

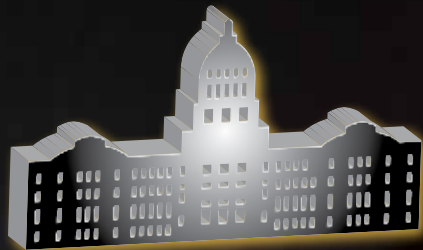
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בס"ד

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**chanukah celebration at the
idaho state capitol**

details on page 12



**chanukah bowl
COMMUNITY PARTY**

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girl kindling menorah

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend,

Looking at events today, you wonder: that Chanukah story of a little light pushing away frightening darkness, of human empathy overcoming terror—does that power still exist?

Then you consider the dawn of each day as sunlight breaks through the night. You think about the cry of a newborn child, of a blade of grass rising from the soil. You think of every

decision to be kind where there is cruelty, to be positive where there is despair and you recognize the eternity of the Chanukah miracle. It is alive and it is within us.

The Maccabee victory was won not through arrogant tyranny but with steadfast pride and purpose in the Jewish mission to restore light and direction to the entire world.

This year, 5776, this message holds special significance. In Temple times, a unique gathering would take place every seven years called Hakhel—“Assemble!” The entire Jewish nation—men, women and children, infants and the elderly—would go up to the Temple in Jerusalem. The royally bedecked king of Israel would ascend a platform and read sections of the Torah. The nation was inspired and invigorated. A display of unity and a statement of purpose refocused this diverse people.

Though our Temple does not stand, our nation lives proudly on. The king may not be seen or heard, but the people—you and I—can recreate the unity and rejoice in our Jewishness.

In the tradition of Hakhel, we invite you to join friends and family - or join us at one of our Chanukah events. By standing together to ignite our own souls, we know others will follow until we light the entire world, one flame at a time.

Happy Chanukah!

Rabbi Mendel & Esther Lifshitz

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CHANUKAH: THE SEARCH

by Tova Bernbaum

When it comes to jobs that present serious occupational hazards, publishing might seem like a low-ranking industry on the danger scale. No loose wires, no scaffolding, no operating heavy machinery, unless you count the few times I was called upon to switch the massive bottle that rested atop the office water cooler. However, when I worked as an editor of children's history books, I found there was one professional hazard that occasionally made my work unbearable: utterly depressing subject matter.

We weren't intentionally trying to upset the poor junior high school students who made up our demographic. It's just that there's no real way to whitewash history. Wars are fought, and then they are taught. The most gruesome details are left out, but the main thrust of historical conflicts—the patterns of violence that are continually repeated, the senseless killing of innocents, mankind's capacity for evil—all come across, no matter how delicately you document the events.

I remember one particularly harsh week: on Monday I was handed an anthology on World War II, Tuesday I was given a collection of essays on September 11, and on Wednesday the subject was Vietnam. I don't remember Thursday, but chances are good I spent the day slouched

over in my chair, chin resting on a stack of papers, staring at my blank computer screen and wondering if depression might qualify me for worker's comp. The icing on this layer cake of misery was that I spent my breaks surfing news sites, most of which reported on the latest violence in Israel, Iraq and Sudan.

I knew I had to find some answer to all of these questions circulating in my head, or at least had to find a new job. But it all seemed so hopeless. The old question of "Why bad things happen to good people?"

do seemed almost quaint in comparison to some of the new ones I had darting around my brain: Why do good people so often stand by and watch when bad things happen to good people? Why do we keep saying "Never Again" to genocide, when one humanitarian disaster after another keeps proving us wrong? What kind of morality can exist in war if both sides are brought up to believe they're right, and a great many of the soldiers are probably fighting against their will anyway?

I don't have all the answers to these questions, but I think I've finally found some meaning in the midst of the apparent meaninglessness. Of course, like all profound moments, my epiphany came when I least expected it, during a perfectly ordinary conversation.

I was discussing the story of Chanukah with my husband, who often likes to take the opinion less traveled when it comes to religion. We were arguing about what the true miracle of Chanukah was. The traditional line is that we aren't really celebrating the military victory of the Maccabees, because their success in battle was short-lived. Rather, we are reveling in the discovery of the flask of oil, along with its astounding eight-day burning power, because that miracle has timeless spiritual significance.

But my husband disagreed. Finding one pure flask of oil in the midst of an impure Temple just seemed like kind of a small thing to base an entire holiday around. We argued back and forth, when finally he said:

"You know what? I think the miracle isn't that they found the flask of oil. It's that they even searched for it to begin with."

And there it was: the flash of understanding that had eluded me all this time. By all logical standards, when the Jews returned to the Holy Temple after battle to find that it had been desecrated by the Greeks, they should have simply given up. When one is

surrounded by impurity, the easy thing to do is accept the "reality" and move on. But, rather than resign themselves to waiting eight days to make pure oil for the Temple's menorah, the Jews searched through every storeroom and crevice till they found that one flask with an unbroken seal, a tiny vestige of holiness in the midst of impurity.

That is the real miracle of Chanukah: that the Jews still scoured the Temple for something sacred, despite the overwhelming odds against finding anything untouched by the Greeks' defilement. The wonder of it all is not so much that the Jews found it, but that they had faith that there was anything, any small amount of goodness, left to be found.

