

**Yay, It's Chanukah!!!**

By Lisa Gitelson

□

# Table of Contents

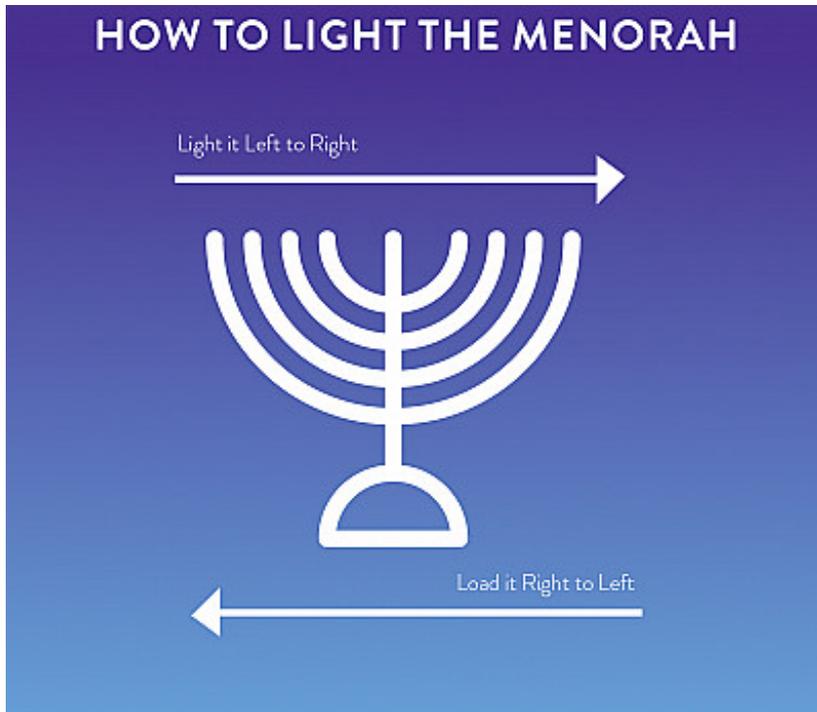
Table of Contents	2
INTRODUCTION	3
How to Light the Menorah	3
Miracles Quote	4
Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah	5
Svivon, Sov Sov Sov!	7
Light The Candles	8
Adam Sandler's "The Chanukah Song"	9
Ma'oz Tzur / Rock of Ages	11
The Chanukah Story, Two Ways	12
How to Recite the Chanukah Blessings	14
Lighting the Menorah	16
A Chanukah Writing Meditation	18
Dreidel Rules	20
Miracles Quote	21
Spreading Light Quote	22
Eight - Matisyahu Quote	23

## INTRODUCTION

# How to Light the Menorah

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



A menorah is also called a “Hanukkiyah”

Each night of Chanukah, we light an additional candle to indicate the growing miracle of each successive night. On the first night, we light the shamash (helper) and use it to light one additional candle. On night two, we light the shamash, plus two candles, and so on until the final night when we have a hanukkiyah full of light. It is traditional to place the hanukkiyah on or near a window, so it can be seen from the street.

## Miracles Quote

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

**“Miracles, in the sense of phenomena we cannot explain, surround us on every hand: life itself is the miracle of miracles.”**

– George Bernard Shaw

## INTRODUCTION

# Hanukkah, Oh Hanukkah

Contributed by [Irving Lebow](#)

Source:

Oh, Hanukkah, Oh, Hanukkah  
Come light the menorah  
Let's have a party  
We'll all dance the hora  
Gather round the table, we'll give you a treat  
Sevionim to play with and lakes to eat

And while we are playing  
The candles are burning low  
One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago  
One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago

Oh, Hanukkah, Oh, Hanukkah  
Come light the menorah  
Let's have a party  
We'll all dance the hora  
Gather round the table, we'll give you a treat  
Sevionim to play with and lakes to eat

And while we are playing  
The candles are burning low  
One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago

Oh, Hanukkah, Oh, Hanukkah  
Come light the menorah  
Let's have a party  
We'll all dance the hora  
Gather round the table, we'll give you a treat  
Sevionim to play with and lakes to eat

And while we are playing  
The candles are burning low  
One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago  
One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago

One for each night, they shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago

## INTRODUCTION

### **Svivon, Sov Sov Sov!**

Contributed by [Irving Lebow](#)

Source:

Sivivon, sov, sov, sov  
Chanukah, hu chag tov  
Chanukah, hu chag tov  
Sivivon, sov, sov, sov!

