

A Non-Jew's Guide to Celebrating Chanukah



Nancy January

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Celebrating
Chanukah

by
Nancy January

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Let me know Your paths,

O LORD; teach me Your ways; guide me in your true way and teach me, for You are God, my deliverer; it is You I look to at all times.

Psalm 25. 4-5

Dedication

This work is dedicated to the multitude of friends, family, and co-workers who have celebrated Chanukah with us through the years. Our shared experiences of trial and error have made our Chanukah celebrations richer and more memorable. Your patient and careful reading of this work as it developed from year to year has saved me from much embarrassment. Your enthusiasm for celebration has kept me on task. Everywhere I look, my home is adorned with your loving gifts presented at this season throughout the years. Each gift is a reminder not only of your love and friendship, but also of God and His love and care for all mankind.

Thank you.

The LORD is my light

and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life,
whom should I dread?

Psalm 27.1

Introduction

About this book

Every year as our family begins to prepare for Chanukah, we get a lot of questions from family and friends about why and how we celebrate this “Jewish” holiday. This guide is written to answer the most common questions and provide a starting point for other Gentiles to begin a tradition of celebration in their own homes.

Unlike the Jews, Gentiles have no command to celebrate Chanukah. But we may choose to do so as long as we don’t turn our celebration into a new religion or incorporate idolatrous practices into our celebration.

Our family likes to read part of the story each night and light the appropriate number of candles according to the Jewish tradition. On the eighth night, we invite everyone we have room for (always making sure to include someone new) and read the whole story from the beginning!

This book tells only of the way our family celebrates this holiday -- which may be different from the way other families celebrate. However, all celebrations include telling the Chanukah story, lighting candles, and having a lot of fun.

Because words in *italics* are instructions, they are not read aloud.

What you need to prepare

You can celebrate Chanukah just by telling the story, but it is much more fun with these visual aids.

Chanukah Menorah

The central piece of the celebration is the Chanukah menorah. A regular menorah is a seven-branched candlestick or oil lamp, but a Chanukah menorah has nine branches. Every year we buy or make a new one, so our collection is growing! You can make a menorah out of almost any material using any kind of candle. We like oil candles the best because of the miracle of oil, but other kinds of candles are fine.

The candles should be lined up so that eight of them are in a straight line or on the same level, and the ninth candle is out of line or on a different level from the other eight. The ninth one is called the “shamash” (pronounced sh’mahsh). “Shamash” is a Hebrew word that means *servant* or *helper*. The shamash is lit first and used to light each of the other candles in their turn.

Both store-bought and homemade Chanukah menorahs can be plain, beautiful, whimsical, or exotic. But making your own is lots of fun.

I read a story about a very poor Jew in Siberia who had no menorah for Chanukah. So he cut potatoes in half, laid the cut sides down, cut a hole in the round ends, put a candle in each hole, and then lined up the cut potatoes to make a menorah! So don’t be afraid to use what you already have and be creative. Just make sure that it is safe and supervised by an adult to prevent burns and fires.

Since Non-Jews are not required to celebrate Chanukah, the Chanukah menorah lights are not sacred. So we can use them to light up the room while we eat, play games, etc. It’s fun to party by candle light just like the Maccabbees!

Food

What celebration is complete without special food? It is a tradition to eat fried foods or other foods made with oil in honor of the miracle of the oil. The most commonly served food is potato pancakes.

Jews call them *latkes* (pronounced laht-kuhs). You can use your favorite recipe or the one we use in the back of this book.

You can have fried chicken, stir fry veggies, fried pies.... But don't get too carried away unless you've first stocked up on antacids and new clothes a size bigger than you're wearing now. As you'll learn from the miracle of the oil, a little oil can go a very long way!

You can also decorate cakes, candies, and cookies with pictures of scenes or items found in the Chanukah story.

Music

Chanukah music is, of course, best. But if you don't have any on hand, you can use any music that praises the God of Israel.

Games

Some of our favorite Chanukah games are listed in the back of the book. You may already have favorite party games that you can adapt for this holiday. Just remember that this holiday is about preserving the knowledge of God in the world and adapt your games to demonstrate that idea. Make sure everyone wins a prize.

Keep the prizes small and simple. The purpose of playing games is to have fun together and reinforce the the lessons of the holiday -- not to compete for a few expensive prizes.

