

HANUKKAH / CHANUKAH

Hanukkah may be spelled many ways in English and seem to fall on different days in the winter, but it is a special Jewish holiday that has been celebrated since 165 B.C.E. In those days a small band of Jews (led by a family called the “Maccabees”) defeated a large Greek-Syrian army. After the victory the Jews rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem. When the Temple was dedicated, oil was needed to light the special Menorah that was described in the Bible that stood at the Temple. The story says that at the time enough oil was found to light the Temple Menorah for one day, but it miraculously burned eight days – which was enough time to make more pure oil. The Menorah continued to burn until the Romans destroyed the Temple in the year 70 C.E. This explains why traditions about the holiday include lighting the Hanukkiyah (special Hanukkah menorah) for eight nights, and that traditional foods served are made with oil, including: jelly donuts (which in Hebrew are called, “sufganiyot”) and potato pancakes (which in Yiddish are called, “latkes”). There is a traditional game played with a dreidel (Yiddish word for four sided spinning top) which has four letters that represent the words: “A Great Miracle Happened There.” The word Hanukkah means “Dedication.” It is spelled many ways in English because it is a Hebrew word with sounds that are not typically found in English words. The holiday always falls on the 25th day of the Biblical month of Kislev.

These are the blessings said before lighting the candles the eight nights of Hanukkah:

HANUKKAH CANDLE BLESSINGS

A *Hanukkiyah* (Hanukkah Menorah) has space for nine candles. The one that is set apart from (usually higher than) the others is the *Shamash* (“helper” or “server”), which is our source of light and used to light the other candles. In the Ashkenazic tradition candles are put in the Menorah from right to left (the ones representing the oldest days first). The candles are lighted from left to right (the ones representing the newest days first). On the first night of Hanukkah, one candle is put in the *Chanukiyah* and lit using the *Shamash*. On the second night, two candles are put in, and one more candle is added every night until eight are in the *Chanukiyah* and lit on the eighth night. Light the *Shamash*, then say the blessings below before lighting the rest of the candles for each night. On the first night, say all three blessings below. On the rest of the nights, say only the first two blessings. After the candles are lit, you may continue with readings, songs, food and games. When lighting candles on Friday night, be sure to light Hanukkah candles first and then the Shabbat candles before sundown.

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

Ba-rukh A-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lekh ha-o-lam, a-sher
kid-sha-nu b'mitz-vo-tav v'tzi-va-nu l-had-lik ner shel Ha-nu-kah.

Praised are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, Who has sanctified us with commandments and commanded us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בַּיָּמִן
הַזֶּה.

Ba-rukh A-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lekh ha-'o-lam, she-'a-sa nis-sim la-avo-tei-nu ba-ya-mim ha-
hem ba-z'man ha-zeh.

Praised are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, Who did wondrous things for our ancestors at this season in those days.

First night only:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִתְיַנְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַיָּמִן הַזֶּה.

Ba-rukh A-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lekh ha-'o-lam, she-he-ye--ya-nu v'ki-y'-ma-nu v'hi-gi-ya-nu la-
z'man ha-zeh.

Praised are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, Who gave us life, sustained us, and permitted us to celebrate this joyous festival.

Songs About the Story of Hanukkah

Maoz Tzur / Rock of Ages מעוז צור

מעוז צור ישועתי,
לך נאָה לשבח;
תכּוֹן בֵּית תּפִּילתי
ושם תּוֹדָה נִזְבַּח.
לעת תּפִּין מְטִיבֵחַ,
מִצַּר הַמְנַבֵּחַ,
אָז אֲגַמּוֹר, בְּשִׁיר מְזִמּוֹר,
תּנַבֵּחַ הַמְזִבֵּחַ.

Ma-oz tzur y'shu-a-ti
L'kha na-eh l'sha-be-ah
Ti-kon beit t'fil-la-ti
V'sham to-dah n'za-be-ah
L'et ta-kin mat-be-ah
Mi-tzar ha-m'na-be-ah
Az eg-mor b'shir miz-mor } 2X
Ha-nu-kat ha-miz-be-ah }

Rock of ages let our song
Praise Your saving power
You amid the raging foes
Were our sheltering tower
Furious they assailed us
But Your arm availed us
And Your word
Broke their sword
When our own strength failed us

Al Hanissim

על הניסים

על הניסים, ועל הפרקו,
ועל הגבורות, ועל התשועות,
ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו
בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

Al ha-nis-sim v'al ha-pur-kan
V'al ha-g'vu-rot v'al ha-t'shu-ot
V'al ha-mil-ha-mot she-a-si-ta
la-a-vo-tei-nu
Ba-ya-mim ha-hem ba-z'man ha-zeh

We give thanks for the redeeming miracles and the mighty deeds by which, at this season, our people was saved in days of old.

Mi Y'malel

מי ימלל

מי ימלל גבורות ישראל
אותן מי ימנה?
הן בכל דור יקום הגבור,
גואל העם.