Chag simcha hu la-am  
Nes gadol haya sham  
Nes gadol haya sham  
Chag simcha hu la-am.

סְבִיבּוֹן סב סב סב  
חנכה הוא חג טוב  
חנכה הוא חג טוב  
סְבִיבּוֹן סב סב סב

חַג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעָם  
נֵס גָּדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם  
נֵס גָּדוֹל הָיָה שָׁם  
חַג שְׂמֵחָה הוּא לְעָם

## INTRODUCTION

# Light The Candles

Contributed by [Irving Lebow](#)

Source:

First blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר חֲנֻכָּה

*Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech ha-olam a-sher ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu le-had-lik ner Cha-nu-kah.*

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

Second blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה

*Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-a-sa ni-sim la-avo-te-nu ba-ya-mim ha-hem bi-zman ha-zeh.*

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

Third blessing, recited only on the first night (or the first time lighting this Chanukah):

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁהַחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵן הַזֶּה

*Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech Ha-olam she-heche-ya-nu ve-ki-yi-ma-nu ve-higi-a-nu liz-man ha-zeh.*

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

## INTRODUCTION

# Adam Sandler's "The Chanukah Song"

Contributed by [Irving Lebow](#)

Source:

Put on your yarmulke  
Here comes Chanukah  
So much funukah  
To celebrate Chanukah  
Chanukah is the festival of lights  
Instead of one day of presents, we have eight crazy nights

When you feel like the only kid in town without a Christmas tree  
Here's a list of people who are Jewish just like you and me  
David Lee Roth lights the menorah  
So do James Caan, Kirk Douglas, and the late Dinah Shore-ah

Guess who eats together at the Carnegie Deli  
Bowser from Sha Na Na and Arthur Fonzerelli  
Paul Newman's half Jewish, Goldie Hawn's half too  
Put them together, what a fine lookin' Jew

You don't need "Deck The Halls" or "Jingle Bell Rock"  
'Cause you can spin a dreidel with Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock- both Jewish

Put on your yarmulke  
It's time for Chanukah  
The owner of the Seattle Supersonicahs  
Celebrates Chanukah

O.J. Simpson, not a Jew  
But guess who is? Hall of famer Rod Carew- he converted  
We got Ann Landers and her sister Dear Abby  
Harrison Ford's a quarter Jewish- not too shabby

Some people think that Ebenezer Scrooge is  
Well he's not, but guess who is

All three Stooges  
So many Jews are in showbiz  
Tom Cruise isn't, but I heard his agent is

Tell your friend Veronica  
It's time to celebrate Chanukah  
I hope I get a harmonica  
Oh this lovely, lovely Chanukah  
So drink your gin and tonica  
And smoke your marijuanica  
If you really, really wannaca  
Have a happy, happy, happy, happy Chanukah  
Happy Chanukah

## INTRODUCTION

# Ma'oz Tzur / Rock of Ages

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source:

Rock of Ages, let our song, praise Thy saving power;  
Thou, amidst the raging foes, wast our sheltering tower.  
Furious they assailed us, but Thine arm availed us,  
And Thy Word broke their sword, when our own strength failed us.  
And Thy Word broke their sword, when our own strength failed us.

Kindling new the holy lamps, priests, approved in suffering,  
Purified the nation's shrine, brought to God their offering.  
And His courts surrounding, hear, in joy abounding,  
Happy throngs, singing songs with a mighty sounding.  
Happy throngs, singing songs with a mighty sounding.

Children of the martyr race, whether free or fettered,  
Wake the echoes of the songs where ye may be scattered.  
Yours the message cheering that the time is nearing  
Which will see, all men free, tyrants disappearing.  
Which will see, all men free, tyrants disappearing.

