

THE WEISEL

DOR L'DOR

FAMILY LEARNING PROGRAM

CHANUKAH AND MIRACLES



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YOUNG ISRAEL
OF
WEST HARTFORD

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אברהם שלום בן ניסן אריה ורייזע וגיטל

חיה בת יוסף אברהם ועטיע

who dedicated their lives to Jewish
education by their loving family

User Guide:

Happy Chanukah! This packet is geared towards children from the ages of four until 6th grade to learn with their parents or other family members. On each page, there will be a source for all to learn. On many pages, the sources will be accompanied by guiding questions in different colored boxes, based on age group, to discuss. For the youngest age group, feel free to just focus on the bolded line in the source and the questions. The top grey boxes are for children 4-6, the middle light blue boxes for children 7-9, and the bottom navy boxes for children 10-12. These are merely suggestions but feel free to try out the other boxes as well. Please note that there are many possible answers to the questions, and the goal is not to reach one "right" answer. In this packet we will learn the reason behind Chanukah and why we celebrate, what the miracles of Chanukah are and how we can appreciate the little miracles in our lives.

Community Celebration — Join Us!!

CHANUKAH *on ice*








SAT NITE | DEC 4TH | 6-7:30 PM

at the
Hockey One
South Windsor Arena
585 John Fitch Blvd

**THIS SATURDAY
NIGHT**



-  **Hot Drink Bar**
-  **Menorah Lighting**
-  **Donuts & Chanukah Treats**
-  **Exclusive Open Skating**
-  **Chanukah Craft Project**

Free & Open To The Community

\$3 Skate Rentals Available

For more info, email events@youngisraelwh.org



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Summary of Chanukah

The year was about 165 BCE. After the death of world conqueror Alexander the Great, his Empire was divided among his generals. The land of Israel - the Kingdom of Judea - was added to the Empire of Antiochus III. When Antiochus Epiphanes became king of the Syrian-Greeks, he was not satisfied with accepting the taxes and loyalty of the Jews as his predecessors had done. He wanted the Jews to lay aside their Torah and ancient religion, and, in their place, substitute the Hellenistic Greek culture and Grecian idols. He defiled the Beit Hamikdash - by filling it with pagan idols and sacrifices of pigs. He forbade the Jews to observe the commandments of Brit Milah (circumcision), Rosh Chodesh (the New Moon), and the Shabbat. Jews who dared to remain loyal to their faith were brutally tortured and murdered.

Against this backdrop, Jewish resistance began to decrease and it seemed inevitable that the last remnants of resistance would soon be wiped out. Then, one courageous man turned the tide. His name was Mattisyahu and he was a Kohain - head of the Hasmonean family, from the Judean town of Modi'in near Lod. The Syrian-Greek governor of Mattisyahu's region set up an idol in Modi'in, rounded up the townspeople, and introduced an "enlightened" Jew who would sacrifice a pig on the idol in recognition of the decree of Antiochus. Old Mattisyahu stepped forward and slew the traitor.

With the rallying cry of, "Mi La'Hashem Ay-li (Whoever is for Hashem, let him come to me)," he called the people to rebellion. A pitifully small number responded at first - the people were numb with fear and hopelessness - but Mattisyahu's five sons led the way. They fought the Syrian-Greeks, retreated to the mountains, and began a war against the Syrian-Greeks and their Jewish allies. Mattisyahu had not long to live, but on his deathbed he charged his sons to carry on the struggle. The glorious brothers heeded his command. He passed on the leadership to his second son, Judah the Maccabee, who was a mighty warrior and a charismatic leader.

Many miracles happened. Outnumbered a hundred to one, Judah and his men won many battles. Jews came to join him. In a few years, he had defeated the mightiest armies of Syria. Following the rebellion, the kingdom of Israel was restored for 200 years, until the destruction of the Second Beit Hamikdash.

On the twenty fifth day of Kislev, Judah and his men marched into the Holy City and immediately made their way to the Beit Hamikdash where they saw a sight that left them shocked and angered. Idols, filth, impurity were everywhere. They rummaged through the ruins seeking at least one flask of pure olive oil with which to light the makeshift menorah they hastily put together.

Flask after flask they found - every one of them defiled. Finally - another miracle! One small jug, sufficient for only one day, remained with the seal of the Kohen Gadol intact! Quickly, with trembling hands, they poured it into the menorah and lit it. It would be eight days before they could manufacture more oil for the next lighting, but meanwhile, they lit what they had. The flames of the menorah burned for 8 days.

