hanukkah  
It's not pronounced Ch-nakah  
The C is silent in Chanukah\*

So read your hooked on phonica  
Get drunk in Tijuana  
If you really really wannaka  
Have a happy happy happy Hanukkah!

\* When transliterated into English, Hanukkah can also be spelled “Chanukkah” (or Chanukah), among other variations. Sandler references the “Ch” version in this song.

**THE HANUKKAH SONG LYRICS – PART III (2002)**

By Adam Sandler

Put on your yarmulke  
It's time for Hanukkah  
Once again it's onaka  
The miracle of Hanukkah

Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights  
One day of presents?  
Hell, no, we get Eight Crazy Nights

But if you fell like the only kid in town without a Christmas tree  
I guess my first two songs didn't do it for you  
So here comes number three

Ross and Pheobe from friends say the Hanukkah blessing  
So does Lenny's pall Squiggy and Will and Grace's Debra Messing  
Melissa Gilbert and Michael London never mix meat with dairy  
Maybe they shoulda called that show Little Kosher House on the Prairie?

We've got Jerry Lewis, Ben Stiller and Jack Black  
Tom Arnold converted to Judaism but you guys can have him back  
We may not get to kiss underneath the mistletoe  
But we can do it all night long with Deuce Bigelow

I'm Jewish  
Put on your yarmulke, here comes Hanukkah  
The guy in Willie Nelson's band who plays harmonica celebrates Hanukkah

Osama Bin Laden - not a big fan of the Jews  
Well maybe that 's because he lost a figure-skating match to gold medalist Sarah Hughes (Her  
mama's Jewish)

Houdini and David Blaine escape strait jackets with such precision  
But the one thing they could not get out of: their painful circumcision

Gwyneth Paltrow's half-Jewish but a full-time Oscar winner  
Jennifer Connelly's half Jewish, too, and I'd like to put some more in her

There's Lou Reed, Perry Farrell, Beck and Paula Abdul  
Joey Ramone invented punk rock music, but first came Hebrew school

Hey, Natalie Portmanika?  
It's time to celebrate Hanukkah!

I hope you get an abtronika  
On this joyful, toyful Hanukkah

So get a high colonika  
And soil your long Johnikas

If you really, really wannaka?  
Have a happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy,....

Happy Hanukkah!

**HANUKKAH, OH HANUKKAH**

Hanukkah, oh Hanukkah, 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  
 Dreydles to play with and latkes to eat.

And while we are playing the candles are burning low  
 One for each night they shed a sweet  
 Light to remind us of days long ago  
 One for each night they shed a sweet  
 Light to remind us of days long ago.

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLqG3BqMC8E>*

**MA'OZ TZUR (ROCK OF AGES)**

לְדָ נְאֻה לְשִׁבְחָ,	מְעוֹז צוֹר יְשׁוּעָתִי
וְשֵׁם תוֹדָה נִזְבְּחָ,	תִּכּוֹן בַּיִת תִּפְלֵתִי
מִצָּר הַמְּנַבְּחָ,	לְעֵת תִּכּוֹן מִטְבְּחָ
חֲנֻכַּת הַמְּזִבְּחָ.	אֶז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מִזְמוֹר

*Ma'oz tsur yeshu'ati  
 Lecha na'eh lescha be'eh'yach  
 Tikon beit te-fi-la-ti  
 Ve sham toda neza'beh'eh'yach  
 Leh et tachin mat be-yach,  
 Mi tsar ham'na be-eh-eh-ehyach  
 Az egmor beshir mizmor  
 Chanukat hamizbe'eh'yach  
 (repeat last two lines)*

Rock of Ages let our song  
 Praise thy saving power  
 Thou amidst the raging foes  
 Was our sheltering tower.  
 Furious, they assailed us,  
 But thine armour veiled us.  
 And thy word broke their sword  
 When our own strength failed us.  
 (repeat last two lines)

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziocxPBxkjg>*

**SIVIVON, SOV, SOV, SOV**

המלים: ל. קיפניס – המנגינה: ו. קלטר

Words: L Kipnis - Music: Wolli Kaelter

סְבִיבוֹן סָב סָב, חֲנֻכָּה הוּא חָג טוֹב  
חֲנֻכָּה הוּא חָג טוֹב, סְבִיבוֹן סָב סָב  
חָג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעַם, נֵס גְדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם  
נֵס גְדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם, חָג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעַם

*Sivivon, sov, sov, sov  
Chanuka, hu chag tov  
Chanuka, hu chag tov  
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov!*

*Chag simcha hu la-am  
Nes gadol haya sham  
Nes gadol haya sham  
Chag simcha hu la-am.*

Dreidel, spin, spin, spin.  
Chanuka is a great holiday.  
It is a celebration for our nation.  
A great miracle happened there.

*Singable English*

*author unknown*

Dreidel spin, round and round,  
Make that merry whirring sound  
Chanukah brings its joys  
Happy are the girls and boys  
One by one light each candle  
At this joyous time of year  
Watch the children spin the dreidel  
Chanukah brings its cheer

*Listen to the melody:* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFodbrlqbJI>

**THE LATKE SONG**

By Debbie Friedman z"l

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'm a latke  
And I'm waiting for Chanukah to come.  
(Repeat)

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'm supposed to do.

Matza and charoset are for Pesach  
Chopped liver and challah for 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 homes, no clothes and very little food.

It's 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)

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwb1PnLcchw>*

**NER LI**

Hanukkah Folk Song

נֵר לִי , נֵר לִי , נֵר לִי דְקִיק,  
בְּחֲנֻכָּה נֵרִי אֲדִלִיק  
בְּחֲנֻכָּה נֵרִי יֵאִיר  
בְּחֲנֻכָּה שִׁירִים אֲשִׁיר,  
לֵל, לֵל, ...