--

*This popular non-literal translation called "Rock of Ages", is based on the German version by Leopold Stein (1810–1882), and was written by Talmudic linguist Marcus Jastrow and Gustav Gottheil.*

## The Chanukah Story, Two Ways

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Tamar Fox

### THE CLASSIC STORY...

Way back in 167 BCE, the Jews were living in the land of Israel, and were ruled by a Syrian Greek king named Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Antiochus wanted the Jews to assimilate into Hellenistic culture, so he outlawed three core Jewish commandments: circumcising male babies, observing the Sabbath, and studying Torah. He also desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem. A Jewish priest named Mattathias and his five sons--collectively known as the Maccabees, which means "hammers" -- led a revolt against Antiochus, and though they were heavily outnumbered, they ultimately succeeded in driving out the Syrian Greeks and rededicating the Temple to God.

When the Maccabees were cleaning the Temple for rededication, they discovered that the oil used to light the huge lamp had almost all been desecrated. There was only enough oil to light the lamp for one night, but when they lit the lamp, the oil miraculously burned for eight days and nights.

To commemorate this miracle we light a nine pronged candelabra, adding one candle each night. We also eat greasy foods, because oil was part of the Chanukah miracle.

### AND THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY...

The real Chanukah story is a little more complicated. Some Jews were happy to assimilate into Hellenistic culture, and the Maccabees declared war on those Hellenized Jews as much as on the Syrian Greeks. The Maccabees used guerilla warfare tactics in a bloody war that went on for years, and only one Maccabee survived to see the end of the war in 164 BCE. That year the war prevented the Jews from being able to celebrate the autumn festival of Sukkot, so they decided that Sukkot should be celebrated once they rededicated the Temple, which they did on the 25th of the month of Kislev. Sukkot lasts seven days plus one extra day for the holiday of Shemini Atzeret, so the new holiday of rededication (Chanukah) became an eight day holiday.

So where did the oil story come from? About 600 years later, the Talmud tells the story of the oil miraculously lasting for eight days to explain why it's forbidden to fast on Chanukah. Many scholars believe that the story of the miracle was a later addition.

## How to Recite the Chanukah Blessings

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Tamar Fox

Blessings are at the core of most Jewish holidays and rituals, and Chanukah is no different. Before lighting the candles we say two blessings, one for the commandment to light Chanukah candles, one for the miracle that was performed for our ancestors in the time of the Maccabees. On the first night we also say Shehechyanu, a blessing of thanksgiving for bringing us to this day.

When you think of blessings, you may think of good wishes, of making something holy. But Hebrew blessings are different. Most Hebrew blessings begin *Baruch Ata Adonai*, which means, Blessed are you, God. We're not blessing the candles, or the challah, or the ritual in front of us, we're blessing God (or the Universe, or the Source of Creation, or the Great Magical Unifier) for giving us the opportunity to experience the special moment of the present.

Even if you don't believe in God, Hebrew blessings can be a powerful way to express gratitude. It's a moment to stop and reflect, to feel thanks for the experience.

If you're not comfortable using the traditional blessings on Chanukah, try listing things you feel grateful for each night. Start with one thing on the first night, and build up to eight on the last night.

1. *Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-Olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Chanukah.*

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

2. *Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-Olam, she'asah nissim la'avoteinu ba'yamim ha-hem bazman ha'zeh.*

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

\* *On the first night, we add:*

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam shehehiyanu v'kiyemanu  
v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.*

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

## Lighting the Menorah

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Alison Laichter

One of my favorite Chanukah tradition and “rule” is that we aren’t supposed to use the Chanukah candles’ light for any purpose. You shouldn’t use the light from the menorah to read or do work or even light your way through the dark. Instead, we are supposed to simply gaze at the light and enjoy it. Have you ever lit a candle and just sat and watched it burn? I recommend it. When I lead Chanukah meditation workshops, that’s always a profound exercise. It’s incredibly lovely to watch the candles burn out, one by one, returning us to darkness.

This time of year, I’m thinking a lot about bringing light to dark places. I’ve learned that we don’t just light candles to bring light to the darkest time of year during Chanukah. We are also reminding ourselves that we’re in constant motion. Things will change. Darkness lead to light and light to darkness, and somehow, there’s some comfort in that.