To publicize and commemorate these miracles, the Rabbis instituted the holiday of Chanukah.

What is Chanukah?

Gemara Shabbat 10b:

מַאי חֲנוּכָּה? דִּתְנוּ רַבֵּנָן: בְּכ"ה בְּכֶסֶלִיו יוֹמֵי דְחֲנוּכָּה תִּמְנִיא אֵינֻן דְּלֹא לְמַסְפַּד בְּהוֹן וְדִלָּא לְהִתְעַנּוֹת בְּהוֹן. שְׁכֶשֶׁנְכִּנְסוּ יוֹזְמִים לְהִיכֹל טְמֵאוּ כָּל הַשְּׁמָנִים שְׁבִהִיכָל. וְכִשְׁגִּבְרָה מַלְכוּת בֵּית חֲשִׁמוֹנָאִי וְנִצְחוּם, בִּדְקוּ וְלֹא מָצְאוּ אֶלָּא פֶּךָ אֶחָד שֶׁל שֶׁמֶן שֶׁהָיָה מוֹנַח בְּחוֹתָמוֹ שֶׁל כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל, וְלֹא הָיָה בּוֹ אֶלָּא לְהַדְלִיק יוֹם אֶחָד. נַעֲשֶׂה בּוֹ נֵס וְהַדְלִיקוּ מִמֶּנּוּ שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמִים. לְשָׁנָה אַחֶרֶת קִבְּעוּם וַעֲשֹׂאוּם יָמִים טוֹבִים בְּהִלֵּל וְהוֹדָא.

[The Gemara asks:] What is Hanukkah, [and why are lights kindled on Hanukkah? The Gemara answers: The Sages taught in Megillat Ta'anit:] On the twenty-fifth of Kislev, the days of Hanukkah are eight. One may not eulogize on them and one may not fast on them. [What is the reason?] When the Greeks entered the Sanctuary they defiled all the oils that were in the Sanctuary. And when the Hasmonean monarchy overcame them and emerged victorious over them, they searched and found only one cruse of oil that was placed with the seal of the High Priest, [undisturbed by the Greeks]. And there was [sufficient oil] there to light the Menorah for only one day. A miracle occurred and they lit the candelabrum from it eight days. The next year the Sages instituted those days and made them holidays with recitation of hallel and special thanksgiving in prayer and blessings.

What is the date of chanukah?

How many days is chanukah?

What nation was fighting the Jews?

What did the Greeks do to the Beit Hamikdash?

If someone destroyed your home, how would you feel?

Why are we not allowed to fast and eulogize on Chanukah?

What miracle does the Talmud here focus on in contrast with the Al HaNissim Prayer
(See English excerpt below)?

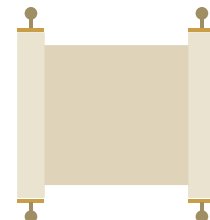


IN THE
SIDDUR:
The Al
HaNissim
Prayer

"In the days of Matisyahu, son of Yochanan the High Priest, the Hasmonean and his sons, when the evil Greek kingdom rose up against Your people Israel to make them forget Your Torah and to turn them away from the statutes of Your will— You, in Your abundant mercy, stood by them in their time of distress,...You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, many into the hands of the few, defiled people into the hands of the undefiled, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and insolent into the hands of diligent students of Your Torah. And You made Yourself a great and sanctified name in Your world. And for Your people, Israel, You performed a great deliverance and redemption unto this very day. Afterwards, Your sons entered the Holy of Holies of Your Abode, cleaned Your Temple, purified Your Sanctuary, and kindled lights in the Courtyards of Your Sanctuary, and designated these eight days of Chanukah to thank and praise Your great Name."



What happened on Chanukah?