*Ner li, ner li  
Ner li dakeek.  
BaChanukah neri adlik.  
BaChanukah neri yair  
BaChanukah shirim ashir.(2x)*

I have a candle, a candle so light  
On Chanukah my candle burns bright.  
On Chanukah its light burns long  
On Chanukah I sing this song. (2x)

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRY1pye5gE4>*

**OCHO KANDELIKAS**

Popular Hanukkah song in Ladino

*Hanukah Linda sta aki  
Ocho kandelas para mi,  
Hanukah Linda sta aki,  
Ocho kandelas para mi.*

Chorus:

*Una kandelika  
Dos kandelikas  
Tres kandelikas  
Kuatro kandelikas  
Sintyu kandelikas  
seysh kandelikas  
siete kandelikas  
ocho kandelas para mi.*

*Muchas fiestas vo fazer, con alegrias i plazer.  
Muchas fiestas vo fazer, con alegrias i plazer.*

(Chorus)

*Los pastelikas vo kumer, con almendrikas i la miel.  
Los pastelikas vo kumer, con almendrikas i la miel.*

(Chorus)

*Translation:*

Beautiful Chanukah is here,  
eight candles for me. (2x)

Chorus:

One candle,  
two candles,  
three candles,  
four candles,  
five candles,  
six candles,  
seven candles  
... eight candles for me.

Many parties will be held,  
with joy and with pleasure.

(Chorus)

We will eat pastelikos (a Sephardic delicacy)  
with almonds and honey.

(Chorus)

*Listen to the melody: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbKyVEIEzL4>*

### **CANDLES BRIGHT**

By Linda Brown

Twinkle, twinkle,  
Candle bright,  
Burning on this  
Special night.

Add another,  
Tall and straight,  
Every night 'til  
There are eight.

Twinkle, twinkle,  
Candles eight,  
Hanukkah we  
Celebrate.

*Sung to the melody of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"*

### HATIKVAH התקווה

Words and Music: N. H. Imber

כָּל עוֹד בְּלִבֵּב פְּנִימָה,  
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמְיָה.  
וּלְפָאֲתֵי מִזְרַח קְדִימָה  
עֵינַי לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה.  
עוֹד לֹא אָבְדָה תְּקוּנָתָנוּ,  
הַתְּקוּוּהָ בַת שְׁנוֹת אֲלֵפִים,  
לְהִיּוֹת עִם חֻפְשֵׁי בְּאֶרְצָנוּ,  
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

*Kol od balevav p'nima  
Nefesh yehudi homee'a  
U'lefa'ate'i mizrach kadima  
Eyin le'Tzion tzofoe'a  
Od lo avda tikvateynu  
Hatikva bat shnot alpayim  
Leehiyot am chofshi be'artzeinu  
Eretz Tzion v'Yerushalayim*

Singable English translation:

So long as still within our breasts  
The Jewish heart beats true,  
So long as still towards the East,  
To Zion, looks the Jew,  
So long our hopes are not yet lost—  
Two thousand years we cherished them—  
To live in freedom in the land  
Of Zion and Jerusalem.

## **Dreidel Games**

### **Put and Take**

On the sides of the dreidel are four letters. They stand for Nes Gadol Hayah Sham-A great miracle happened there.

To play the game, each player puts in one or more nuts or coins as agreed.

Spin the dreidel.

If it falls on N, the player does nothing.

If it falls on G, the player gets all.

If it falls on H, the player takes half.

If it falls on S, the player takes the whole pot.

### **Endurance**

All plays spin the dreidel at a given signal. The player whose dreidel spins the longest is the winner.

### **Play for Score**

Each Hebrew letter of the dreidel has a numerical value.

N = 50

G = 3

H = 5

S = 300

Plays agree on a definite score or definite time in which to play. Each player spins the dreidel. Scorekeeper credits each player with numerical value of letter on which his dreidel falls until score is reached.

**PLASTIC TAKES ITS TURN:****A visit to the Vilplast factory, where they make dreidels the old-fashioned way**

By Ofer Aderet

During the Hebrew month of Tishri, when most Israelis were busy eating apples and honey, fasting and building a sukkah, the Vilplast plastics factory began to prepare for Hanukkah. To meet its quota of 150,000 dreidels, the factory had to get into the Festival of Lights mode by Rosh Hashanah.

Vilplast, which is owned by the Vilhelm family, who immigrated here from Poland, has been manufacturing plastic dreidels for the past 65 years. This week five models were placed on the desk of Yeshayahu Goffin, the young plant manager, who married into the family: a large top, which has room for candies and surprises inside; a small, fast-spinning variety; and others of different sizes and colors.

"Before the country started importing products from China," says Goffin, "we were one of the best-known factories in Israel in the field of plastic toys. Dreidels were among the first things we manufactured." Today, however, it's impossible for Vilplast to survive on tops alone, and therefore the factory usually concentrates on making charity boxes, a product in particular demand in the Haredi sector. In addition, they also make hanukkiyot (Hanukkah menorahs) from plastic, intended for use as children's toys, and noisemakers for Purim.

In spite of the ultra-Orthodox nature of the factory and its location in Jerusalem's Romema neighborhood, its dreidels also find their way into secular homes in Israel and the world over. "It's not a holy thing," stresses Goffin, "it's a toy with a tradition that's thousands of years old. I assume that anyone who thinks it's important hands this tradition down to his children, in exactly the same way that people eat jelly doughnuts on the holiday," adds Goffin.

In recent days the market has been flooded with a new metal spinning top, Beyblade, based on an animated Japanese TV children's series, whose heroes wage battles with spinning tops. But the steep price - about NIS 100 each - is not making many parents of young children happy, especially since they assume the trendy top will quickly become outdated. In comparison, a tour in the Vilplast factory, on the other hand, arouses longing for the old-fashioned variety.

The factory takes pride in the fact that it was among the first in the world to manufacture simple dreidels from plastic, 60 years ago. Today, China is unquestionably the dominant force in this market.

Goffin: "Hundreds of types of tops with all kinds of special effects come from there. They spin nicely and have lights and sounds - but it's not the real, original thing."

A real dreidel, he emphasizes, has to fall on one side, and when it does so, will reveal the letter that comes up by chance: nun, gimmel, heh, and peh or shin, which stand for the Hebrew words meaning, "A great miracle took place here/there" - depending on where the dreidel is being spun, in Israel or the Diaspora.

Not many people know this, but even in the Holy Land there is a demand for the dreidels usually used abroad, bearing the letter shin, signifying sham - there.

"Some people claim that according to the kabbala, it's better to use a shin," Goffin explains, adding, "Actually most Jews were not in Israel until 60 years ago. Maybe some are still used to playing with shin."

Whatever the case, he says, there is a demand for both, and sometimes, when there aren't enough dreidels with shin, they export the ones with peh (meant for local use ), "because the objective, in the final analysis, is to create the atmosphere of the Land of Israel everywhere."

