

Celebrating Chanukah

We celebrate the memory of the revolution carried out by Judah Macabee and his followers who in the year 168 B.C.E. gathered an army of 10,000 Jews. This little band defeated the Syrian emperor Antiochus Epiphanes with his army of 60,000 foot soldiers and 5,000 horsemen and elephants. These Jews chose to fight rather than submit to the state religion imposed on Palestine by Antiochus.

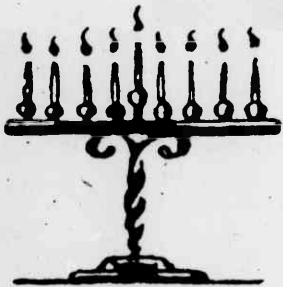
The victorious Jews searched the Holy Temple for oil that had not been defiled by the hands of the Greek oppressors. They found a single small jar of acceptable oil, enough to burn for only one day. Miraculously, it burned for eight days until more pure oil could be manufactured. To commemorate this event, Rabbi Joseph Caro (16th century) instructed Jews to "eat, be merry, linger over viands and punctuate meals with jest and song and relate miracles." They were also told to buy a lamp, set it in public view, and kindle lights, the symbol of truth and survival. The candles are lit on each of the eight days of Chanukah using a Menorah which contains a special place for the "Shamas" flame which stands a little higher or lower than the others. The flames are never lit directly, but rather each one is lit from the flame of the "shamas".

The candles are placed in the Menorah from right to left but they are lit from left to right. No work is allowed on Chanukah while the lights are burning, but children are allowed to play "dreidel". The dreidel is a small spinning toy like a top with four sides. Each side has one Hebrew letter inscribed, either a "nun," "gimmel", "hai", or "shin", standing for the words "Nes, Gadol, Haya, Sham". "A great miracle happened there."

Oil is the great significance of the history of Chanukah, therefore we eat latkes or fritters fried in oil during this holiday. It is also traditional to eat dairy products, particularly cheese to remind us of the Apocryphal story of Judith and Holofernes. Judith, daughter of the High Priest, fed cheese and wine to the Assyrian commander until he fell asleep. With his own sword, she chopped off his head thus saving her village from the warring armies.

Although we associate Chanukah with latkes, other Jewish groups have developed other customs. The Sephardim give presents of candy and fruit, and prepare deep fried cheese pastries. The Turks fry sweet dumplings, and the Israelis delight in a "sufganiat" which resembles jelly doughnuts topped with sugar. Vegetable pancakes can be found in Rumania and fruit pancakes are another Israeli Chanukah tradition.

Almost Hanukkah



Mommy is making latkes,
Daddy sits, smoking his pipe.
We know it's almost Hanukkah,
As children dance in delight.
Then we'll light the candles,
As the family gathers 'round.
We start to sing the blessings,
Ringing out a beautiful sound.

It's Hanukkah Time Again

It's Hanukkah, it's Hanukkah,
We will play the dreidel game.
Then I look at the menorah,
And it always looks the same.
I see the candles burning down,
We light them once each night.
When I see them melting,
They look so very bright.

By Michelle Steiner

Hanukkah



Hanukkah, Hanukkah, let's give a cheer,
You spin your dreidel this time of year,
Don't stop, don't stop, until you win,
Then start to play all over again.

Hanukkah Haiku

It's Hanukkah time
Eight nights of bright candle light
That flicker with might.