Maimonides in his Mishneh Torah, Laws of Megillah & Chanukah 3:1-2

בבית שני כשִׁמְלֵכִי יוֹן גָּזְרוּ גְזָרוֹת עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבָטְלוּ דִּתָּם וְלֹא הֵנִיחוּ אוֹתָם לַעֲסֹק בְּתוֹרָה וּבְמִצְוֹת. וּפָשְׁטוּ יָדָם בְּמִמוֹנָם וּבְבָנוּתֵיהֶם וּנְכָנְסוּ לְהִיכָל וּפָרְצוּ בוֹ פְּרָצוֹת וְטָמְאוּ הַטְּהָרוֹת. וְצָר לָהֶם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מְאֹד מִפְּנֵיהֶם וּלְחָצוֹם לַחֵץ גָּדוֹל עַד שֶׁרָחַם עֲלֵיהֶם אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְהוֹשִׁיעָם מִיָּדָם וְהִצִּילָם וְגָבְרוּ בְּנֵי חֲשִׁמוֹנָי הַכֹּהֲנִים הַגְּדוֹלִים וְהָרְגוּם וְהוֹשִׁיעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיָּדָם וְהַעֲמִידוּ מֶלֶךְ מִן הַכֹּהֲנִים וְחָזְרָה מַלְכוּת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵתֵר עַל מְאֵתִים שָׁנָה עַד הַחֲרָבָן הַשֵּׁנִי: וְכִשְׁגָּבְרוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל אוֹיְבֵיהֶם וְאָבְדוּם בְּכ"ה בְּחֹדֶשׁ כֶּסֶלּוֹ הָיָה וּנְכָנְסוּ לְהִיכָל וְלֹא מָצְאוּ שָׁמֶן טָהוֹר בַּמִּקְדָּשׁ אֲלָא פָּךְ אֶחָד וְלֹא הָיָה בוֹ לְהַדְלִיק אֲלָא יוֹם אֶחָד בְּלִבְדּוֹ וְהַדְלִיקוּ מִמֶּנּוּ נֵרוֹת הַמַּעֲרָכָה... שְׁמוֹנֶה יָמִים

In the time of the second beit hamikdash when the kings of the Greeks decreed 3 evil decrees on Jewish People and they didn't let them learn Torah or do mitzvot. They took their money and their daughters and went into the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) and made impure everything that was pure. Bnei Yisrael were in pain from what they saw until God saved them. The Maccabees Kohanim won the war defeating the Greeks. They anointed a king from among the Kohanim and returned Jewish Sovereignty to the land of Israel for more than 200 hundred years (!!!), up until the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. On the 25th of Kislev, they re-entered the Beit Hamikdash where they only found one jug of oil that was only enough to last for one day. But they used that jug to light the menorah for 8 days...!!!

What did the Greeks decree that the Jews were not allowed to do?

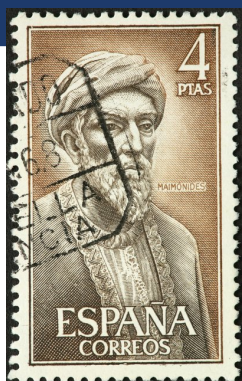
What is a mitzvah that you love to do that you would be upset if someone told you that you aren't allowed to do it?

Which Temple did the story of Chanukah take place during?

When did they re-enter the Beit Hamikdash?

How long was the oil supposed to last for and how long did it really last for?

How does Maimonides frame the story? How is it similar and how is it different than the Talmud on the previous page?



Meet Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (1138–1204)! Commonly known as Maimonides or referred to by the acronym RaMBaM (Hebrew: **רמב"ם**), he one of the most prolific and most important medieval Jewish philosophers, Torah scholars and Halakhists. A physician by training, he serving as the personal physician of Sultan. Born in Córdoba, Spain, he lived in both Morocco and Egypt and is one of the most revered Sephardic leaders. He compiled a complete work of Jewish Law divided by topic into 14 volumes entitled the Mishneh Torah or the Yad ha-Hazaka.

Deeper Meaning behind the Oil

When we try to find the message behind the *pach hashsemen*, jug of oil, we think that it could be that we need to always trust in Hashem even when it seems like there is no hope. I want to offer another explanation, the oil lasting for 8 days is a yearly reminder for each of us about our own potential. The oil represents our potential and what we can accomplish. We need to have faith in ourselves that it we can always do it, despite the hardships and what possibly can come at us, we need to believe that from within us, We need to realize how much we can do with our potential, we each have our own oil within us, while we might not always think that oil is enough, this miracle shows that it does not take much to change the course of history. It's the little things that can last a lifetime. Another lesson that we can learn from the jug of oil is that we need to always look. Some Rabbis believe that the reason we celebrate Chanukah for 8 days is broken up by the 7 extra days and then another day for the fact that they even looked for the oil. The Chashmonaim going back to look for the oil warranted another day of celebration because of the hope that they still had, despite the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) being destroyed.