**LOOK LIKE YOU SLAVED ALL DAY: A meal in minutes**

by Jamie Geller

November 24, 2010

Hanukka is one of my favorite times of year, and certainly one of the busiest. I host several parties because you know how it goes: Aunt Jenny won't come if Uncle Oscar is in the room, and Scott isn't talking to Heather, and Barbara won't bring the kids if Steve is coming. You have to check your opinions on politics and religion at the door with your coat (that leaves only sports and weather).

So there is at least a party a night before the week is out. That's a lot of cooking.

You may not believe that I don't like to cook, being that I am a cookbook author (the Quick & Kosher cookbook series), run a kosher food blog ([blog.kosher.com](http://blog.kosher.com)), and host an online cooking show (Quick & Kosher with Jamie Geller).

The fact is, I wrote my first cookbook, Quick & Kosher: Recipes from the Bride Who Knew Nothing, precisely because I needed easy recipes that would get me out of the kitchen fast. Once I had a sizable collection — and learned how to turn on my oven — I wanted to share my beginner's expertise with the hungry waiting world.

I actually had to learn how to use an oven. I'm not pointing any Freudian fingers here, but the truth is that my mother never cooked. It was my grandparents, immigrants from the Old Country, who showed me that there are other ways to get food besides dialing a phone.

(They didn't have phones in the Old Country, so they had to cook.) In fact, Mom's folks were professional chefs who ran a terrific little restaurant in Philadelphia.

They fried up our latkes year after year, the kind of latkes that would be gone before the tray reached my end of the table. It never occurred to me that I could learn, but Hanukka miracles continue to happen, even in my own kitchen.

I've learned a thing or two; enough to write a second cookbook (Quick & Kosher Meals in Minutes) while I juggled a career and four children under the age of five. I learned to cook great food in a fraction of the usual time, and I love sharing my tips with other busy people.

For those planning a Hanukka bash, my goal is to keep you calm and confident while thoroughly versed in prepping the customary fried and dairy treats.

I'm not an expert at explaining those customs, but here goes.

Take the fried foods, specifically the noble potato pancake, or latke. The main miracle of Hanukka was that the supply of sacred oil needed for the golden menorah of the Holy Temple (when it was re-sanctified by the Maccabees) was only enough to last one day, yet it burned for eight. So we fry Hanukka foods in oil. In Israel they do doughnuts, called sufganiyot, and they are a little piece of sugar-coated heaven.

The dairy thing goes back to one of the gorier stories of the Jewish victory. Suffice it to say that a clever woman used abundant dairy cuisine to lull a certain Greek general to sleep, then promptly dispatched him over the River Styx, or wherever dead Greeks go. To celebrate her triumph, we favor dairy meals (but I wouldn't go to sleep right afterward; you can never tell.)

So whether you're rejoicing over energy-efficient oil, the smarts of a gutsy woman, or the fact that Scott and Heather are talking again, it's time to party. You'll need lots of good food, and I'm here to provide the shortcuts to culinary success with or without a miracle.

When you want to pull out all the stops, try this Hanukka menu that I pirated from my new book. It'll look like you slaved all day, but you don't have time for that.

Jamie Geller is the author of *Quick and Kosher Recipes from the Bride Who Knew Nothing* and its sequel, *Quick and Kosher Meals in Minutes from the Bride Who Knew Nothing*. To learn more recipes, visit Jamie's blog at [blog.kosher.com](http://blog.kosher.com).

### **SAMOSAS LATKES**

3 baking potatoes, peeled and shredded  
 1 medium onion, finely chopped  
 1/2 cup frozen peas, thawed  
 1/4 cup matzah meal  
 2 large eggs, beaten  
 1/4 teaspoon curry powder  
 1 teaspoon kosher salt  
 1 cup canola oil  
 Sour cream for serving  
 1 (10-ounce) jar chutney, any variety

Line a cookie sheet with paper towels.

In a large bowl, mix together potatoes, onion, peas, matzah meal, eggs, curry powder, and salt.

In a large nonstick saute pan, heat 1/4 cup oil over high heat until shimmering but not smoking, about 1 minute. Ladle about 1/4 cup batter per latke into the hot oil, spreading batter to form a 3-inch round. Make 3 latkes at a time. Reduce heat to medium and cook for 4 minutes on each side, until latkes are golden. Remove from oil and place on paper towels to drain.

Continue making latkes, three at a time, until all of the batter is used. Add oil to the pan as necessary, heating oil after each addition before adding more batter.

Serve with sour cream and chutney.

**BEYOND THE JELLY DOUGHNUT:**

**This year, fry up some dessert from the Sephardic tradition. A bamieh or churro, anyone?**

by Amy Spiro

A soft, warm, freshly fried doughnut, with strawberry jelly oozing out the center after you take the first bite. The epitome of Hanukkah desserts? Sure, if you're Ashkenazi.

But for many Jews, the eight days of light involve more exotic confections — bamieh, orejas, churros or kookoos.

“The truth is, jelly doughnuts are very much an Ashkenazi creation, which is great. Same as hamentaschen for Purim — all of these are gifts from the Ashkenazim to the world,” says Reyna Simnegar, author of “Persian Food from the Non-Persian Bride.” She filled her book, which was published earlier this year, with tips and tricks she discovered when learning to cook Sephardic food after marrying an Iranian man.

Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Simnegar discovered at age 12 that her ancestors were maranos — or hidden Jews — who concealed their Jewish heritage during the Spanish Inquisition. At age 15, she decided to convert to Judaism. Today, with a Persian husband and a Latin American background, Simnegar brings all sorts of culinary excitement to her family's Hanukkah celebrations.

“On Hanukkah I always try to make something fried,” she says. Persians, she added, do have a version of the sufganiyah, or doughnut, called pidashki, but it is filled with cream, never jelly. “I make it on Hanukkah because it's fried and because it's delicious,” says Simnegar, though it is not specifically designed for the holiday.

“Persians in general, whenever they want to celebrate something, they make halvah,” she says. “They really make halvah all year round for desserts for special occasions; they have different flavors — carrot halvah and date halvah and all kinds of different halvah.”

But in the spirit of the holiday, Simnegar makes a variety of fried dishes, including bamieh, “a fried pastry dipped into syrup.”

Borrowing from her own Venezuelan heritage, Simnegar — who is currently

working on a South American cookbook — likes to make traditional fried dishes like churros or orejas.

“Those are the things I make on Hanukkah from my background because they’re both fried and they’re so good,” she said.

