

# Chanukah 101

Chanukah, meaning "dedication" in Hebrew, refers to the joyous eight-day celebration during which Jews commemorate the victory of the Maccabees over the armies of Syria in 165 B.C.E. and the subsequent liberation and "rededication" of the Temple in Jerusalem. The modern home celebration of Chanukah centers around the lighting of the chanukiyah, a special menorah for Chanukah; foods prepared in oil including latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts); and special songs and games. To learn more, go to URJ.org.



**December 12-20**

## How to Light the Chanukiyah:

Candles are added to the chanukiyah (menorah) from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. (On the Shabbat of Chanukah, kindle the chanukiyah before the Shabbat candles.)

Light the shamash (the helper candle) first, using it to kindle the rest of the Chanukah lights. As you do, say or sing:

**1.** Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the Chanukah lights.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו  
במצוותיו, וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu  
b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.

**2.** Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who performed wonderous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שעשה נסים לאבותינו  
ואמותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asah nisim  
laavoteinu v'imoteinu bayamim hahaeim baz'man hazeh

*On the first night we add:*

**a.** Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקיימנו  
והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu  
v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

## How to Make Latkes:

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large Russet potatoes
- 1 large onion peeled
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp course kosher salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- Safflower or other oil, for frying



apple sauce or sour cream for serving.

### PREPARATION

Using a food processor with a coarse grating disc, grate the potatoes and onion. Drain out remaining liquid. Working quickly, transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Add the eggs, flour, salt, baking powder and pepper, and mix thoroughly. In a heavy pan over medium-high heat, pour in about 1/4 inch of the oil. Once the oil is very hot, use a heaping tablespoon to drop the batter into the pan, cooking in batches. Use a spatula to flatten and shape the drops into discs. When the edges of the latkes are brown and crispy, about 5 minutes, flip. Cook until the second side is deeply browned, about another 5 minutes. Transfer the latkes to a paper towel-lined plate to drain and sprinkle with salt while still warm.

# The Largest Menorah in the World

New York is home the world's largest Chanukiyah! Actually, both of them.



The *newer* largest menorah, sits across the street from the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan. Designed by Yaacov Agam, it stands 32 feet tall, weighing 4,000 lbs. It was unveiled on December 29, 2005.



The *older*, largest menorah also stands at 32 feet tall and stands in Brooklyn at the Grand Army Plaza. Every night of Chanukah there is live music, hot latkes and gifts for children. This menorah has been standing since 1984.



## How to Play Dreidel:

Playing dreidel is a Chanukah tradition. The dreidel, or in hebrew, *sevivon*, means "to turn around." The four letters on the dreidel, stand for the saying, *Nes Gadol Haya SHam*, meaning A Great Miracle Happened There.

Basic Rules:

- 1 Each player begins the game with gelt or coins (or m&m's, cheerios, etc.).
- 2 Before starting, each player puts one "coin" into the center "pot." This is done again every time the pot becomes empty.

## Chanukah Ideas For Pre-Teens and Teens

### *It's Not Just About the Presents*

While everyone enjoys receiving gifts, Chanukah is an opportunity to invite other themes of Tikkun Olam into your home and traditions.

Consider the following:

- Visit a local soup kitchen and donate food or help feed the hungry
- Go through old books, DVDs and toys and see if a local hospital or preschool could use them
- Talk about ways to bring light to others, by standing up for those who need it most
- Watch movies together to learn about others' plight for freedom
- Share the warmth and light of Chanukah with friends and neighbors



- 3 Decide on a player to go first and move clockwise around the circle.
- 4 Each player gets one turn to spin the dreidel.
- 5 Depending on what side is facing up, follow these rules:
  - Nun: Nothing - player does nothing
  - Gimel: Get - player gets everything in pot
  - Hey: Half - player gets half of pot (odd, round up)
  - Shin: Put in - player puts one coin in pot
- 6 When one player has won everything, the game is over.