Gifts

If your family is like ours, you love to give and receive gifts. So Chanukah is as good an excuse to do so as any.

We decided our very first Chanukah to make the gifts meaningful and appropriate for the holiday. And we decided that homemade gifts were better than store-bought, because making gifts encourages each person to put extra thought into the gifts they give, use their

God-given talents, and/or learn new skills in the process. This has been challenging and resulted in some wonderful one-of-a-kind treasures.

Here are the rules our family uses for gift-giving:

1. The gift must increase or reinforce the recipient's knowledge or awareness of God.
2. The giver should be able to explain the relationship of the item to one of the lessons of Chanukah or how the gift will benefit the recipient to be more aware of God.
3. When possible, the gift should be made by the giver.

This is not as hard as it seems. For example, one year our oldest son typed the verses from Ecclesiastes 3.1-8, bought a clock kit, fixed the typed page on the face of the clock, and gave it to me (rule 3). He explained that it would help me remember that God is the creator of time (rule 2). In the years since, I have checked time by that clock many times each day. I have found the verses to be an encouragement, a comfort, and a joy to know that God is in every situation I can experience (rule1).

Another of my favorites is a "coupon book" my youngest son made for me when he was about nine-years-old (rule 3). He stapled 3 X 5 index cards together. The top one was decorated for the cover. Each card inside had a particular activity that I could "spend" the "coupons" on. One of the cards was good for "a great big hug." Another was for cleaning his room. Another for doing his homework without an argument. He said he made the book because he wanted to show his appreciation for the family that God made for him. Each time I used a coupon, I thanked God for a son who loves and wants to obey God.

We have also given and received gifts of food, books, audio and video tapes, jewelry, handmade clay menorahs, candles, shirts and caps decorated for the holidays, embroidered pictures, items to help

celebrate other holidays. So, you see, not everything is handmade. Also, we only give the smallest children gifts every night. They need more visual aids than older children and adults do. Gift-giving is an optional extension of the holiday celebration. Be careful that the gifts do not become more important than the story.

If you do choose to give gifts as part of your celebration, we recommend that you keep them meaningful and simple. You can give gifts that are unrelated to Chanukah any other time of the year. Don't ruin this holiday with commercialism. Let your gifts be visual aids that reinforce the lessons of Chanukah.

A few words

Don't worry if you haven't been celebrating Chanukah as described in this book. This is just a description of how we do it in our home. Each year we do something a little differently because we always have new ideas and a deeper understanding, our children are getting older, and grandchildren are joining us. Every year and each night of the celebration we have to make adjustments to meet the needs of the particular group that gathers in our home. So relax and enjoy the celebration!

If you have any questions start by contacting your local Orthodox rabbi. You may also send me questions, comments, or suggestions to be shared in the next edition. Please write to me by regular mail.

Nancy January
57527 S. 550 Rd.
Rose, OK 74364 USA

or

e-mail: ChanukahGuide@Rainbows-INK.com

When I behold

Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars that You set in Place, mortal man that You have taken note of him, that You have made him little less than the angels, and adorned him with glory and majesty.....Oh LORD, our Lord, how majestic is Your name throughout the earth!

Psalms 8.4-6, 10

Let the Celebration Begin!

The First Night of Chanukah

Chanukah is the celebration of one of the world's most important events. We celebrate both an historical military victory and a spiritual victory of good over evil.

Tonight we begin telling our story. Each night we tell a little more, until, on the eighth night, our story is finished and our Chanukah menorah is full of light.

The story of Chanukah really begins in the Garden of Eden. Satan, the Adversary, tried to destroy God's influence in the world by telling Eve that eating the forbidden fruit would give her knowledge that only God had, so she would be like God.

But that wasn't true. Adam and Eve both ate the fruit. They learned about evil, but did not become gods. God made them move out of His garden.

Seven generations later, nearly all the people in the world tried to destroy God's influence in the world by refusing to live by God's rules and doing whatever wickedness they wanted to do. But God didn't create people so they could be wicked. God wants people to be righteous by learning about Him and obeying His laws.

In all the wicked world, God found Noah, who was a righteous man. God told Noah to build the ark and fill it with a few of all the different animals in the whole world. Then God closed Noah, his family, and the animals inside the ark and flooded the earth—killing

all the wicked people. After the flood, only the animals and God-fearing people who were inside the ark survived.

