

CHANUKAH

Designed and written by Sorah Cohen.

A long time ago, in the land of Eretz Yisrael there was a beautiful house. It wasn't your house, it wasn't mine, it was Hashem's house. What do you think it looked like inside Hashem's house? Do you think it was very beautiful? It had lots of gold furniture and colorful curtains. Everybody loved coming to Hashem's house to visit. The people that looked after the house were called the Kohanim. Everyday, the Kohen Gadol, would light the Menorah. He would pour oil inside each cup and then light it with fire. The light would shine and light up the Beit Hamikdash and the whole world.

At that time, there was a mean King Antiochus who ruled the land of Eretz Yisrael. "I don't like the light of the Jewish people," said King Antiochus. He decided to make some strict rules, "No more lighting the Menorah, no more celebrating Shabbat and no more learning Torah!" He told his Greek soldiers to go into the Beit Hamikdash and put a greek idol inside. They came and knocked down the Menorah, and broke all the jars of oil. They made a big mess.

Do you think it's nice to go into Hashem's house and make a mess? How do you think the Jewish people felt? They were angry and sad. They didn't like what Antiochus and the Greek soldiers did.

The Jewish people ran away to learn Torah in caves in the hills. They wouldn't let King Antiochus stop them from learning precious Torah. If they heard a Greek soldier coming they would put away their scrolls and play game of dreidel.

A brave Jewish man named Yehudah Hamaabee said, "We must stop Antiochus! We must think of ways to make him go away." He gathered some brave Maccabees to help.

At first the Maccabees were afraid. "There are so many Greek soldiers and they have big elephants. How can we chase them away?"

Yehudah said, "If we are brave and remember that Hashem always helps us, we will succeed!"

The Maccabees were brave and chased away Antiochus and the Greeks! What a miracle!

When the Jewish people came into the Beit Hamikdash they saw a big mess! They saw idols and broken jars of oil. Everyone came to help clean up and scrub the Beit Hamikdash, until it looked shiny and beautiful. When they wanted to light the Menorah, they couldn't find any jars with a kosher seal on it. All the jars were broken. They searched and searched, until at last they found one tiny jar of oil. Enough to light the Menorah for just one night. It would take 8 days before they could get more fresh oil, but they lit the Menorah anyways. To their surprise, this little jar of oil burned for eight days! The Jewish people were so grateful for this miracle!

We celebrate these two amazing miracles every year on Chanukah by lighting the Menorah.

What else do we do on Chanukah to remember the miracle of the oil?

We eat donuts and latkes which are fried in oil!

ANTIYUCHUS THE WICKED KING.

Antiochus, the wicked king,
He did to the Jews a terrible thing!
He made the holy Beit Hamikdash unclean,
And besides, he was so mean!
"That's not fair!" the Maccabees did say,
And with Hashem's help,
They chased Antiochus away!
They found a little oil,
It was a sight,
Hashem made it burn,
For 8 days and nights!

DREIDEL RHYMES:

(some lyrics from Morah Music)

I had a little dreidel,
I made it out of clay,
And when it's dry and ready,
Oh dreidel I shall play.

CHORUS:

Oh dreidel, dreidel, dreidel, dreidel,
I made it out of clay and when it's dry and ready,
Oh dreidel I shall play.

I had a little dreidel, I made it out of sand,
And when I tried to spin it, it crumbled in my hand.

I had a little dreidel, I made it out of air,
And when I tried to spin it, it simply wasn't there.

I had a little dreidel I made it out of money,
It was so expensive, it wasn't even funny.

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of wood,
and when it lands on hey I think it's pretty good.

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of snow,
I put it in the oven, oh where did my dreidel go?

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of ice,
I put it in a pitcher, and it looked very nice.

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of fruit,
I put it on a platter and it looked very cute.

I have a little dreidel, that was made in France,
And when it lands on Gimmel, it begins to dance.

I have a little dreidel, I made it out of cork,
I found it in a toy store, somewhere in New York.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

- What is a miracle? [something that happens that is surprisingly good.]
- How does it feel to be next to the light of the Menorah?
- How can you be brave like the Macabees? [doing something helpful and kind, even when it's not comfortable]
- Do you think it's good to tidy up when it's messy? Why? [It makes us feel comfortable and happy]
- Do you think Antiochus's rules were fair? What do you think are fair rules to make? [that show respect for other people. Including them in rule making.]