Churros are “something I really miss from my childhood so I always love to make them,” said Simnegar. “My friends say, ‘Whatever night of Hanukkah you’re making churros, please invite me over!’”

According to “The Encyclopedia of Jewish Food” by Gil Marks, many Sephardic communities have their own fried treats for the holiday. Moroccan and Egyptian Jews make zangula, which is similar to a funnel cake, Turkish Jews make burmuelos, fritters bathed in honey, and the Bene Israel in India prepare a milk-based fried pastry called gulab jamun, that is fried and dunked in a sugar syrup flavored with cardamom and saffron. Egyptian, Lebanese and Syrian Jews make zalabia, a similar deep-fried confection, and Greek Jews serve loukoumas.

### **Bamieh**

If you do not have a frying thermometer, test the oil with a small piece of dough. If the ball of dough rises to the top when dropped in the oil, the oil is ready.

#### Dough

1 cup water  
 1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted margarine or butter  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 1 cup flour  
 5 eggs

#### Syrup

¼ cup rose water  
 1 cup honey  
 ½ teaspoon saffron  
 ½ teaspoon cardamom

#### Additional

4 cups canola oil for frying

In a small nonstick saucepan, bring water, margarine, and salt to a boil. Add the cup of flour, all at once, mixing rapidly. Reduce the heat to medium and keep on mixing until a ball of dough that detaches easily from the pot forms. Set aside and let cool for at least 10 minutes.

In the meantime, make the syrup, mixing all ingredients in a plastic bowl; microwave for one minute. Pour prepared syrup into a large bowl.

Transfer cooled dough to a stand mixer fitted with a flat paddle attachment. Add the eggs, one by one, making sure each egg is completely incorporated into the dough before adding the next.

Transfer the dough to a pastry bag fitted with a medium star pastry tip.

In a 4-quart saucepan, heat the oil until it reaches a temperature of 350°F. Drop in a 1-inch size strip of dough, squeezing the pastry bag and cutting the dough with kitchen scissors as it comes out of the tip. Fry until the dough is golden and puffed.

Scoop the bamieh out of the oil and place into a strainer to cool.

When balls have cooled, transfer them to the bowl of cold syrup. Soak the bamieh in the syrup for about 3 minutes.

### **Churros Venezolanos**

Working with warm dough will also help prevent oil absorption. Shaping this dough with a star tip is a must because it allows for expansion while frying. It is imperative to dust the churros with sugar the second they are out of the fryer; this is the only way to get the sugar to stick to them.

Enough oil for frying

Enough sugar for coating

1 ½ cups water

½ teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon salt

1 ½ cups flour

Heat enough oil for frying in a 5-quart saucepan until it reaches a temperature of 375 F. Put the sugar in a flat container for coating.

In a small saucepan bring the water, sugar and salt to a boil. Remove from heat and add the flour all at once, stirring with a wooden spoon until the mixture forms into a smooth ball that pulls away from the pan sides.

While still warm, transfer dough to a pastry bag fitted with a medium star tip.

Pipe long strands of dough (as large as the saucepan allows — cutting with kitchen scissors to fit) and fry, turning occasionally, until golden.

Remove from the oil and immediately swirl in the sugar until fully coated. Serve warm or at room temperature with hot chocolate and arequipe (dulce de leche) for dipping.

**THE HANUKKAH PREDICTION:** Amaze your audience with this Hanukkah magic trick!

The Effect: Show the audience three cards—each with a different Hanukkah symbol on it. Have an audience member select a card. Tell him or her that you knew which card he or she was going to pick. Prove it!

## Materials:

- Hanukkah-symbol cards (found in the Hanukkah cards magic trick PDF)
- The “I knew you’d pick the menorah” card (also found in the Hanukkah cards magic trick PDF)
- A small manila envelope (or any envelope that you cannot see through)
- A pen with a pen cap
- Tape
- A thin strip of paper saying: “I knew you’d pick the gift” (also found in the Hanukkah cards magic trick PDF)

## Preparation:

1. Cut out the Hanukkah-symbol cards and glue them on cardboard. On the back of the dreidel card write: “I knew you’d pick the dreidel!” Place the three symbol cards inside the envelope.
2. Cut out the card that says: “I knew you’d pick the menorah!” Mount it on cardboard. Place it inside the envelope, too. (Try to keep it separate from the symbol cards.)
3. Cut out the thin strip of paper that says: “I knew you’d pick the gift!” (Do not mount it on cardboard.) Remove the pen cap from the pen. Tape the left side of the strip face-down to the pen tip. Wrap the rest of the strip around the pen tip. Cover it completely with the pen cap.

Presentation: Perform the trick on a table in front of a small audience.

Pull out the three Hanukkah symbol cards from the envelope, leaving the “I knew you’d pick the menorah” card inside.

Put the "empty envelope aside (but still on the table, in view of the audience).

Place the three cards face up on the table. (Make sure the audience does not see the backs of the cards.)

Hand one audience member the pen you’ve prepared, and instruct him/her to tap each card.

Next, tell him to choose one of the symbols (e.g., the dreidel), but not to tell you which one. When he’s done, tell him that you predicted which symbol he was going to pick, and that you’ll prove it.

Have him tap on the symbol he chose, with the pen.

IF HE CHOSE THE DREIDEL, flip over the dreidel card, revealing the words: “I knew you’d pick the dreidel!” He’ll assume that all the cards have something written on their backs. Have him turn them over, revealing blank backs!

IF HE CHOSE THE MENORAH, hand him the envelope. Tell him to look inside. He’ll pull out the card that says: “I knew you’d pick the menorah!”

IF HE CHOSE THE GIFT, tell him to pull the pen cap off. He’ll unravel the slip of paper saying: “I knew you’d pick the gift!”

The audience will be shocked and amazed by your prediction!

Note: You can perform this trick only once. Otherwise, the audience will figure out how it’s done.

**BUON HANUKKAH! AN ITALIAN HOLIDAY FEAST**

By Katherine Martinelli

Like Jews around the world, Italian Jews, who make up one of the oldest Jewish communities, mark Hanukkah with a fried feast, but with their own spin. Holiday tables are covered with dishes like fried chicken, mashed potato pancakes, olive oil fried eggplant and honey-soaked dough fritters.

Italian Jewish cuisine traditionally varies greatly by region and even community. However, some Hanukkah foods, like Pollo Fritto per Chanuka, or simple fried chicken seems to have almost universal appeal. Now, get those images of the heavy Southern American version out of your head. This rendition is marinated in olive oil, lemon juice, nutmeg, and garlic before being dredged in flour and egg (in that order) and fried. The marinade keeps the chicken moist and flavorful while the outside crisps in the hot oil.