שמעו! בימים ההם בזמן הזה
מכבי מושיע ופודה.
ובימנו כל עם ישראל
יתאחד יקום להגאל!

Mi y'ma-lel g'vu-rot Yis-ra-el
O-tan mi yim-neh
Hen b'khol dor
Ya-kum ha-gi-bor go-el ha-am

Sh'ma

Ba-ya-mim ha-hem ba-z'man ha-zeh
Ma-ka-bi mo-shi-a u-fo-deh
Uv'ya-me-nu kol am Yis-ra-el
Yi-ta-heid ya-kum l'hig-ga-el

Who Can Retell?

(Singable English)

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

Hark!

At this time of year in days of yore
Maccabees the Temple did restore
And today our people as we dreamed
Through their faith and courage is
redeemed

Who can retell...

Songs in Other Languages

Ocho Kandelikas

(Ladino song by Flory Jagoda)

Hanuka linda sta aki,
Ocho kandelas para mi

O, Una kandelika,
dos kandelikas,
tres kandelikas,
kuatro kandelikas,
sintyu kandelikas,
sej kandelikas,
Siete kandelikas,
ocho kandelas para mi.

Muchas fiestas vo fazer,
Kon alegriyas i plazer.

O, Una kandelika ...

Los pastelikos vo kumer,
Kon almendrikas i la myel.

O, Una kandelika ...

Beautiful Hanukkah is here
Eight candles for me

Oh, one litte candle
Two little candles
Three little candles
Four little candles
Five little candles
Six little candles
Seven little candles
Eight candles for me

Many parties I will do
With happiness and joy too
Oh...

The little pastries I will eat
With almonds and honey treats

Oy Hanukah, Oy Hanukah

(Yiddish Song)

Oy Hanukah, Oy Hanukah
A yomtov a shayner,
A lustiger a fraylicher,
Nishto noch azayner,
All nacht in draydlach shpilen mir
Zudig hayse latkes est ohn shir!
Geshvinder, tsind, kinder,
Di dininke lichtalach on
Zogt al haniseem,)
Loybt Gott far die niseem,)2X
Un kumt gicher tantzen in kon.)

Oh Hanukah, Oh Hanukah

(Singable English)

Oh Hanukah, Oh Hanukah
Come light the Menorah
Let's have a party
We'll all dance the Hora
Gather round the table
We'll give you a treat
Dreidels 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)2X
To remind us of days long ago)

Songs About Dreidels

S'vivon סביבון

סְבִיבוֹן סוֹב סוֹב סוֹב
חֲנֻכָּה הוּא חָג טוֹב
חֲנֻכָּה הוּא חָג טוֹב
סְבִיבוֹן סוֹב סוֹב סוֹב

חָג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעַם
יֵס גָּדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם
יֵס גָּדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם
חָג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעַם

S'vi-von sov, sov, sov
Ha-nu-kah hu hag tov
Ha-nu-kah hu hag tov
S'vivon sov sov sov

Hag sim-ha hu la-am
Nes ga-dol ha-ya sham
Nes ga-dol ha-ya sham
Hag sim-ha hu la-am

S'vivon (Singable English)

S'vivon - spin, spin, spin
Nun and Gimmel, Hay and Shin
Gimmel stops, then I win
S'vivon - spin, spin, spin

Nun and Gimmel tell the story
Of God's wonder and God's glory
So we sing and so we celebrate
Hanukah O Hanukah

Dreidel Song

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

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

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

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
With legs so short and thin
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
It drops and then I win

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

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
It loves to dance and spin
Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel
Come play now, let's begin

Songs About Candles

How Many Candles?

How many candles (3X)
Do we light?
On our chanukiah (2X)
The first (second...eighth)
Hanukah night

One (6X) One candle burning (2X)
The first Hanukah night (2nd - 8th)

Ner Li

נֵר לִי

נֵר לִי נֵר לִי נֵר לִי דָּקִיק
בְּחִנְכָּה נְרֵי אֲדַלִּיק
בְּחִנְכָּה נְרֵי יְאִיר
בְּחִנְכָּה שִׁירִים אֲשִׁיר

Ner li (3X) da-kik
Ba-Ha-nu-kah ne-ri ad-lik
Ba-Ha-nu-kah ne-ri ya-ir
Ba-Ha-nu-kah shir-im a-shir

My candle (3X) so small
On Hanukah I will light you all
On Hanukah my candle I'll light
On Hanukah I will sing all night

Light One Candle

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Light one candle
For the Maccabee children
Give thanks that their light didn't die
Light one candle
For the pain that they endured
When their right to exist was denied
Light one candle
For the terrible sacrifice
Justice and freedom demand
Light one candle
For the wisdom to know
When the peacemaker's time is at hand
Don't let the light go out
It's lasted for so many years
Don't let the light go out
Let it shine through
Our love and our tears
Light one candle
For the strength that we need
To never become our own foe
Light one candle
For those who are suffering
The pain we learned
So long ago
Light one candle
For all we believe in
Let anger not tear us apart
Light one candle
To bind us together
With peace as the song in our heart
Don't let the light go out...
What is the memory
That's valued so highly
That we keep it alive in that flame?
What's the commitment
To those who have died
When we cry out
"They've not died in vain?"
We have come this far always believing
That justice will somehow prevail
This is our burden
And this is the promise
And this is why we will prevail
Don't let the light go out...