It’s been my experience that the scariest part of feeling lost or anxious, depressed or sad, is that we fear that we’ll feel that way forever. Of course, we know, intellectually, that everything changes and we won’t be stuck in any feeling forever, but in dark moments, it’s hard to see the light or sometimes even the possibility of light. So, we light candles and remember our ability to create light, joy, peace, love, and also that darkness precedes light and light goes to dark and back again.

We learn in the story of Chanukah that even the holiest place, the Temple, could be desecrated, that the eternal light can go out. How heartbreaking that must have been for the people of that time. And, if that’s possible, what are the chances that our fragile, human hearts could ever stay whole and holy for our whole lives? Just like the Maccabees rededicated the Temple and searched through all of the brokenness for light, I’m using the holiday of Chanukah (which means “dedication”) to excavate my own heart and life, and rededicating myself to creating a life that brings light into the world.

Each night, when you light the candles, adding more and more as the holiday

continues, take at least a few moments to simply gaze at the candlelight. Enjoy the gift of light, look inside and see what needs your dedication, and notice the tiny and huge miracles that have brought you to this very moment.

Happy Chanukah.

## A Chanukah Writing Meditation

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Alison Laichter

Just as the Maccabees rededicated the Temple (the Hebrew word Chanukah means “dedication”), looked through the rubble, and miraculously found the ingredients for light, we can use this holiday to look through our own rubble and find our own sources of light. Use this writing meditation to take time to pause and reflect on light, dedication, and miracles. Consider these eight questions and the time you’re taking to write your answers a gift to yourself. Happy Chanukah!

### Instructions:

Take a deep breath. Close your eyes. Take a full breath. Check in with your body, and ask yourself “what does it feel like to breathe?” and return to the physicality of your breath. Become aware of how your breath comes and goes, how your lungs fill and empty, your belly rises and falls.

Use the questions on the next page to guide your writing meditation practice. Take your time and give yourself the gift of presence. This is being present. This is your practice, your exploration of dedication, and your opportunity to find out what lights up your life. Who knows, you could discover some hidden miracles!

When your mind inevitably wanders, because that’s what minds do, gently bring yourself back to this moment on your next inhale. Practice returning to your self, and to this paper in your hands.

### The Questions:

What brings light to my life?

How can I kindle that light?

How can I bring more light into the world?

What miracles have I experienced during difficult times?

What miracles am I trying to cultivate in my life?

How can I bring about miracles in the lives of others?

What will I (re)dedicate myself to this year?

*May our practice light us from within and allow us to radiate outwards, during the darkest time of the year and always, bringing light and peace to ourselves and the world.*

## Dreidel Rules

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

**Source:** Alison Laichter

Dreidel (a Yiddish word, in Hebrew it's *sevivon*, and in either language means "to turn around") is a top with four sides. Each side of the dreidel has a different Hebrew letter: Nun, Gimmel, Hey, and Shin. Together the letters are an acronym for the phrase, "Nes gadol haya sham," "A great miracle happened there." The "there" signifies Israel, and in Israel, dreidels have a Pey instead of a Shin. The Pey stands for the word "Po," which means "here."

Dreidel is a game played all over the world during Chanukah, with any amount of players, and you can play with gelt (gold foil wrapped chocolate coins), or actual coins, nuts, candies, whatever you want. Here are the rules:

Each player has a bunch of pieces of gelt. Everyone puts one piece into the center. The center "pot" may need to be replenished after every round, so every time it's empty, everyone again puts one piece of gelt in the pot to continue playing.

Now, it's time to spin. Each player spins the dreidel, and if the dreidel lands on

**Nun:** The player does nothing.

**Gimmel:** The player wins everything in the pot!

**Hey:** The player takes half of the pot.

**Shin:** The player puts a piece of gelt in the pot.

If you run out of gelt, you're out. If you get all the gelt, you win!

## INTRODUCTION

### Miracles Quote

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



## Spreading Light Quote

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

**“There are two ways of spreading light; to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”**

– Edith Wharton

## Eight - Matisyahu Quote

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



**“Eight is the number of infinity,  
one more than what you know  
how to be. And this is the light  
of festivity, when your broken  
heart yearns to be free.”**

– Matisyahu