(Recipes below)

And while Italians don't do latkes in the Ashkenazi sense, that doesn't mean they don't have potato pancakes. Unlike latkes, Fritelle di Patate, are formed from seasoned mashed potatoes, coated in breadcrumbs, and — of course — fried. They are comfort food at its best, with a crispy exterior and creamy, starchy middle.

Hanukkah's emphasis on oil is a natural marriage with Italian Jewish cuisine. Claudia Roden points out in "The Book of Jewish Food," that Roman Jews in particular popularized frying vegetables in the region. "Although eating fried foods was considered a little vulgar," says Roden, "it is now very fashionable, and restaurants specialize in fried vegetables, which are featured as 'Jewish Style.'"

Rome's historic Jewish ghetto is famous for its Carciofi alla Giudia, or Jewish Style Artichokes, though equally, if not more traditional is Melanzane alla Giudia, or the Jewish Style Eggplant in this menu. Italian Jews were responsible for introducing eggplant, among other present day staples of Italian cuisine, to the national diet. Pellegrino Artusi, in his 1891 "La Scienza in Cucina e l'arte di Mangiar Bene" (Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well), points out that prior to the mid nineteenth century "One hardly saw eggplants or fennel in the markets of Florence; they were considered to be vile because they were foods eaten by Jews."

In this eggplant dish, the seeds and most of the flesh are removed from the vegetable before being fried in plenty of olive oil and garlic. The dish is simple, straightforward and delicious.

Italian Hanukkah meals are finished off with sweet fried dough fritters. In "Classic Italian Jewish Cooking," Edda Servi Machlin describes Fritelle de Chanuka as "diamond-shaped pieces of bread dough with anise seeds and raisins inside which, after frying, were coated with hot honey." The precipizi I bring you here are similar in nature, but without the anise seeds and raisins (they also bear a striking resemblance to Struffoli, an Italian Christmas confection). Whatever they are, they bring a sweet end to a festive holiday meal. Chag Sameach!

Pollo Fritto per Chanuka (Fried Chicken for Hanukkah)

Yield: 4 Servings

¼ cup olive oil  
¼ cup lemon juice  
¼ teaspoon nutmeg  
2 teaspoons minced garlic  
2 pounds chicken breast, cut into tenders\*  
¾ cup flour  
2 eggs, beaten  
½ cup vegetable oil  
Lemon wedges  
Chopped parsley

- 1) Mix the olive oil, lemon juice, nutmeg, and garlic in a large bowl. Add the chicken and turn to coat. Marinate, covered, for at least an hour or overnight in the refrigerator.
- 2) Dip each piece of chicken first in the flour, then in the egg.
- 3) Heat the vegetable oil in a large, heavy duty pan over medium-high until hot.
- 4) Add the chicken, working in batches if necessary (do not crowd the pan), and fry until golden brown on both sides and cooked through.
- 5) Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and keep warm in a 200F oven if not serving immediately.
- 6) Serve with lemon wedges and garnish with chopped parsley.

\*Note: Although Pollo Fritto is traditionally prepared with pieces from a whole chicken, I tried to lighten the meal ever so slightly by using chicken breast cut into finger-friendly tenders.

Fritelle di Patate (Italian Potato Pancakes)

Yield: 10 pancakes

1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped  
1 egg, beaten  
1 tablespoon chopped parsley  
1¼ cup breadcrumbs  
¾ cup finely chopped onion  
Salt and pepper  
1 cup vegetable oil

- 1) Put the potatoes in a large pot of cold water over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Lower the heat slightly and simmer until potatoes are softened.

- 2) Drain the potatoes and mash with a potato masher or wooden spoon. Allow to cool slightly.
- 3) Put the potatoes in a large bowl and add the egg, onion, parsley, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the breadcrumbs. Mix until well combined. Season generously with salt and pepper.
- 4) Form the potato mixture into patties about  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inches wide and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick.
- 5) Put the remaining breadcrumbs on a plate. Coat the potato patties in breadcrumbs.
- 6) Heat the vegetable oil in a heavy-bottomed pan over high heat. When the oil is very hot but not smoking, add the potato pancakes. Do not crowd the pan and work in batches as necessary.
- 7) Fry, flipping once, until golden brown on both sides.
- 8) Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and keep warm in a 200F oven if not serving immediately.

Melanzane alla Giudia (Jewish-Style Eggplant)

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

2 pounds eggplant  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil  
4 cloves garlic, chopped  
Chopped fresh parsley

- 1) Cut the eggplant into quarters lengthwise. Cut out the seeds and much of the flesh, leaving about  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch before the skin. Cut the eggplant into bite sized pieces.
- 2) Heat the olive oil in a large pan over medium heat and add the garlic. Cook for a few minutes until lightly browned (do not burn).
- 3) Add the eggplant and stir to coat in oil. Cook, partially covered and stirring often, until tender and cooked through, about 15 minutes.
- 4) Sprinkle with chopped fresh parsley and serve.

Precipizi (Italian Hanukkah Treats)

Yield: 20 to 24 balls

2 eggs, lightly beaten  
 $1\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour  
2 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons rum or other clear spirit  
½ cup vegetable oil  
¼ cup honey  
Powdered sugar (optional)

- 1) Mix together the eggs, flour, sugar, olive oil, and rum and lightly knead until you get a smooth, soft dough.
- 2) Shape into small balls about the size of olives.
- 3) Heat the vegetable oil in a large pan over high heat.
- 4) Add the dough balls and fry until golden on all sides, working in batches if necessary. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.
- 5) When the dough balls have all finished cooking, wipe the pan clean with a paper towel and add the honey.
- 6) When the honey is hot, add the dough balls back into the pan and stir to coat.
- 7) Pour onto a baking sheet and allow to cool.
- 8) Here most instructions say to put them close together and cut them into rectangles, but I prefer to keep them as is. As they cool the honey will harden slightly.
- 9) To serve, arrange however you like and top with powdered sugar, if you wish.

**CHANUKAH 5772**

By Idit Klein

When Jewish comedian Gilda Radner lit a menorah on Saturday Night Live in the 1970s, it was the very first time that lighting Chanukah candles had been broadcast on national television. The skit was a hilarious riff on the ubiquity of Christmas, but what millions of viewers remember most is Gilda. After reciting the blessings over the Chanukah candles, she beamed. Then, unexpectedly, she began to cry—and it wasn't part of the script.