And that is the miracle of our generation, too. We live in a seemingly incomprehensible world. History and current events are teeming with countless examples of mankind's cruelty. But instead of growing numb to the suffering, we persist in asking "Why?!" We demand answers. We search for some kind of meaning in what could easily be written off as a random series of events with no logical conclusion or design. Above all, we believe that there's something out there, some answer that will grant us peace of mind during these harsh times.

And we will keep searching for that solace, until we find our little flask of oil with which to illuminate the darkness. answers. We search for some kind of meaning in what could easily be written off as a random series of events with no logical conclusion or design. Above all, we believe that there's something out there, some answer that will grant us peace of mind during these harsh times.

And we will keep searching for that solace, until we find our little flask of oil with which to illuminate the darkness.

For more articles on Chanukah, see www.jewishidaho.com/102815.



CHANUKAH GUIDE

CHANUKAH

Chanukah is an eight-day festival that begins on the eve of the 25th of the Jewish month of Kislev.

The Chanukah festival commemorates the miraculous victory of light over dark when the Seleucids (Syrian-Greeks) sought to forcefully Hellenize the people of Israel. Read the Chanukah story on page 6.



At the heart of the holiday is the nightly menorah (candelabrum) lighting: a single flame on the first night, two on the second evening, and so on till the eighth night of Chanukah, when all eight lights are kindled.

KINDLING THE MENORAH

The Chanukah Lights are lit in the evenings preceding each of the eight days of Chanukah, beginning with Sunday evening, December 6, 2015.

WHO LIGHTS THE MENORAH?

Both men and women are obligated to light the Chanukah menorah, or to participate in the household menorah lighting. Children should be encouraged to light their own menorahs. Students and singles who live in dormitories or their own apartments should kindle menorahs in their own rooms.

WHERE TO PLACE THE MENORAH

Many have the custom to place the menorah in a doorway opposite the *mezuzah* (such is the custom of Chabad-Lubavitch), so that the two

mitzvot of mezuzah and Chanukah surround the person. Others place it on a windowsill facing a public thoroughfare. (If placed on the windowsill, it should be no higher than 20 cubits—about 29 feet—above street level).

SETTING UP YOUR MENORAH

The Chanukah lights should consist of lamps or candles—i.e., a flammable fuel that feeds a visible flame via a wick. The most ideal way to fulfill the mitzvah is with cotton wicks in olive oil, or beeswax candles; paraffin candles or other types of candles or lamps are also acceptable, but not gas lights or electric lights. The lamps or candles must contain enough fuel, at the time of the lighting, to burn until half an hour after nightfall (nightfall is about 40 minutes



after sunset). The lamps or candles should be arranged in a straight row, and should be of equal height. The *shamash*—the “servant” candle that kindles the other lights—should be placed apart from the rest (higher, outside the row, etc.).

On the first night of Chanukah one light is kindled on the right side of the Menorah. On the following night add a second light to the left of the first and kindle the new light first, proceeding from left to right, and so on each night.



WHEN TO LIGHT YOUR MENORAH

The Chanukah lights are kindled in the evening preceding each of the eight days of Chanukah. The custom of many communities (and such is the Chabad-Lubavitch custom) is to light the menorah shortly after sunset; other communities light it at nightfall. In either case, the menorah must contain enough fuel at the time of the lighting to burn until 30 minutes after nightfall. *Note: Many standard Chanukah candles last only approximately 30 minutes. If using those candles, then light after nightfall every night (aside for Friday—see below).*

If one did not kindle the Chanukah lights early in the evening, they can be kindled later, as long as there are people in the streets (or others awake in the house).

SHABBAT REQUIREMENTS

IMPORTANT: It is forbidden to light a fire on Shabbat, beginning at sunset on Friday evening until Saturday night. Therefore, on Friday evening, December 11, the Chanukah lights must be kindled before the Shabbat lights, which are lit 18 minutes before sundown. Extra oil or larger candles should be used for the Chanukah lights to ensure they will burn a half-hour after nightfall—the standard 30-minute Chanukah candles cannot be used on Friday. From the time the Shabbat candles are lit (Friday evening) until Shabbat ends (after nightfall Saturday night) and

until the *Havdalah* prayer is recited, the Chanukah menorah should not be re-lit, moved or prepared.

Chanukah lights for Saturday night are kindled only **after** Shabbat ends.

BLESSINGS FOR THE MENORAH

On the first night of Chanukah, Sunday, December 6, recite all three blessings. On all subsequent nights, recite blessings number 1 and 2.

See page 5 for daily instructions and blessings.

After kindling the lights, the Haneirot Halalu prayer is recited.

SACRED LIGHTS

One is not to benefit from the light of the candles, only from the *shamash* and other sources of light. For the first half-hour when the candles are burning, it is customary to sit by the candles, and tell stories relating to the holiday.

Work should not be done in the proximity of the burning candles. Women customarily refrain from household work during the half-hour that the lights are burning, to honor the brave Jewish women who played a significant role in the Chanukah story.