One of Noah's descendents was Abraham, a righteous man who loved God and taught everyone around him to love God. Because Abraham loved God so much, God decided to make his descendents the teachers who would teach the whole world to love God. After many generations, these descendents of Abraham became known as Israelites; today we call them Jews.

One of the most famous Jews is King Solomon. He built a beautiful Temple in Jerusalem so people all over the world could come and worship God. And people did come to the Temple, kings and queens, business owners, workers, poor people, even sick people. People came from Africa and India. They came from Greece and Italy. They came from everywhere to learn about God and worship at the Temple that God called "A House of Prayer for All Nations."

Then about 2100 years ago, King Antiochus of Asyria went to Jerusalem and marched his soldiers right up to the Temple. But King Antiochus and his soldiers didn't come to worship God. They wanted to destroy God's influence in the world and make people treat Antiochus like God.

The Jews fought the soldiers. At first, the evil Antiochus seemed to be winning. But in the end, the Jews drove him away and continued to worship God and to teach all the Non-Jews who went to the temple to learn about God. These Non-Jews were called God-fearers because they feared and loved God.

We cannot become gods by learning everything God knows. We cannot become gods by ignoring God's rules and making up our own. We cannot become gods by destroying God's property or His people. There is only one God. There can never be more than one God.

Tonight we light the first candle on our Chanukah menorahs. Let this single light remind us that there is only one God.

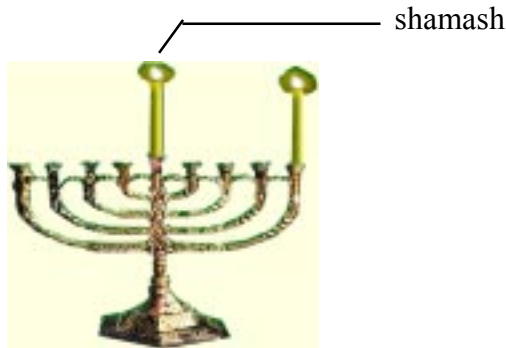
Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candle.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 8 and/or talk about:

How do we know people can not be gods? What can God do that people can not do?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

The teaching of the LORD

is perfect, renewing life; the decrees of the LORD are enduring, making the simple wise; the precepts of the LORD are just, rejoicing the heart; the instruction of the LORD is lucid, making the eyes light up.

Psalms 19.8-9

The Second Night of Chanukah

When King Antiochus first came to Israel, he overthrew Israel's government and declared himself to be the King of Israel. Then he started changing Israel's laws.

King Antiochus hated God because he hated God's rules. God's first rule is "Don't worship any god but Me." Antiochus didn't like that rule. He wanted to be worshipped as a god. So he told the Jews to quit studying the Bible because that is how they learned God's rules.

King Antiochus told the priests to burn all the Torah scrolls so nobody could study them. "Torah" is the Hebrew word for Bible. At that time, the Bible was written by hand on scrolls made from thin sheets of leather called "parchment."

The priests did not want to burn the Bible, so they hid as many of the scrolls as they could. The priests helped other people study the scrolls when Antiochus and his soldiers could not see what they were doing.

The evil king told the rabbis to quit teaching the people who came from all over the world to learn about God. But the rabbis had secret meetings with the Jews and God-fearers who traveled to Israel to learn God's ways.

Even parents were ordered to stop teaching their children about God. But that didn't stop them. People would gather together and pretend to have a party or play gambling games. Antiochus liked to see people having parties and gambling. He wanted them to do anything that kept them from teaching and learning about God. Antiochus didn't know that they were studying the Torah at the party and only playing games when the soldiers came close to their parties. After the soldiers left, the people started studying again.

Just as the priests, rabbis, and Jews were dedicated to learning and studying about God and His laws in those days, so must we dedicate

ourselves to learning about God and following His rules for us. We must follow God’s laws even when people tell us not to. If we do follow God’s laws, then God will call us “righteous” just as He called Noah and Abraham righteous.