The power of this moment was in seeing a television star—someone so adored by the American public and so integrated into American culture—openly proclaim her difference when she could have so easily chosen not to.

Publicizing difference is fundamental to Chanukah, the most widely observed Jewish holiday in the United States. Jews are commanded to light the menorah in a place in our homes that is easily visible from the street: “One should place the Chanukah lights by the entrance to one's home, on the outside” (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 21b). The 16th-century code of Jewish law, the Shulchan Aruch, is very specific about the maximum and minimum height for the menorah's placement, where in the room the menorah can be placed, and the time of day at which lighting should occur. This specificity is all for the sake of maximizing the visibility of the menorah to the outside world. As the Mishnah Berurah, a 20th-century commentary on the Shulchan Aruch, notes, “This is required because of the need to publicize the miracle” (Mishnah Berurah, 671:21). Publicizing the miracle is so critical for the rabbis that they are willing to say that in certain situations, kindling the Chanukah lights even takes precedence over reciting Kiddush over wine on Shabbat (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 23b).

But what exactly are we publicizing? The miracles of Chanukah itself (the Maccabees' improbable military victory over the Syrian-Greeks and the small jug of oil that lasted eight days) aren't obvious to those who witness the flickering light of candles in a window. So whom is this display really for and why does it matter so much that the sages required it?

I believe that the candles convey our choice to be visibly Jewish in a world where it is all too easy to hide. I see the purpose and power of this act as two-fold: affirming and enriching those who choose to claim Jewish identity in the public eye, while challenging onlookers to celebrate difference, not dismantle it.

Much like this choice we face on Chanukah, I've always felt that choosing to come out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender is a profoundly Jewish act—making a public claim to identity; asserting an affiliation; daring to declare difference.

In October 1993, I was a college student milling around the campus green on National Coming Out Day. A few minutes later, I stepped away from the crowd and joined the few students anxiously standing in line behind a microphone. We each would share a few words about coming out as lesbian, gay or bisexual. I have no recollection of what I said. For me, the moment that I recall vividly—the moment that mattered and required courage—was when I stepped into that

line. I didn't need to say a word. The moment I joined the others in that line was the moment I emerged from the invisibility and silence of not being out into the public sphere of expressing who I am. It was exhilarating.

And yet, we know that in some parts of the world, making our identities known and visible comes with acute risk. Last year, David Kato, a Ugandan LGBTI activist and one of the most visible and vocal defenders of human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Ugandans, was brutally murdered. Kato partnered closely with AJWS's Ugandan grantees to voice opposition to the Anti-Homosexuality Bill—a piece of proposed legislation to strengthen existing penalties against homosexuality and make same-sex relations in Uganda punishable by prison.

Those of us who live in relative physical, spiritual and emotional safety bear the responsibility of making visible that which is too risky for others to expose. Whether it's putting our menorahs in the window or waving a rainbow flag, working for justice—on the local, national and global stage—demands revealing what oppression often conceals.

The lesson of Chanukah isn't only about the miracle of light, victory over oppression and the power of rededication. It's also about demanding to be seen. Coming out, showing up and making the choice to put our identities in the public sphere—much like the choice Gilda Radner made—can be a prerequisite for repairing the soul and, as importantly, a moral telescope for recalibrating the world.

*Idit Klein is the executive director of Keshet and producer of the documentary, Hineini: Coming Out in a Jewish High School. While living in Jerusalem, she was a GLBT rights activist involved in the creation of the Jerusalem Open House. She graduated magna cum laude from Yale and received a Master's in Education from UMASS Amherst. Idit was among eight recipients of the 2003-2005 Joshua Venture Fellowship for Jewish social entrepreneurs. She is a past fellow and board member of the Jewish Organizing Initiative and was honored by the Jewish Women's Archive with a Women Who Dared award.*

**WE KINDLE THESE LIGHTS**

By Rabbi Reuven Hammer

Hanukkah is a holiday that is both simple and profound. It is simple in that very little is required in order to observe it according to all the requirements of Jewish practice. According to the Talmud, all that is required is the lighting of one light each night.

The lighting of more than one candle, which is standard practice today, was an addition to the requirement of one light per household performed by those who are "particularly zealous" in their observance. We, who follow the ruling of the school of Hillel, add one more light each night (Shabbat 21b).

The original reason for kindling lights each night is uncertain. The well-known story of the miraculous can of oil does not appear in the books of Maccabees or in the Mishna, but only in the Talmud. It may be connected to the fact related in First Maccabees 4:50 that "They burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the menorah and they lighted the Temple." Certainly the rekindling of the Menorah, the most important symbol of God's presence in the Temple and eventually the most important visual symbol of Judaism, was a central feature of the Temple rededication and one that could be easily replicated in each home by the kindling of a light. The tale of the oil only added greater significance to that action.

Of course it should not be forgotten that the lighting of lights at the season of the winter solstice, the time when the hours of daylight are the shortest, was an ancient practice of many religions. The Talmud records a legend that as the days became progressively shorter, Adam was frightened, thinking that eventually there would be no light at all. "Perhaps because I have sinned," he said, "the world is becoming dark and returning to the state of chaos and confusion. This is the 'death' to which I have been sentenced by Heaven!" He then fasted for eight days, but as the days began to become longer again he realized that this was simply the natural way of the world and then kept a festival for eight days. He observed this festival every year in thankfulness to God, but idolaters later observed it in honor of their gods (Avodah Zarah 8a). This was the Sages' explanation of the origin of the Roman festival of Kalenda at that time of year.

The eight days of Hanukkah is actually based on the fact recorded in Second Maccabees 10:6 that they celebrated the rededication of the Temple for eight days "like Sukkot, recalling that on Sukkot they had been wandering in the mountains and caverns like wild animals." That also explains why we recite Hallel on Hanukkah each day, since Hallel is recited each day of Sukkot.

Although the historical events leading to the Maccabean revolt are quite complicated and include an inner conflict among various Jewish groups as well as the struggle between Jews and the Syrian Greeks who ruled the land, the holiday has come to represent the triumph of religious freedom over the attempt to force an alien culture upon the Jewish people. As such it is a time to celebrate the right of a people to determine its own destiny and to worship God according to its own beliefs.