CHANUKAH PRAYERS

During the eight days of Chanukah, we add the *Al HaNissim* liturgy to the *Amidah* and the Grace After Meals. The complete *Hallel* prayer is also said in the morning service. A portion of the Torah relating to the dedication of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle) is read daily in the Synagogue during morning prayers.



CHARITY

It is customary to increase one's daily giving to charity. On Fridays we give double the amount, to account for Shabbat.

CHANUKAH GELT

It is traditional to give children Chanukah gelt (money). Of course, this beautiful custom adds to the children's happiness and festive spirit. In addition, it gives adults an opportunity to give the children positive reinforcement for exemplary behavior, such as diligence in their studies and acts of charity.

Chanukah gelt is given to children after lighting the menorah. The children should be encouraged to give charity from a portion of their money.

CHANUKAH FOODS

Because of the great significance of oil in the story of the Chanukah miracle, it is

traditional to serve foods cooked in oil.

Among the most popular Chanukah dishes are potato latkes (pancakes) and sufganiot (doughnuts).

It is also customary to eat cheesy foods on Chanukah, in commemoration of the bravery of Yehudit.

DREIDEL

On Chanukah we play a game called *Dreidel*. The *dreidel* is a four-sided spinning top, called a "sevivon" in Hebrew. It has a Hebrew letter on each side that represent the first letter of the Hebrew words, "Nes Gadol Hayah Sham" - meaning, "A Great miracle Happened There." See page 6 for the history of the *Dreidel* and instructions on how to play *Dreidel*.

Learn more about Chanukah at www.jewishidaho.com/chanukah.

Lighting Your Menorah

First Night of Chanukah

Sunday, Dec. 6 – 25 Kislev

After sunset recite blessings 1, 2, and 3*, and kindle one light on your menorah.



Second Night of Chanukah

Monday, Dec. 7 – 26 Kislev

After sunset recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle two lights on your menorah.



Third Night of Chanukah

Tuesday, Dec. 8 – 27 Kislev

After sunset recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle three lights on your menorah.



Fourth Night of Chanukah

Wednesday, Dec. 9 – 28 Kislev

After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle four lights on your menorah.



Fifth Night of Chanukah

Thursday, Dec. 10 – 29 Kislev

After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle five lights on your menorah.



Sixth Night of Chanukah

Friday, Dec. 11 – 30 Kislev

Before sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle six lights on your menorah.



The menorah must be lit BEFORE lighting the Shabbat candles. (Light Shabbat candles at 4:50 pm in Boise).

Seventh Night of Chanukah

Saturday, Dec. 12 – 1 Tevet

After night falls and Shabbat ends (5:56 pm in Boise), recite the Havdalah (www.jewishidaho.com/256963). Recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle seven lights on your menorah.



Eighth Night of Chanukah

Sunday, Dec. 13 – 2 Tevet

After sunset recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle eight lights on your menorah.



* Note: Recite blessing 3 the first night or the first time you light your menorah this Chanukah.



BLESSINGS

1 Baruch Atah Ado-noi, Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam, Asher Ki-de-sha-nu Be-mitz-vo-sav, Ve-tzi-vanu Le-had-lik Ner Chanukah.

ברוך אתה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוְּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר חֲנֻכָּה.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to kindle the Chanukah light.

2 Baruch Atah Ado-noi, Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam, She-asa Nisim La-a-vo-sai-nu, Ba-ya-mim Ha-haim Biz-man Ha-zeh.

ברוך אתה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ, בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days at this time.

3 Baruch Atah Ado-noi Elo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam She-heh- chi-yah-nu Ve-ki-ye-mahnu Ve-hi-gi-ahnu Liz-man Ha-zeh.

ברוך אתה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.

AFTER LIGHTING, SAY OR SING:

הַנְּרוֹת הַלְלוּ אֱנוּ מֶלֶךְ יִקְיָן, עַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת, וְעַל הַנְּסִים, וְעַל הַנִּפְלְאוֹת, שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה, עַל יְדֵי כְהֻנֵּי קְדוֹשִׁים. וְכָל שְׂמוֹנֵת יָמֵי חֲנֻכָּה, הַנְּרוֹת הַלְלוּ קִדְּשׁ הֵם, וְאִין לָנוּ רֵשׁוֹת לְהִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בָּהֶן, אֲלֵא לְרֵאוֹתֶן בְּלִבָּר, כְּדֵי לְהוֹדוֹת וּלְהַלֵּל לְשִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל, עַל נְסִיךְ וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְעַל יְשׁוּעָתְךָ:

THE CHANUKAH STORY

Under Syrian Rule

More than 2000 years ago there was a time when the land of Israel was part of the Syrian-Greek Empire, dominated by Syrian rulers of the dynasty of the Seleucids.

Antiochus III was king and the Land of Israel was part of his empire. At the beginning of his reign he was favorably disposed toward the Jews and accorded them some privileges. Later on, however, when he was beaten by the Romans and compelled to pay heavy taxes, the burden fell upon the various peoples of his empire who were forced to furnish the heavy gold that was required of him by the Romans. When Antiochus died, his son Seleucus IV took over, and further oppressed the Jews.