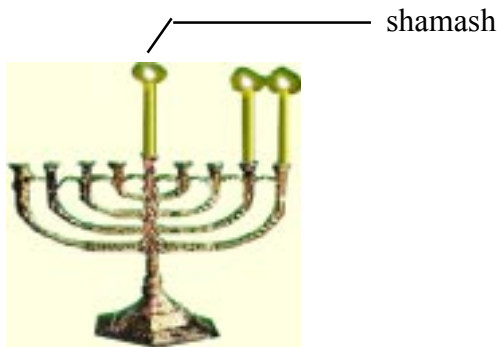
Tonight we light two candles on our Chanukah menorahs. As the first light reminds us that there is only one God, let this second light remind us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 19 and/or talk about:

What are the laws that God gave to all mankind? What are some biblical examples? How can we apply these laws in our own lives?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

Are they so witless,

all those evildoers, who devour my
people as they devour food, and do not
invoke the LORD?

Psalm 14.4

The Third Night of Chanukah

King Antiochus was angry with the priests for not obeying him, so he fired every one of them and hired men who would obey him instead of obeying God. Then he made his priests put a big statue of him in God's Temple and sacrifice pigs in front of it on God's holy altar. Then the king said, "I am god instead of Israel's God." King Antiochus broke God's second law: Do not blaspheme God.

God's priest who lived in Modin was named Mattathias. He loved God very much and was angry when King Antiochus took over God's Holy Temple to use as his own. Mattathias decided to fight King Antiochus and get the Temple back so all the people in the world could come and worship the true God again.

Soon other people came to join Mattathias and his five sons to fight against King Antiochus. Mattathias' sons became generals. But their army didn't look like much of an army. They didn't have uniforms, good weapons, or even training. A few of them had bows and arrows, some have spears that they made out of shovels and hoes. Some had slingshots. And all of them had rocks. Rocks are everywhere in Israel, so the people used rocks for weapons. They used everything they could find to fight against the evil king's army.

It didn't make any sense that a small group of men could stand up to a professional army. But they did. King Antiochus was very angry and brought elephants to use like tanks. But even the elephants couldn't stop God's army from fighting the King's soldiers. Antiochus was not going to get away with denying the true God.

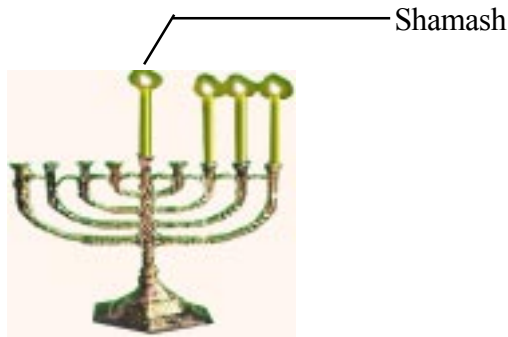
Tonight we light three candles on our Chanukah menorahs. As the first light reminds us that there is only one God and the second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind, let this third light remind us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 14 and/or talk about:

What does it mean to “blaspheme God”? How can the things we say or do blaspheme God? In what ways can we be careful to honor God?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

The Fourth Night of Chanukah

Tonight our story continues with Judah, son of the priest Mattathias, commander-in-chief of Israel's army. As the Israelites looked at King Antiochus' army, they wondered how they could possibly hope to win in battle. Antiochus had a huge army of well-trained soldiers in brightly shining armor. They had horses, chariots, elephants, and all sorts of weapons.

Judah knew that the small Israelite army was no match for the enemy. But he also knew that the enemy army was no match for Israel's God—and God was fighting for Israel's army.

Judah made banners for his soldiers to carry into battle. The banners had the first letter of each word in the sentence "Mi cha-mo-cha bai-lim Adonai?" which means "Who is like you, God?" These letters spelled the word "Maccabee." So Judah and his army became known as the Maccabees.

When Israel's soldiers looked at the banners, they remembered that they were not fighting alone—God was fighting with them. This knowledge filled them with courage to win the battles and drive King Antiochus out of God's holy Temple.

