



Handout for Celebrating Chanukah



Get yourself a **Chabad Art Calendar** so you know when Chanukah and all of the other Jewish holidays fall throughout the year! The Jewish holidays are based on the Jewish calendar and fall at different times each year. Unless you have a Jewish calendar, you'll never know when the holidays are! Google "Chabad" and your city to find a calendar - you'll find a Chabad house where they can send you a calendar or send you to a place where you can pick one up.

Chanukah falls on Kislev 25 through Tevet 2. It starts at the end of the month of Kislev on the Jewish calendar and goes for 8 nights, ending on the 2nd of the following month of Tevet. It is not a holiday given to us in the Torah but instead, the Sages established it as a permanent holiday of praise and Thanksgiving, celebrating **freedom from religious persecution**. They wrote it into the Talmud in the year 165 BCE. **It commemorates the time when a small band of Jewish soldiers won against a huge army of Serian-Greeks.** When they took back the Temple, cleaned it from its desecration, and rededicated it, they found a small flask of untarnished sacred oil that miraculously lasted for 8 nights. The holiday of Chanukah started being celebrated a year after this occurred.

How to Celebrate:

Light a menorah for 8 nights, each night lighting another candle until the entire menorah is lit on the last night of the holiday. The middle candle, or "Shamash", is used to light the candles. Light that night's candle first and then go backwards in lighting until you've reached the first night's candle. Candles are placed starting from the right side of the menorah. You can face your menorah out a window or door so it can be seen from the street. A fun tradition is to have every family member light their own menorah. **A specific prayer** is said (see below) while lighting the candles or oil wick. You can go online to buy a menorah or ask your local synagogue or Chabad house. **Many Chabad houses will give out free starter kits that include a menorah.** [Here is the Chabad megasite for so more on Chanukah.](#)

Prayers said while Lighting: [Here's a YouTube of these sung, plus a traditional Chanukah song.](#)

1. *Barukh Ata A-doe-nai Eh-lo-hainu Meh-lekh HaOlam, ah-sheh kideeshanu bemitzvotov vitzeevanu lehadlick nair khanukah.* "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 lights."
2. *Barukh Ata A-doe-nai Eh-lo-hainu Meh-lekh HaOlam, She-asani Neesim Lavotainu bahyahmim ha-hem biz-mahn ha-zeh.* "Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who performed miracles for our forefathers in those days, at this time."

Only on the first night, add:

Barukh Ata Ado-nai Eh-lo-hainu Meh-lekh HaOlam, sheh-heh-khee-ahnu, veh-kee-ah-mahnu, veh-hee-gee-ahnu liz-mahn hah-zeh. "Blessed are You, L-ord our G-d, King of the Universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion."

It's traditional to sing **Chanukah songs** (I recommend a CD called, "To Life – Chanukah and other Jewish celebrations") and eat latkes (potato pancakes) – see recipe below. In the US, since there's so much hullabaloo this time of year among the non-Jewish kids getting presents, Chanukah has evolved into a holiday where **small presents are given** each night of the holiday. Traditionally, kids were given gelt (money) instead of presents. [There is a game played called Dreidel which can be looked up online here.](#) Nowadays, kids can use chocolate coins for that game or peanuts in shell.

Latka Recipe – Serves 4 – 5 people

6 large potatoes
2 medium onions
6 eggs
4 Tbl. Flour
2 tsp. salt

Grate potatoes and onions. Use salad spinner to squeeze out potato water. Add beaten eggs, flour and salt. Scoop by tablespoon, depending on size you want to eat, into a hot pan of oil. Let brown on both sides and then drain on paper towel. Serve with applesauce and sour cream.

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