Added to the troubles from the outside were the grave perils that threatened Judaism from within. The influence of the Hellenists (people who accepted idol-worship and the Syrian way of life) was increasing. Yochanan, the High Priest, foresaw the danger to Judaism from the penetration of Syrian-Greek influence into the Holy Land. For, in contrast to the ideal of outward beauty held by the Greeks and Syrians, Judaism emphasizes truth and moral purity, as commanded by G-d in the holy Torah. The Jewish people could never give up their faith in G-d and accept idol-worship.

Yochanan was therefore opposed to any attempt on the part of the Jewish Hellenists to introduce Greek and Syrian customs. The Hellenists hated him.

The Madman: Antiochus

When Seleucus was killed his brother Antiochus IV began to reign over Syria (in 3586 - 174 B.C.E.). He was a tyrant of a rash and impetuous nature, contemptuous of religion and of the feelings of others. He was called "Epiphanes," meaning "the gods' beloved." Several of the Syrian rulers received similar titles. But a historian of his time, Polebius, gave him the epithet Epimanes ("madman"), a title more suitable to the character of this cruel king.

Desiring to unify his kingdom through the medium of a common religion and culture, Antiochus tried to root out the individualism of the Jews by suppressing all the Jewish Laws. He removed the righteous High Priest, Yochanan, from the Temple in Jerusalem, and in his place installed Yochanan's brother Joshua, who loved to call himself by the Greek name of Jason. For he was a member of the Hellenist party, and he used his high office to spread more and more of the Greek customs among the priesthood.

Joshua or Jason was later replaced by another man, Menelaus, who had promised the king that he would bring in more money than Jason did. When Yochanan, the former High Priest, protested against the spread of the Hellenists' influence in the Holy Temple, the ruling High Priest hired murderers to

assassinate him.

Antiochus was at that time engaged in a successful war against Egypt. But messengers from Rome arrived and commanded him to stop the war, and he had to yield. Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, a rumor spread that a serious accident had befallen Antiochus. Thinking that he was dead, the people rebelled against Menelaus. The treacherous High Priest fled together with his friends.

The Martyrs

Antiochus returned from Egypt enraged by Roman interference with his ambitions. When he heard what had taken place in Jerusalem, he ordered his army to fall upon the Jews. Thousands of Jews were killed. Antiochus then enacted a series of harsh decrees against the Jews. Jewish worship was forbidden; the Torah scrolls were confiscated and burned. Sabbath rest, circumcision and the kosher dietary laws were prohibited under penalty of death. Even one of the respected elders of that generation, Rabbi Eliezer, a man of 90, was ordered by the servants of Antiochus to eat pork so that others would do the same. When he refused they suggested to him that he pick up the meat to his lips to appear to be eating. But Rabbi Eliezer refused to do even that and was put to death.

There were thousands of others who likewise sacrificed their lives. The famous story of Chanah and her seven children happened at that time.

Antiochus's men went from town to town and from village to village to force the inhabitants to worship pagan gods. Only one refuge area remained and that was the hills of Judea with their caves. But even there did the Syrians pursue the faithful Jews, and many a Jew died a martyr's death.

Mattityahu

One day the henchmen of Antiochus arrived in the village of Modin where Mattityahu, the old priest, lived. The Syrian officer built an altar in the marketplace of the village and demanded that Mattityahu offer sacrifices to the Greek gods. Mattityahu replied, "We are determined to remain loyal to the covenant which G-d made with our ancestors!"

Thereupon, a Hellenistic Jew approached the altar to offer a sacrifice. Mattityahu grabbed his sword and killed him, and his sons and friends fell upon the Syrian officers and men. They killed many of them and chased the rest away. They then destroyed the altar.

Mattityahu knew that Antiochus would be enraged when he heard what had happened. He would certainly send an expedition to punish him and his followers. Mattityahu, therefore, left the village of Modin and fled with his sons and friends to the hills of Judea.

All loyal and courageous Jews joined them. They formed legions and occasionally left their hiding places to fall upon enemy detachments and outposts, and to destroy the pagan altars built by order of Antiochus.

The Maccabees

Before his death, Mattityahu called his sons together and urged them to continue to fight in defense of G-d's Torah. He asked them to follow the counsel of their brother Shimon the Wise. In waging warfare, he said, their leader should be Judah the Strong. Judah was called "Maccabee," a word composed of the initial letters of the four Hebrew words *Mi Kamocho Ba'eilim Hashem*, "Who is like You, O G-d."

Antiochus sent his General Apolonius to wipe out Yehuda and his followers, the Maccabees. Though greater in number and equipment, the Syrians were defeated by the Maccabees. Antiochus sent out another expedition which also was defeated. He realized that only by sending a powerful army could he hope to defeat Judah and his brave fighting men.

An army consisting of more than 40,000 men swept the land under the leadership of two commanders, Nicanor and Gorgias.

When Judah and his brothers heard of that, they exclaimed: "Let us fight unto death in defense of our souls and our Temple!" The people assembled in Mitzpah, where Samuel, the prophet of old, had offered prayers to G-d. After a series of battles the war was won.

The Dedication

Now the Maccabees returned to Jerusalem to liberate it. They entered the Temple and cleared it of the idols placed there by the Syrians. Judah and his followers built a new altar, which he dedicated on the twenty-fifth of the month of Kislev, in the year 3622.