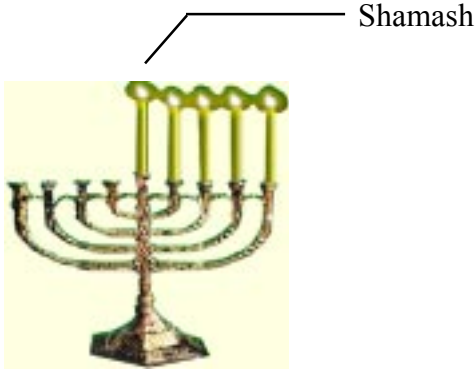
Tonight we light four candles on our Chanukah menorahs. The first light reminds us that there is only one God. The second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind. The third light reminds us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do. Let this fourth light remind us that God is always fighting on the side of righteousness against the influence of unrighteousness.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 3 and/or talk about:

What are some other examples of God fighting on the side of righteousness? Some are in the Bible. Some are in the lives and history of people you know or know about. What things are the same in all the stories?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

The Fifth Night of Chanukah

We are told the story of an old man named Eliezer who was captured and taken to King Antiochus. Eliezer was very well known and very much loved. King Antiochus thought that if Eliezer would worship him, then everyone in Israel would do it too.

The evil king said, “Eliezer, if you will bow to me and call me “God” instead of your God, I will let you live.” But Eliezer would only worship the true God.

King Antiochus thought it might be enough for Eliazer to bow down in front of him so other people would think Eliazer was bowing in worship. But Eliazer would only bow before the true God.

The king became furious with Eliazer, but knew the old man would never give up the true God. Finally, he said, “Eliazer, if I throw my ring to the ground will you pick it up for me and let others think you are bowing to me? If you do, I will spare your life.”

But Eliazer did not want the children to think he was bowing to the wicked king. He didn't want the children to follow that example, so he refused. King Antiochus became really angry and killed Eliazer for being faithful to the true God.

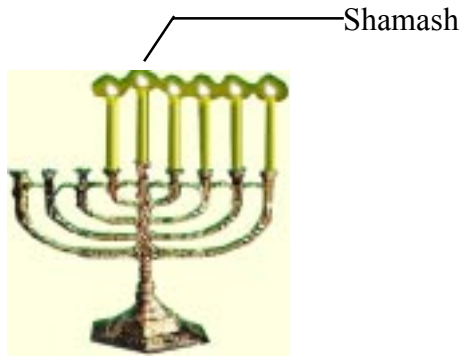
Tonight we light five candles on our Chanukah menorahs. The first light reminds us that there is only one God. The second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind. The third light reminds us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do. The fourth light reminds us that God is always fighting on the side of righteousness against the influence of unrighteousness. Let the fifth light remind us that others are watching what we do and listening to what we say to learn God's ways from us. We must carefully choose the lessons that our lives teach.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 1 and/or talk about:

Who are the people whom you have watched to learn about God?
What did you learn about God from their behavior? What do you want other people to learn about God from your behavior?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

The Sixth Night of Chanukah

Another Chanukah legend tells us of Hannah and her seven sons. They were brought before King Antiochus. He wanted them to break just one of God's laws because he wanted them to obey him and not God.

King Antiochus told Hannah's oldest son to eat some forbidden food. He refused saying, "I love God and will not break even one of his laws." King Antiochus killed him on the spot.

Then the king turned to the next oldest son and ordered him to eat the forbidden food lest he die like his brother. But the second son also refused and was killed on the spot.

And so, Hannah's first six sons were each ordered to eat the forbidden food or die. Each refused and was killed.

Finally, King Antiochus turned to Hannah and said, "Convince your remaining son to eat this food and you will both be spared." She and her son held each other very close and Hannah whispered in his ear, "Be strong. We must obey God and not man." Then she said to Antiochus, "We love our God and will not disobey him." They, too, died rather than break even one of God's laws.

Whenever and wherever their story is told, the faithfulness and courage of Hannah and her seven sons inspire people. Most of us will never have to risk being killed for obeying God. This story puts our challenges in perspective and gives us encouragement to obey God's laws instead of compromising with human laws and customs that disobey God.

Tonight we light six candles on our Chanukah menorahs. The first light reminds us that there is only one God. The second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind. The third

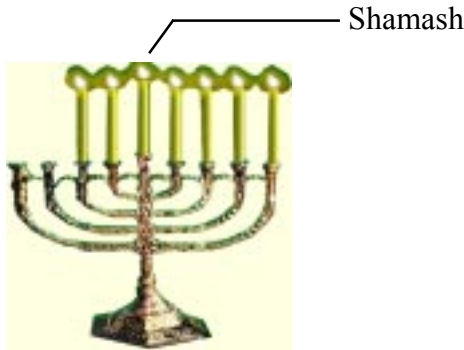
light reminds us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do. The fourth light reminds us that God is always fighting on the side of righteousness against the influence of unrighteousness. The fifth light reminds us that others are watching what we do and listening to what we say to learn God's ways from us. Let the sixth light remind us of those courageous people who lost their lives to set an example of righteousness for us to follow.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 37 and/or talk about:

In what ways are we challenged in our own lives to disobey God's laws? When were you faithful to obey God? What were the consequences? Have you ever broken one of God's laws? What happened?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

The Seventh Night of Chanukah

In the third year of the Maccabee rebellion against King Antiochus, the Maccabees finally took the Temple away from the evil king and his soldiers.