Hanukkah Parodies

It Was the Latkes

(Sung to the tune of "Oh Hanukah")

Each Hanukah we glorify
brave Judas Maccabeus
Who had the courage to destroy
Antiochus and free us
But it is not fair
That we should forget
Mrs. Maccabeus
To whom we owe our debt
She mixed it, she fixed it
She poured it into a bowl
You may not guess)
But it was the latkes)2X
That gave brave Judas his soul)

The Syrians said:
"It cannot be
That old Mattathias;
Whose years are more than 83
Will dare to defy us"
But they didn't know his secret you see
Mattathias dined on latkes and tea.
One latke, two latkes
And so on into the night
You may not guess)
But it was the latkes)2X
That gave him courage to fight)

So this is how it came about
This gastronomic wonder
That broke the ranks of Syria
Like flaming bolts of thunder
Mrs. Maccabeus
Wrote in the dough
Portions of the Torah
Then fried them so
They simmered, they shimmered
Absorbing the olive oil
You may not guess)
But it was the latkes)2X
That made the Syrians recoil)

It Was the Latkes (continued)

Now these little Latkes
Brown and delicious
Must have hit the spot 'cause
With appetites vicious
All the heroes downed them
After their toil
Causing in our Temple
A shortage of oil
One latke, two latkes
And so on into the night
You may not guess)
But it was the latkes)2X
That gave us the Hanukah light)

King of the Fry

(Sung to the tune of "Who Can Retell")

Who will deny
The King of the Fry
The latke precious
Who can withhold
All glory and gold
From such as he?

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

Tzimmes and fish
And kugel and knish
And blintze blessings
Tagelach and schnapps
Are surely the tops for Shabbes joy
(Repeat verse)

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

[Repeat first verse]

Hanukkah Parodies

Latkes

(Sung to the tune of "Downtown")

There is a treat that
Everybody should eat
A certain time of year: Latkes
While they are fixin' –
How the smell in the kitchen
Makes you smile and cheer: Latkes

With applesauce or sour cream
Both ways are really nifty
You can also eat them plain
Because they're nice and crispy

Delicious too,
You fry them in low fat oil
The Rabbi, the Cantor,
The Shammass, the Mohel

Eat Latkes - they are so good for you
Latkes - napkins you'll need a few
Latkes - eat them at Hanukkah time.

Mama's Little Baby Loves Latkes

Chorus: Mama's little baby
Loves latkes, latkes.
Mama's little baby loves latkes too!
(Repeat chorus)

Put away the breads,
Put away the jelly,
Now's the time to rub your belly!
Put away the candies,
Put away the popcorn
Hanukkah's the time when
Latkes were born.

Mama's little baby, (etc.)

Hanukah

(sung to the tune of "Matilda")

Chorus:
Hanukah, Hanukah, Hanukah,
Come light the candles
In the menorah (Repeat chorus)

We call it "Festival of Lights"
The candles burning for eight nights
Hanukah: come light the candles
In the menorah

Chorus

The Maccabees they had no fear
Because their freedom was so dear
Hanukah come light the candles in the
menorah

Chorus

Brave Judah and the Maccabees
Brought the Syrians to their knees.
We're celebrating in (Shreveport)
The battles' over ancestors fought
By now the reason is quite clear
Why we have a party every year.



Hanukkah Dreidel Game

from the De Benedetti Family

Dreidel: the Yiddish word for a spinning top with four Hebrew letters representing the four words for the Hebrew phrase: a Great Miracle Happened There. In Hebrew the words are נֶס גָּדוֹל הַמִּיִּתְּרָה שָׁמַיְמָה. The Hebrew word for *Dreidel* is סְפִינְדֵּל *S'vivon*. In Israel the *S'vivon* says: A Great Miracle Happened Here (נֶס גָּדוֹל הֵקֵה פִּה) *Nes Gadol Hayah Poh*). The miracles of Hanukkah include the few simple Jews defeating the Greek-Syrian army, and the small amount of oil burning for eight days.

How to play the Dreidel Game:

Before each spin, everyone has to put in (candy, or coins, etc.)

The letter facing up when the *dreidel* stops spinning lets you know what to do:

| <u>Letter Name</u> | <u>Letter Sound</u> | Hebrew Word | English Meaning | Win / Lose | Letter Shape |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Noon | N | נֶס | Miracle | Nothing | נ |
| Gimmel | G | גָּדוֹל | Big/Great | Gimme all | ג |
| Hey | H | הֵקֵה | Was | Half | ה |
| Shin | Sh | שָׁמַיְמָה | There | Shucks (-1) | ש |