Since the golden Menorah had been stolen by the Syrians, the Maccabees now made one of cheaper metal. When they wanted to light it, they found only a small cruse of pure olive oil bearing the seal of the High Priest Yochanan. It was sufficient to light only for one day. By a miracle of G-d, it continued to burn for eight days, till new oil was made available. That miracle proved that G-d had again taken His people under His protection. In memory of this, our sages appointed these eight days for annual thanksgiving and for lighting candles.

Playing Dreidel



When the Greek Antiochus forbade Torah study, Jewish children studied together secretly in caves. When they heard a Greek officer approaching, they would hide their schoolbooks and pretend to be playing with tops.

We play dreidel (*sevivon* in Hebrew) on Chanukah as a reminder of these brave children and their courage. The word dreidel comes from the Yiddish word *drei*, which means "turn." Our dreidels have four sides, with a Hebrew letter imprinted on each: *Nun*, *Gimmel*, *Hay*, and *Shin*. These stand for the Hebrew words *Ness Gadol Haya Sham*, which means "a great miracle happened there, in reference to the Maccabees' miraculous victory. In Israel, the dreidels say *Nun*, *Gimmel*, *Hay*, and *Pay* which stand for "*Ness Gadol Haya Poh* - A great miracle happened here."

THE RULES

To play, you need a dreidel and some coins (or anything small but easily counted, like candy or cereal pieces). All players begin with an equal amount, and also establish the "pot" by contributing equally.

- Take turns spinning the dreidel. If it lands on:
 - נ **Nun**—get nothing.
 - ג **Gimmel**—take the whole pot.
 - ה **Hay**—take half the pot.
 - ש **Shin**—pay two into the pot.
- If the pot empties out, everyone contributes equally once again.

TALL CANDLES a Chanukah story

Reb Pesachya from Kherson was a chassid of the Rebbe Rashab, the fifth rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch. Once, at a Simchat Torah gathering with the rebbe, Reb Pesachya—having already said l'chaim once or twice—stood up and declared:

“The Rebbe always says that he does not perform miracles—but I have a story to tell!

“One summer, I had a private audience with the Rebbe, and the Rebbe told me the following: ‘You work in the forests, and sometimes you even need to spend a few days in a row in the forest. When Chanukah arrives, don’t forget to bring candles with you. Just make sure that they are big candles.’

“When Chanukah arrived, I indeed needed to spend a few days in the forest. Recalling the Rebbe’s words, I brought some large candles with me.

“While in the forest, thieves came upon me, took all my money and said they were going to kill me. I pleaded with them to spare my life, but they

said they could not do so, since I would certainly go to the police, who would then pursue them. They said they had no choice but to kill me.

“My continued pleading went nowhere. I asked them if I could have one final request, and they agreed. It is Chanukah, I said, and our tradition requires us to light candles each night. Out of their ‘great compassion,’ they permitted me to light my candles.

“As I was lighting the candles, a local landowner passed nearby and saw the light. He had a revolver with him, chased away the robbers and saved me.”

Concluding his story, Reb Pesachya said, “Is that not a miracle?!”

The Rebbe Rashab said: “Zogt a niggun!” “Someone start a song!”

More Chanukah stories at www.jewishidaho.com/102817

THE THING ABOUT OIL

by Naftali Silberberg

The economics of oil strangely mirror the nature of oil itself. On one hand, the political and geo-economic machinations which cause the rise and fall of oil prices are beyond the understanding of the average citizen. On the other hand, we all are strongly affected by the decisions of the powers that be who set the price of a barrel of oil. The price of oil affects energy costs, which in turn affect the cost of basically every product on the market.

This is similar to oil itself: its chemical makeup causes it to rise above other fluids, but also utterly permeates substances which it touches. Make a paper or food wet, and it will dry out after a short while. Pour oil on it, and it will remain oily for good. Remember the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill and the incredible damage it caused? New Orleans has long been dry from Hurricane Katrina, but Prince William Sound is still feeling the effect of the oil spill disaster.

The holiday of Chanukah is completely oil-oriented. The miracle involved the Greeks’ unsuccessful attempt to defile all the oil in the Holy Temple, and the miraculous jug of oil which burned for eight days. We celebrate by lighting menorahs—preferably with oil—and eating oily foods such as latkes and doughnuts. What is the inner connection between Chanukah and this non-miscible fluid which transcends yet permeates?

An understanding of the Greeks’ objective and the Maccabean victory will allow us to understand why oil is so symbolic of the war, and an appropriate way to celebrate our victory.

As opposed to the story of Purim, when our oppressors wished to physically annihilate our people, the Greeks did not long for our demise. They “merely” wanted us to abandon our obstinate loyalty to our “outdated” mitzvot, and assimilate into the progressive Greek culture. (We apologize if this argument sounds familiar and all too contemporary . . . we’re just reporting the historical facts!)

There were a fistful of Jews who refused to discard the mitzvot in favor of Hellenism. We owe these heroic people a debt of gratitude: if not for them, our nation would today be as extinct as Hellenism and the ancient Greeks.

What exactly is the nature of these mitzvot which triggered this intense battle?