The war was not over. King Antiochus was still in control of Israel's government, but the Temple belonged to Israel's God once again.

When the Maccabees took the Temple back, they were very sad to see how Antiochus and his false priests had treated the Temple. They had stolen all the Temple treasures and sacrificed unclean animals on God's holy altar. The Maccabees had a lot of work to do to clean up the Temple and make it fit for worshiping the true God.

When the Temple was finally clean and ready and all the Temple vessels were repaired and polished bright, the Temple was ready to be rededicated to God. But one thing was missing—oil for the menorah. Only very pure olive oil could be used to make the lights of the menorah. They searched and search but found only oil that Antiochus' soldiers had ruined. Finally, they found enough pure oil to burn in the menorah for 24 hours—one whole day and no more. It would take eight days to get more oil suitable for the menorah.

The Maccabees weren't sure what to do. God's law said the priests must not let the menorah lights go out. They must keep them burning always. One day's oil was not enough to fulfil that commandment.

Finally the priests and Maccabees decided to use the oil they had and rededicate the Temple as soon as possible so it could once again be a House of Prayer for all Nations. They had a big celebration with lots of singing and praising God for His teachings and His goodness. The real priests made a parade to take the Torah scrolls they had hidden from Antiochus back to the Temple so people from all nations could once again come and learn.

After the first day of celebration, everyone expected the menorah to run out of oil, but it kept burning. It burned a second day and a third! It burned a fourth day and a fifth! It burned the sixth day and the seventh! On the eighth day, the menorah lights burned until the new oil was prepared and brought to the temple to keep the menorah lit.

God commanded Israel to keep the menorah lit in the Temple at all times. When they did everything they could to obey this commandment, God helped them with the part they couldn't do. He created the "Miracle of Lights."

Tonight we light seven candles on our Chanukah menorahs. The first light reminds us that there is only one God. The second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind. The third light reminds us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do. The fourth light reminds us that God is always fighting on the side of righteousness against the influence of unrighteousness. The fifth light reminds us that others are watching what we do and listening to what we say to learn God's ways from us. The sixth light reminds us of those who lost their lives to set an example of righteousness for us to follow. May this seventh light remind us that God will help us obey Him when we do all we can to obey His laws.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.

Shamash



While the candles burn, read Psalm 32 and/or talk about:

When we disobey God, our hearts and minds become defiled just as the Temple was defiled by King Antiochus and his false priests. What instructions does God give us so we can rededicate ourselves to righteousness?

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

*Who may ascend the
mountain of the LORD?*

Who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not taken a false oath by My life or sworn deceitfully. He shall carry away a blessing from the LORD, a just reward from God, his deliverer. Such is the generation of those who turn to Him, Jacob, who seek Your presence.

Psalm 24. 3-6

The Eighth Night of Chanukah

Tonight is the last night of Chanukah until next year. We have told the history, asked some questions, played dreidel, eaten latkes, sang songs, given and received presents. And so, Chanukah has come to an end. But what have we really learned that we will not forget in the coming year? Has there been enough substance to this celebration that we are changed until next Chanukah? Or has it just been a fine excuse for parties and gift exchanges?

Each night we have increased the number of lights from one to eight as we learned of this historical event that preserved God's teachings until this day and made it possible for God's teachings to reach all nations.

The first light reminds us that there is only one God. The second light reminds us that God established laws and teachings for all mankind. The third light reminds us that we must not blaspheme God with the things we say and do. The fourth light reminds us that God is always fighting on the side of righteousness against the influence of unrighteousness. The fifth light reminds us that others are watching what we do and listening to what we say to learn God's ways from us. The sixth light reminds us of those who lost their lives to set an example of righteousness for us to follow. The seventh light reminds us that God will help us obey Him when we do all we can to obey His laws.