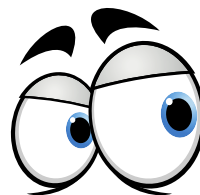
What is something that is hard for you to do?
How do you feel when you can't do it?

What is a time where you have seen Hashem help you when it was hard?
What is something you want to try harder to accomplish?

What is something you think would be part of the oil inside you?
What is something you have done that you think has changed the course of history?

Al Hanisim- And for the Miracles

עַל הַנִּסִּים וְעַל הַפְּרָקָן וְעַל הַגְּבוּרוֹת וְעַל הַתְּשׁוּעוֹת וְעַל הַמַּלְחָמוֹת שֶׁעָשִׂיתָ לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזֶמֶן הַזֶּה....
[We thank You] for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds, for the deliverances and for the wars that You performed for our fathers in those days at this season.





Deeper meaning behind The War



We have seen this story happen even more recently. In 1967, the Six day war in Israel broke out. Israel being a small country with not many soldiers defeated the 5 big nations that were attacking, Syria, Jordan and Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq. The small fairly new country was able to capture land and win the war. This is a very similar story to our story of Chanukah. The small nation was able to defeat the mighty with the help of Hashem. We can learn from both of these stories that no matter how small you might feel and how you might not think you can accomplish anything, with the help of Hashem we can do anything!

How was Israel able to defeat the other nations?

What did Israel capture in the 6 day war?
How is the story of the 6 day war similar to Chanukah?

What nations did Israel defeat?
What is the significance of the 6 day war?



Miracles in our Lives today



Modeh Ani

מוֹדֵה / מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיִם שֶׁחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי
בְּחֶמְלָה. רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ:

I am grateful to you, Hashem, king of life and existence who returned my neshama back to me compassionately, your faith is great.

Modeh Ani is the first thing we say when we awake every morning. We thank Hashem for waking us up and returning our Neshamot (souls) to us so that we may live another day. It is a kindness that Hashem does for us, to grant us another day of life.

When do we say Modeh Ani?
What are we thanking Hashem for?

How is Hashem described in Modeh Ani?

Why do we say that Hashem's faith is great in the end? What does His faith have to do with waking us up, shouldn't it be "our faith is great"?

Deeper Meaning behind Modeh Ani

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z'l says that waking up from your sleep is a type of rebirth, the gemara in Brachot on daf 57b explains that sleep is considered "one sixtieth of death." The recitation of modeh ani is a recognition of the gift of life that God has given us. This tefilah is us preparing ourselves to sanctify the new day.

Questions to think
about...

What are other small miracles that you see
in your life?

What else do we do in the morning to start
it in a holy way?

What is a way to make sure we remember Hashem
throughout the day?

ANSWERS

Page 4

25th of Kislev
8 days
Greeks

They made all the oils impure by touching them.
anger towards the person who destroyed it,
sad your things are gone

These are supposed to be days of
happiness and joy
The Gemara focuses on the oil

Page 5

Learn Torah,
A single remaining jar of oil still
sealed with the stamp of the
Kohen Gadol

The story involved the destruction of the second beit hamikdash
The re-entered when they won the war against the Greeks

The oil was supposed to last for one day and it lasted for 8.
The Rambam does not talk about the fact that we cant eulogize offast on Chanukah

Page 6

For all ages, try to discuss different things that are difficult in some areas of school, with your hobbies,
trying new things. Talk about little things in your life that have shown you the hand of Hashem like
finding a parking spot outside work, doing well on a test
Talk about the different strengths you think you have and how they can help other people

Page 7

With Hashem's help we were able to win the war. Hashem helps us in many different areas of our lives, here
he helped us in war

Yerushalayim and more specifically the old city.

The stories are similar because in both of them the underdog win, The Chashmonaim and the Israelis were not
the predicted winner but they did.

Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. The six day war allowed the Jews to show the rest of the world how
powerful we are and while we may be a small nation we can accomplish many things and come out victorious

Right when we wake up in the morning so we start our day off thanking Hashem! Modeh ani gets us in
the right mindset

King of all living things and existence. Hashem control all parts of the world, not just our waking up but
everything in existence is in some way controlled by Hashem's hand

Many explain that we say that Hashem's faith in us is great. He believes in each and every one of us that we
can be incredible and amazing people, that we can serve Hashem in the best way possible.