Mitzvot are the directives which emanate from G-d. Needless to say, directives which originate from a spiritual infinite being can be understood by us physical finite beings as much as an earthworm can grasp $E = mc^2$. Yet incredibly—and much to the ire of the ancient Greeks—these ultra-transcendent mitzvot permeate every detail of our mundane lives, which they seemingly should transcend. Before, after, and while eating; before, after, and while sleeping; before, after, and while involved in business—the mitzvot affect every area of life.

The merging of the highest levels of divinity with mundane everyday life, a seemingly impossible phenomenon, is made possible by the fact that—to use Kabbalistic lingo—G-d transcends transcendence. He can transcend or permeate, or be both simultaneously. Just like oil!

While munching on tasty oily latkes, let us be thankful to the fledgling Maccabee army who risked their life for the oil. It is to their credit that 2,200 years later we still have the ability to oil our life with mitzvot, thus infusing our humdrum existence with unimaginable holiness.



INGREDIENTS

2 packages dry yeast (about 2 scant Tablespoons)
 1/4 cup warm water
 1-1/2 cups milk, scalded and cooled
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon nutmeg
 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
 2 eggs
 1/3 cup shortening
 4-1/2 cups flour

Baked Doughnuts

If you want to enjoy the taste of traditional doughnuts without standing over a pan of hot oil to cook them, this is a great recipe for you.

Add your favorite glaze, topping or sprinkles!



INSTRUCTIONS

In a large mixer bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, sugar, salt, spice, eggs, shortening and 2 cups flour. Blend 1/2 minute at medium speed, scraping bowl occasionally. Stir in remaining flour until smooth, scraping sides of bowl. Cover. Let rise in warm place until double (50 to 60 minutes).

Turn dough onto well-floured cloth-covered board; roll around lightly to coat with flour. Dough will be soft to handle.

With floured, stockinet-covered rolling pin, gently

More Chanukah recipes at www.jewishidaho.com/102819

roll dough about 1/2 inch thick. Cut with floured 2-1/2 inch doughnut cutter. Lift doughnuts carefully with spatula and place 2 inches apart on greased cookie sheet. Brush doughnuts with melted butter. Cover; let rise until double (about 20 minutes).

Heat oven to 420° F. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until golden. Immediately brush with melted margarine or butter and shake in Cinnamon Sugar or spread with glaze or topping.

Makes 1-1/2 to 2 dozen doughnuts.

CHANUKAH TIDBITS

THE LAMP

The Syrian-Greek desecration of the Holy Temple was another example of their determination to destroy the sanctity of Jewish life. The worship of one invisible, omnipotent G-d was replaced with the worship of pagan deities made in the image of man.

The Torah tells us that "the soul of man is the lamp of G-d." Just as oil permeates the olive, the Divine soul permeates the Jew; and just as the oil burning in the menorah spreads light, the Jewish soul illuminates the world in the performance of good deeds. In defiling the sacred oil of the menorah, the Greeks tried to destroy the Jewish soul.

But the soul cannot be extinguished. Miraculously, despite the best efforts of the oppressors, one cruse of pure oil remained in the Temple, and one cruse was enough to re-dedicate the Temple and renew the holy task of spreading light throughout the world.

SPREADING THE LIGHT

There is a Talmudic statement: "We are day workers."

Day means light. Our task is to spread light, to illuminate the world with the light of the Torah.

Evil and darkness do not get swept out with a broom. By creating more light, the night and darkness will disappear by themselves.

INFINITE LIGHT

Although it commemorates the kindling of the Temple's Menorah which had only seven branches, our Chanukah Menorah has eight lights.

The number 'eight' in this context is not just the digit after 'seven.'

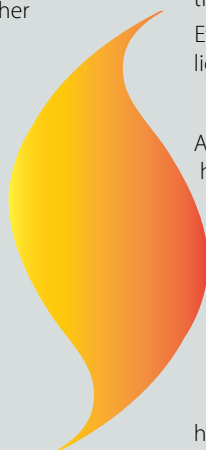
Symbolically, 'seven' is associated with the natural world, created in six days and completed with G-d's rest on the Seventh, Shabbat.

'Eight,' however, represents the infinite and supernatural, in contrast to the finite and natural.

The seven-lamp Menorah illuminated the natural world, but Chanukah goes even beyond. It is a foretaste and reflection of the era of Moshiach, a higher level that is above and beyond our worldly limitations.

At the end of the long dark night, right before daybreak; we may be tempted to fall asleep. Chanukah gives us the strength to be awake for and aware of the approach of daylight.

More Chanukah insights at www.jewishidaho.com/102815



ADULT EDUCATION

WHY DO WE SAY MAZAL TOV AND L'CHAIM?

WHY DO WE PLACE PEBBLES ON A HEADSTONE?