Let the eighth light of Chanukah represent the growing number of people who seek God through righteousness. May its flame burn brightly to ignite our passion to know and serve God.

But what of the ninth candle, the Shamash? We have used it every night to light each of the other candles. Just as a single candle was used to light many candles, God has chosen the people of Israel to be a Light Unto the Nations.

God has designated Israel as the keepers of His Torah and teachers of righteousness to the world. Just as the Shamash candle is used to share its flame with the other candles, the Jews share the Torah's teachings for righteousness with all mankind.

The prophet Zechariah tells us in chapter 8, verse 23, "The LORD of Hosts said: In those days ten men from nations of every language will take hold--they will take hold of every Jew by a corner of his cloak and say, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'"

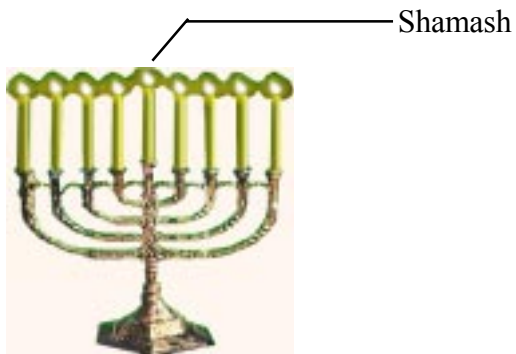
As a Light Unto the Nations, the Jews will one day build a third temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Like the first two temples, it will be a House of Prayer for All Nations.

Prayer :

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who gives us instructions for righteousness and creates the lights of Chanukah.

We praise You, Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, who performed wondrous deeds at this season so very long ago to preserve your teachings for the world.

Light the Shamash candle first, and then use it to light the other candles from left to right.



While the candles burn, read Psalm 24 and/or:

It is not enough to obey God only when it is easy to do so. May we be inspired by the lights of this festival to examine and renew our commitment to God to apply His teachings in our daily lives.

May the Temple be rebuilt as a House of Prayer for all Nations, speedily and in our day!

Now it's time to eat, play games, dance, sing, exchange gifts!

*And it shall come to pass
in the last days,*

that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2.2-3

Recipes

These recipes came to us many years ago without notation of the original source. If anyone knows where they originated, please tell us so we can credit the cooks.

Rainbow Latkes (Potato Cakes)

1 grated zucchini	1 grated sweet potato
2 grated white potatoes	1 grated red onion
2 beaten eggs	3 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt	oil for frying

Mix all ingredients. Add enough oil to hot frying pan to fry latkes. Drop batter by spoonfuls into hot frying pan, and brown both sides. Drain on heavy paper or paper towel. Serve hot.

Traditional Latkes (Potato Cakes)

2 cups grated potatoes	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 egg	1/4 cup flour
1 1/4 teaspoon salt	1/8 teaspoon pepper
oil for frying	

optional: small, finely chopped onion

Sprinkle potatoes with soda, mix, let stand a few minutes. Then squeeze liquid from potatoes. Mix remaining ingredients with potato mixture. Drop mixture by spoonfuls into hot frying pan. Flatten into patties. Brown to golden brown on both sides. Drain on heavy paper or paper towel. Serve hot with applesauce.

Add your own recipes here



A series of 20 solid horizontal lines providing a template for writing recipes.

Games

Torah Trivia

To play this game, you will need to make some “Torah scrolls.”

You will need:

Two popsicle sticks for each of the guests at your party.

One 3 inch X 6 inch piece of paper for each scroll (parchment paper looks really nice)

One 2 inch X 4 inch piece of paper for each scroll.

Colors, markers, or pens (we like the gold metallic inks)

white glue

colorful ribbon or yarn

one piece of notebook paper

If you have children in the house, they will enjoy helping with this. Just make sure the younger ones are well supervised.

In the center of the large papers, write “Happy Chanukah ” with a colorful marker, crayon, pencil, or pen. If you want the scrolls to be a party favor for guests to take home, write the year under “Happy Chanukah.”

In the center of the smaller papers, use a regular pen or pencil to write a question from the Bible or the Chanukah story. (You can type it if you want.) Put a different number by each question. Write that same number on the notebook paper and write the answer next to the number. Remember that some folks will need easy questions and some will be able to answer hard questions. Everyone HAS to be able to answer a question so don't make them too hard. The questions should also have short answers, or this game will take all night.