By Ashley Widis

HAPPY CHANUKAH

Things To Do:

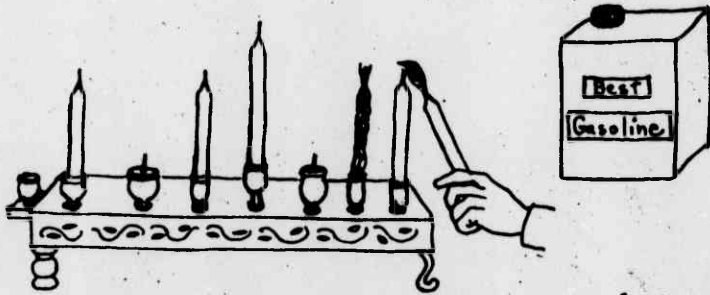
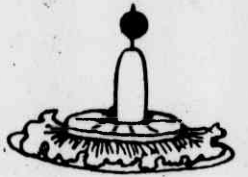


Chanukah Candles Salad

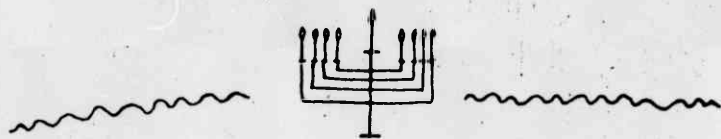
By Malya Dinerman

Ingredients: One canned pineapple ring
one leaf of lettuce
one half of banana
one maraschino cherry
one toothpick

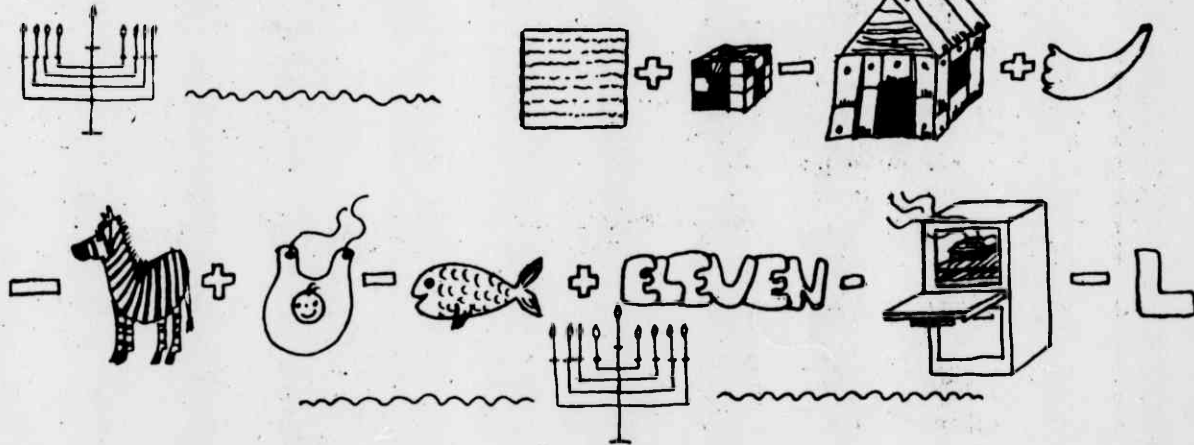
Directions: Put the lettuce leaf on a plate. Place the pineapple ring on the lettuce. Put the banana half inside the hole in the pineapple ring, standing up. This is the candle. Fasten the cherry onto the banana top with the toothpick. This is the flame.



Many years ago, during the Miracle of Chanukah, there was a great search for Kosher oil. Eventually a little bit was found. Would you have been able to find some if you were around then? Let's see how good you are at finding all the mistakes in our Menorah. (Hint: There are 8 mistakes)



As a member of Tzivos Hashem, I'm sure you're aware of the Army Troopers involved in the Chanukah Miracle. Ooops! Their name just slipped my mind. Do the puzzle and figure it out.



- Answers to Menorah
- a) 7 cups instead of 8
 - b) Shamas is same level
 - c) Candles being lit from right side
 - d) One leg of Menorah different
 - e) Gasoline is no good for Menorah use
 - f) One cup higher than rest
 - g) Some cups for candles, some for oil
 - h) One candle is double-wicked

MATZAH plus CUBE-HUT plus SHOFAR-ZEBRA plus BIB-FISH plus ELEVEN-OVEN-L equals MACABEE

HAPPY CHANUKAH

From

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