The lights that we light, then, do not simply represent the renewal of the physical light that has diminished at the turn of the year and will then increase each passing day, but the light of the spirit, the light of religious freedom, the light of the Divine presence in our lives. Thus the simplicity of the holiday and the ease of its observance is balanced by the weight of the importance of that which it celebrates: religious freedom for all.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת שבת דף כא עמוד ב

תנו רבנן: מצות חנוכה נר איש וביתו?

והמהדרין - נר לכל אחד ואחד?

והמהדרין מן המהדרין-?

בית שמאי אומרים: יום ראשון מדליק שמנה. מכאן ואילך פוחת והולך?

ובית הלל אומרים: יום ראשון מדליק אחת. מכאן ואילך מוסיף והולך. . . ?

מאי חנוכה? דתנו רבנן: בכֹּהֵן בַּכֶּסֶלִיּוֹ יוֹמֵי דַחְנוּכָה תִּמְנִיא אֵינוֹן, דְּלֹא לְמַסְפַּד בְּהוֹן וְדִלֵּא לְהַתְעַנּוֹת בְּהוֹן?

שְׂבִשְׁבִכְנָסוּ יוֹנִים לְחִיבֵל טַמְאָו כֹּל הַשְּׁמָנִים שְׂבִיבֵיכֹל?

וּבְשִׁגְבְּרָה מְלֻכּוֹת בֵּית הַשְּׁמוֹנָאִי וְנִצְחוּם, בְּדַקָּו וְלֹא מִצְאוּ אֵלָא פֶּךָ אֶחָד שֶׁל שֶׁמֶן שֶׁהִיא מוֹנַח בְּחֻתְמוֹ שֶׁל כֶּהֵן גְּדוֹל?

וְלֹא הִיא בּוֹ אֵלָא לְהַדְלִיק יוֹם אֶחָד?

נַעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ נֵם וְהַדְלִיקוּ מִמֶּנּוּ שְׁמוֹנֵה יָמִים?

לְשָׁנָה אַחֶרֶת קְבָעוּם וְעִשְׂאוּם יָמִים טוֹבִים בְּהֵלֵל וְהוֹדָאָה?

### Talmud Bavli Shabbat 21b (Soncino Talmud, H. Freedman trans.)

Our Rabbis taught: The precept of Hanukkah [demands] one light for a man and his household;<sup>10</sup> the zealous [kindle] a light for each member [of the household]; and the extremely zealous, — Beth Shammai maintain: On the first day eight lights are lit and thereafter they are gradually reduced;<sup>11</sup> but Beth Hillel say: On the first day one is lit and thereafter they are progressively increased.<sup>12</sup> 'Ulla said: In the West [Palestine] two amoraim,<sup>13</sup> R. Jose b. Abin and R. Jose b. Zebida, differ therein: one maintains, The reason of Beth Shammai is that it shall correspond to the days still to come,<sup>14</sup> and that of Beth Hillel is that it shall correspond to the days that are gone; but another maintains: Beth Shammai's reason is that it shall correspond to the bullocks of the Festival;<sup>15</sup> whilst Beth Hillel's reason is that we promote in [matters of] sanctity but do not reduce.

Rabbah b. Bar Hana said: There were two old men<sup>16</sup> in Sidon:<sup>17</sup> one did as Beth Shammai and the other as Beth Hillel: the former gave the reason of his action that it should correspond to the bullocks of the Festival, while the latter stated his reason because we promote in [matters of] sanctity but do not reduce.

Our Rabbis taught: It is incumbent to place the Hanukkah lamp by the door of one's house on the outside;<sup>18</sup> if one dwells in an upper chamber, he places it at the window nearest the street. But in times of danger<sup>19</sup> it is sufficient to place it on the table. Raba

said: Another lamp is required for its light to be used;<sup>20</sup> yet if there is a blazing fire it is unnecessary. But in the case of an important person,<sup>21</sup> even if there is a blazing fire another lamp is required.

What is [the reason of] Hanukkah? For our Rabbis taught: On the twenty-fifth of Kislev<sup>22</sup> [commence] the days of Hanukkah, which are eight on which a lamentation for the dead and fasting are forbidden.<sup>23</sup> For when the Greeks entered the Temple, they defiled all the oils therein, and when the Hasmonean dynasty prevailed against and defeated them, they made search and found only one cruse of oil which lay with the seal of the High Priest,<sup>24</sup> but which contained sufficient for one day's lighting only; yet a miracle was wrought therein and they lit [the lamp] therewith for eight days. The following year these [days] were appointed a Festival with [the recital of] Hallel<sup>25</sup> and thanksgiving.<sup>26</sup>

We learnt elsewhere: If a spark which flies from the anvil goes forth and causes damage, he [the smith] is liable. If a camel laden with flax passes through a street, and the flax overflows into a shop, catches fire at the shopkeeper's lamp, and sets the building alight, the camel owner is liable; but if the shopkeeper placed the light outside, the shopkeeper is liable.<sup>27</sup> R. Judah said: In the case of a Hanukkah lamp he is exempt.<sup>28</sup> Rabina said in Rab's name: This proves that the Hanukkah lamp should [in the first instance] be placed within ten.<sup>29</sup> For should you think, above ten, let him say to him, 'You ought to have placed it higher than a camel and his rider.' 'Yet perhaps if he is put to too much trouble, he may refrain from the [observance of the] precept'.

10. I.e., one light is lit every evening of the eight days (v.infra) for the entire household.

# One less each day.

# Up to eight.

# V. Glos.

# I.e., each evening one must kindle as many lights as the number of days of Hanukkah yet to come.

15. 'The Festival', without a determinate, always refers to Tabernacles (Sukkoth).

Thirteen bullocks were sacrificed on the first day, twelve on the second, and so on, one less each succeeding day; v, Num. XXIX, 12 seqq.

# The Heb. zaken, pl. zekenim, frequently means learned men, without particular reference to age (Kid. 32b), and may connote this here.

# On the coast of Phoenicia.

# To advertise the miracle. Their houses did not open directly on to the street but into a courtyard, and there the lamp was to be placed (Rashi); v., however, Tosaf, a.l.

# When there is religious persecution.

20. Agreeing with the view supra that the light of the Hanukkah lamp may not be used.

# Who is not accustomed to work at the light of a blazing fire.

# The ninth month of the Jewish year, corresponding to about December.

# This is an extract of the Megillath Ta'anith, lit., 'the scroll of fasting'.

# Hence untouched and undefiled.

25. 'Praise', Ps. CXIII-CXVIII, recited on all Festivals; v. Weiss, Dor, I, p. 108, n. 1.