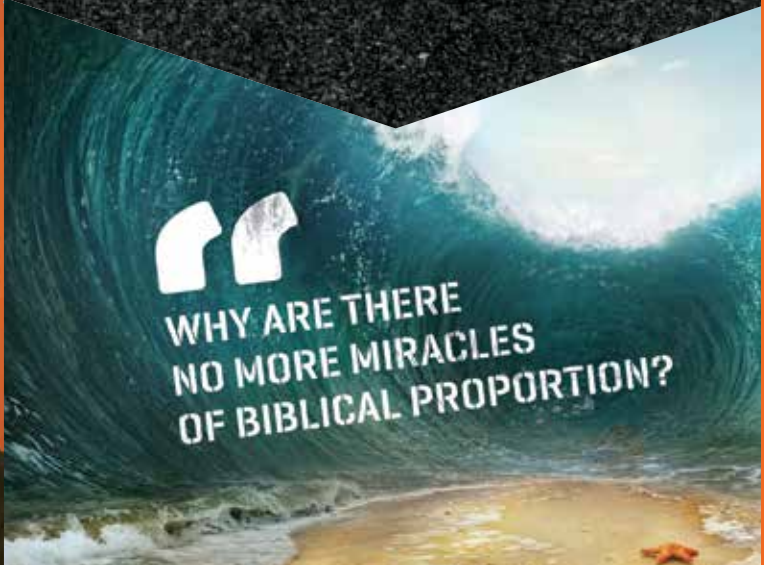
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WHY ARE JEWS SINGLED OUT FOR PERSECUTION?



“

WHY ARE THERE NO MORE MIRACLES OF BIBLICAL PROPORTION?



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FROM OUR MAILBOX & INBOX



Hi Rabbi,

I'm happy that I was able to find your email. I haven't written to you in a while and I wanted to wish you a (late) Happy New Year!! I hope it's a fantastic year for you, Esther and your kids. I'm doing well here in Westchester and would love to hear from you.

I miss hanging out with you and the rest of the Cherry Gulch squad.

P.S. Regards from Michael S.

Jake M.

This is a "confession from a free spirit congregant". For a long time I had glanced at Parashot Hashavua but never really delved into it. It felt more like homework at school in Israel, where we had Tanach almost daily. Until a few days ago when I waited for a friend and had "time to kill." I picked up the Torah book and really enjoyed my time reading, understanding and analyzing. Why do I write all this? To let people know how much joy can be derived of such reading in your own time and speed. In addition, being able to read it in Hebrew adds to the pleasure and understanding. Hebrew is a beautiful language in which you can express three words in English in one word. I love you: ohavech!

I want to thank Esther and Rabbi Mendel for your nonjudgmental attitude and accepting me the way I am.

Wishing you and your family a very Happy Shana Tova with love,

Varda

Wow, what a pleasure this Yom Kippur was!!! I can't tell you how much I appreciate the honor

of the Alliah and the beautiful blessings for a great new year.

We really enjoyed the holiday immensely – your hospitality and your words were deeply moving and inspirational.

My wife really loved it too... which says a lot!! And she loved Esther!

We wish you amazing and sweet New Year and will be back in touch with you next time I'm back!

I will make a donation online as well later today or by tomorrow!

Warmest regards,

Brian Morrison

Dear Rabbi Mendel and Esther,



Thank you for inviting us to your wonderful, delicious Sukkah dinner.

We enjoyed the stories, songs, description of the holiday, holding the 4 Kinds and of course seeing your beautiful family.

We appreciate all that you do on behalf of the Southern Idaho Jewish community.

Shalom! Your friends,

Judy and Juergen Trinkaus

Dear Esther,

Thank you so much for having us over to your house for Sukkot. As always, we had a great time. It's amazing how fast your kids are growing. Especially Shaina!

Chag sameach,

Elizabeth Rodgers

We enjoyed the evening in the sukkah and thank you for the invitation. As always, the food was delicious and the company

enjoyable.

I hope you and your family can rest a little now! Thanks again,

Courtney Savin

Hi Rabbi Mendel,

Thank you so much for this wonderful picture of Drake. Drake has told me all about you and his positive experiences with learning more about our Jewish religion.

Thank you so much for taking the time out to email me regarding Drake. Since Cherry Gulch and meeting you he wasn't involved in our temple. We belong to Temple Jeremiah in Northfield, IL. We had Drake in Hebrew school as well as Sunday school but it didn't last. We have been trying to figure out how to incorporate learning about his religion without having to be in a classroom. I can't tell you how excited he was about reading out of the Torah and the tefillin. Drake has been telling us how he wants to get more involved in learning about his religion.

We can't thank you enough and when we are visiting Drake at school, we would love to come and meet you. Thank you and we looking forward to meeting you soon

Best,

Marla and Rich London

Dear Reb Mendel and Rebbitzin Esther,

My wife Linda and I very much appreciated the Shabbos service and dinner which we attended with our daughter Elana, son-in-law Noah and grandchildren Shira and Chaya. It was also a pleasure to speak a few words of Yiddish with you. My father, a Yiddish teacher, would

have approved.

Please use this donation as you see fit.

Morris Olitsky

Rabbi Mendel,

Thank you for making room at the table for Larry and me. You are always so hospitable and welcoming. We really appreciate it.

Elyse

Thank you Rabbi Mendel and all. We appreciate being on your mailing list and receiving the Chabad Times. Thank you for the help you and Chabad provide.

L'Shalom,

P.D. Kahlke

Dear Esther,

Thank you so much to you and Rabi Lifshitz for orchestrating top-quality High Holidays this year. I really enjoyed the services and festivities for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Simchat Torah. Great job!