Keep the easy and hard questions separate so a child doesn't get a hard question. You can use different colors for the large paper for easy and hard questions, or just keep them in different baskets, use different colored yarns, etc.

Cover a table (or other work area) with something so you don't get glue on the work area. Lay the large pieces of paper on the table with the writing facing you so you can read it right-side up. Put a thin line of glue from top to bottom on the left and right ends of the paper. Put one stick on top of each glue line. Let it dry for several hours.

When the glue is dry, roll the sticks toward the center of the paper, winding the paper around the sticks like a Torah scroll.

Then unroll the scroll and center one small paper (with a question on it) writing-side up inside the scroll and roll it back up.

Tie a ribbon or piece of yarn around it's waist.

Display the scrolls by arranging them on a table, putting them in a basket, hanging them from a string,.... Be sure you don't get the easy and hard questions mixed up.

To Play the Game

Pass out the scrolls or let everyone choose one for themselves, whichever method is easiest for your players and the room arrangement.

Designate a person to go first and decide in which order other players will take turns.

On a player's turn, he/she opens the scroll and reads the question (or someone else can read the question if that is better for your players). The player then has 30 seconds to answer the question.

A right answer wins a prize. A wrong answer wins another question. If a player gets a second wrong answer, a prize is awarded for participation. The object of the game is to have fun and reinforce

the lessons of Chanukah. So there can be no winners or losers. Everyone gets a prize.

Our family gives dreidles and gelt for prizes for this game, so you know what the next game is!

*King Solomon prayed at the
dedication of the temple:*

“...if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your name--for they shall hear about Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm--when he comes to pray toward this House, oh, hear in Your heavenly abode and grant all that the foreigner asks You for. Thus all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will recognize that Your name is attached to this House that I have built.”

I Kings 8.41-43

Dreidle

A dreidle (pronounced “dray-dull) is a four-sided top. On each side of the dreidle is a Hebrew letter. Each letter is the first letter of a word in the Hebrew sentence “nes gadol hayah sham,” which means “A great miracle happened there.”

To play this game you will need:

A smooth tabletop or floor to spin the dreidle.

At least one dreidle, but you can provide one for each player (or have players bring their favorites from home).

Gelt (chocolate candy coins--sometimes called “Coins of the World”) or other tokens (candy “kisses” work wonderfully).

Play begins by choosing someone to start, then moving clockwise around the circle. Each round begins with each player placing a token in a pile at the center of the circle. The pile is call the “pot.” Each player spins the dreidle on his/her turn. Then follow the instructions indicated by the letter that is on top when the dreidle stops spinning.

At the end of the game, each player leaves with the same amount of gelt or tokens that he/she started with. If playing with real money, it is traditional that all the money used in the game be donated to charity. It is a game, after all, and should not be truly gambling--enriching one player while impoverishing the others.



Nun (noon) =
Nothing happens.
Next player spins.



Gimmel (gim-mel) =
Spinner gets everything
in the pot.



Chet (het) =
Spinner gets half of the tokens
in the pot.



Shin (sheen) =
All players add a token to
the pot.

*LORD, who may sojourn in
Your tent,*

who may dwell on Your holy mountain? He who lives without blame, who does what is right, and in his heart acknowledges the truth; whose tongue is not given to evil; who has never done harm to his fellow, or borne reproach for his acts toward his neighbor; for whom a contemptible man is abhorrent, but who honors those who fear the LORD; who stands by his oath even to his hurt; who has never lent money at interest, or accepted a bribe against the innocent. The man who acts thus shall never be shaken.

Psalm 15



A series of 20 solid horizontal lines providing a ruled area for writing notes.

A Non-Jew's Guide to Celebrating Chanukah

is a step-by-step description of how and why one American non-Jewish family celebrates the festival of Chanukah. Each step is easily reproducible and adaptable for your family.

This guide includes the Chanukah story, recipes, games, pages for your notes about how your family celebrates, and more.

Don't let another Chanukah go by without joining in this celebration commemorating the valiant military victory won by a makeshift army of everyday people who refused to forsake God. Join the celebration of God's response to the rededication of His temple--the miracle of the Menorah oil that burned but refused to be consumed. It will renew your faith.