# This lighting took place in 165 B.C.E. Exactly three years before, on the same day,

Antiochus Epiphanes had a pagan altar erected in the Temple, upon which sacrifices were offered (I Macc. I, 41-64). Apart from the Talmudic reason stated here, Judas Maccabeus chose 25th of Kislev as the anniversary of the Temple's defilement, and the dedication of the new altar was celebrated with lights for eight days, similarly to the Feast of Tabernacles, which lasted eight days and was celebrated by illuminations (I Macc. IV, 36; II Macc. X, 6; supra a, p. 90, n. 3). Actually the revolt was against the Syrians, of whom Antiochus Epiphanes was king, but the term 'Greeks' is used loosely, because the Seleucid Empire was part of the older Empire founded by Alexander the Great of Macedon, and because it was a reaction against the attempted Hellenization of Judea. The historic data are contained in the First Book of the Maccabees.

# For the loss of the flax.

# Because, as stated above, it should be placed outside; the onus then lies upon the camel driver.

# Handbreadths from the ground.

30. Possibly the lamp may be placed at the outset higher, yet the Rabbis did not wish to make the precept too burdensome.

### **Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 33b1**

**R. Judah, R. Jose and R. Simeon were sitting, and Judah, a son of proselytes, was sitting near them. R. Judah commenced [the discussion] by observing, "How fine are the works of [the Roman] people! They have made streets, they have built bridges, they have erected baths."**

**R. Jose was silent.**

**R. Simeon b. Yochai answered and said, "All that they made they made for themselves; they built market-places to set harlots in them; baths to rejuvenate themselves; bridges to levy tolls for them."**

What does R. Judah think are the positive contributions made by the Romans?

Why does R. Simeon b. Yochai disagree with him?

Mapping this passage onto the contemporary reality of globalization, which "works" do you think R. Judah would praise today? How would R. Simeon b. Yochai critique his praise?

1 For a humorous alternate take on this passage, see "The Aqueduct" clip from Monty Python's "The Life of Brian" at <http://tinyurl.com/2k9wz4>.

**Mishna and Talmud Relating to Hanukkah:**

The story of Hanukkah, along with its laws and customs, is entirely missing from the Mishna apart from several passing references (Bikkurim 1:6, Rosh HaShanah 1:3, Taanit 2:10, Megillah 3:4 and 3:6, Moed Katan 3:9, and Bava Kama 6:6). Rav Nissim Gaon postulates in his Hakdamah Le'mafteach Hatalmud that information on the holiday was so commonplace that the Mishna felt no need to explain it. Reuvein Margolies[6] suggests that as the Mishnah was redacted after the Bar Kochba revolt, its editors were reluctant to include explicit discussion of a holiday celebrating another relatively recent revolt against a foreign ruler, for fear of antagonizing the Romans.

Hanukkah is described in the Talmud. The Gemara, in tractate Shabbat 21, focuses on Shabbat candles and moves to Hanukkah candles and says that after the forces of Antiochus IV had been driven from the Temple, the Maccabees discovered that almost all of the ritual olive oil had been profaned. They found only a single container that was still sealed by the High Priest, with enough oil to keep the menorah in the Temple lit for a single day. They used this, yet it burned for eight days (the time it took to have new oil pressed and made ready)

The Talmud presents three options:

1. The law requires only one light each night per household,
2. A better practice is to light one light each night for each member of the household
3. The most preferred practice is to vary the number of lights each night.

Except in times of danger, the lights were to be placed outside one's door, on the opposite side of the Mezuzah, or in the window closest to the street. Rashi, in a note to Shabbat 21b, says their purpose is to publicize the miracle.

**Omissions in the Mishnah:**

A number of important laws are not elaborated upon in the Mishnah. These include the laws of tzitzit, tefillin (phylacteries), mezuzah, the holiday of Hanukkah, and the laws of gerim (converts). These were later discussed in the minor tractates.

Rabbi Nissim Gaon in his Hakdamah Le'mafteach Hatalmud writes that many of these laws were so well known that it was unnecessary for Rabbi to discuss them. Reuvein Margolies suggests that as the Mishnah was redacted after the Bar Kochba revolt, Rabbi could not have included discussion of Hanukkah which commemorates the Jewish revolt against the Syrian-Greeks (the Romans would not have tolerated this overt nationalism). Similarly, there were then several decrees in place aimed at suppressing outward signs of national identity, including decrees against wearing tefillin and tzitzit; as Conversion to Judaism was against Roman law, Rabbi would not have discussed this.

David Zvi Hoffman suggests that there existed ancient texts in the form of the present day Shulchan Aruch that discussed the basic laws of day to day living and it was therefore not necessary to focus on these laws in the Mishnah.

**NARRATIVE OF JOSEPHUS**

The ancient Jewish Historian Flavius Josephus narrates in his book Jewish Antiquities XII, how the victorious Judas Maccabeus ordered lavish yearly eight-day festivities after rededicating the Temple in Jerusalem that had been profaned by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Josephus does not say the festival was called Hannukkah but rather the "Festival of Lights":

"Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days, and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon; but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honored God, and delighted them by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when, after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival. Judas also rebuilt the walls round about the city, and reared towers of great height against the incursions of enemies, and set guards therein. He also fortified the city Bethsura, that it might serve as a citadel against any distresses that might come from our enemies.

**Siddur - Al HaNissim על הנסים**

*On Chanukah the following is added:—*

We thank thee also for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds and saving acts, wrought by thee, as well as for the wars which thou didst wage for our fathers in days of old, at this season.

In the days of the Hasmonean, Mattathias son of Johanan, the High Priest, and his sons, when the iniquitous power of Greece rose up against thy people Israel to make them forgetful of thy Torah, and to force them to transgress the statutes of thy will, then didst thou in thine abundant mercy rise up for them in the time of their trouble; thou didst plead their cause, thou didst judge their suit, thou didst avenge their wrong; thou deliveredst the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the arrogant into the hands of them that occupied themselves with thy Torah: for thyself thou didst make a great and holy name in thy world, and for thy people Israel thou didst work a great deliverance and redemption as at this day. And thereupon thy children came into the inner sanctuary of thy house, cleansed thy temple, purified thy holy place, kindled lights in thy sacred courts, and appointed these eight days of Chanukah in order to give thanks and praises unto thy great Name.