Also, thank you for all the insightful publications (Chabad Times!) and for introducing me to the Lubavitch International newspaper. I now get it at home and I eagerly anticipate every issue.

Ana Yemets

Letters to the Editor

We'd love to hear from you. Please submit your comments, articles, suggestions and letters to chabad@jewishidaho.com

or send them via postal mail.

All submissions are subject to editorial review.

Ask the Rabbi

Do Jews Cross Fingers?

Is it wrong for a Jew to say "I'm keeping my fingers crossed" for good luck?

And if so, is there a Jewish equivalent to crossing fingers? I'm waiting to hear back about a job interview, and need all the luck I can get...

by Aaron Moss

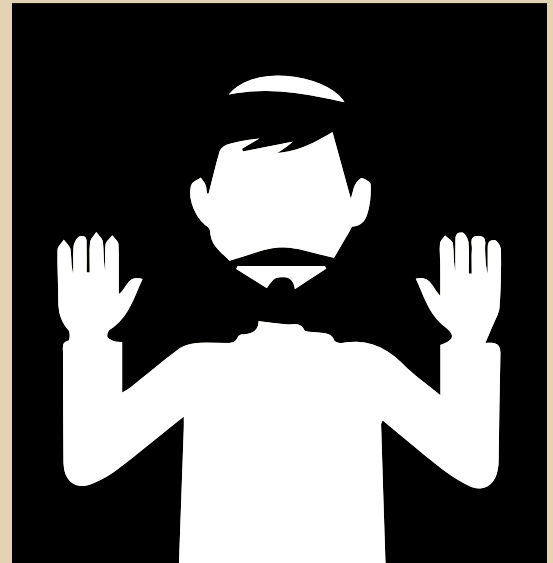
Crossing fingers is a Christian practice. It originated in medieval England, when Christians believed that the cross symbol had the power to ward off evil and bring good fortune. If you bumped into a witch and didn't have a cross handy, the easiest way to form one was by curling one finger over another.

These days, most finger-crossers don't associate it with any religious belief. But it is still not a Jewish thing to do.

And I don't think there is a Jewish version of crossing fingers. You could try twisting them into a Star of David, but that is more likely to bring arthritis than good luck. Besides, we don't believe that good fortune comes from signs and gestures. We pray to G-d, do good deeds and have faith in the future.

The language we use shapes the way we think. So rather than say "I'm keeping my fingers crossed that I'll get the job," say "If G-d wills it, I'll get the job." If it's not meant to be, no finger contortion can change that. And if it is G-d's will, no "witch" can get in the way.

More Ask the Rabbi at www.jewishidaho.com/asktherabbi



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Chabad Hebrew School, Shofar Factory/Beekeeper



THE CHABAD TIMES Chabad Lubavitch of Idaho

PHOTOS Sukkot, Women's Circle, Adult Education, Game Night

THE CHABAD TIMES Chabad Lubavitch of Idaho



PHOTOS

Mommy & Me, iHEART



MESSAGE FROM THE REBBE

ILLUMINATING THE WORLD

FROM A 1980 LETTER OF THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSOHN OF RIGHTEOUS MEMORY

Greeting and Blessing!

Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, recalls the victory—more than 2100 years ago—of a militarily weak but spiritually strong Jewish people over the mighty forces of a ruthless enemy that had overrun the Holy Land and threatened to engulf the land and its people in darkness.

The miraculous victory—culminating with the dedication of the Sanctuary in Jerusalem and the rekindling of the Menorah which had been desecrated and extinguished by the enemy—has been celebrated annually ever since during these eight days of Chanukah, especially by lighting the Chanukah Menorah, also as a symbol and message of the triumph of freedom over oppression, of spirit over matter, of light over darkness.

It is a timely and reassuring message, for the forces of darkness are ever present. Moreover, the danger does not come exclusively from outside; it often lurks close to home, in the form of insidious erosion of time-honored values and principles that are at the foundation of any decent human society. Needless to say, darkness is not chased away by brooms and sticks, but by illumination. Our sages said, "A little light expels a lot of darkness."

The Chanukah Lights remind us in a most obvious way that illumination begins at home, within oneself and one's family, by increasing and intensifying the light of Torah and Mitzvos in the everyday experience, even as the Chanukah Lights are kindled in growing numbers from day to day. But though it begins at home, it does not stop there. Such is the nature of light that when one kindles a light for one's own benefit, it benefits also all who are in the vicinity. Indeed, the Chanukah Lights are expressly meant to illuminate the "outside," symbolically alluding to the duty to bring light also to those who, for one reason or another, still walk in darkness.

What is true of the individual is true of a nation, especially this great United States, united under G-d, and generously blessed by G-d with material as well as spiritual riches. It is surely the duty and privilege of this Nation to promote all the forces of light both at home and abroad, and in a steadily



growing measure.

Let us pray that the message of the Chanukah Lights will illuminate the everyday life of everyone personally, and of the society at large, for a brighter life in every respect, both materially and spiritually.

With esteem and blessing in the spirit of Chanukah,

More about the Rebbe at www.jewishidaho.com/rebbe

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Details inside

