

Channukah Running Sheet:

7pm discussion and dinner

8.15pm candle lighting, singing and blessings

8.30 → sevivon betting on tables;

Candle making on tables

Games

Tasks:

Chinuch	adele email template – adam & Hannah give Adele by 15 th
ADAM STILL TO DO	
Photocopying chinuch	Hannah
Sevivons	Hannah
Sevimon rules	adam
Maotzur typed	adam
Alternative to maotzur	Hannah and adele DONE
Sweets x 200	adele
CDs	everyone
Donuts	Hannah
CD player	adele
Set up	LJCC – 5 round tables
Games/charades	adam
Candles	adele DONE
Paper plates/knives forks	Hannah
Bagels & dips	adele
Metal trays for candles	adele

CHANUKA: THE FESTIVAL OF CHANGING MEANINGS



Hello! Choose a couple of people and have a look at whichever questions tickle your fancy. Enjoy!

HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF CHANUKAH:

Chanukah, beginning on 25 Kislev, commemorates the triumph of the Jews, under the Maccabees, over the Greek rulers (164 BCE) - both the physical victory of the small Jewish nation against mighty Greece and the spiritual victory of the Jewish faith against the Hellenism of the Greeks. One day Greek forces arrived at Modiin, the home of Mattityahu, an elder and religious leader of the prestigious Hasmonean family. There, the army established a Greek religious altar and ordered Mattityahu to offer a sacrifice to a pagan god. Mattityahu refused, but while he stood firm, another Jew offered to make the sacrifice. Enraged, Mattityahu killed him and attacked the Greek soldiers. His action sparked a Jewish rebellion, which he and his sons led. They became known as the Maccabees, which in Hebrew, means Men Who are as Strong as Hammers. Led by Judah Maccabee, the Maccabees, a force much smaller than the powerful Greek armies, finally triumphed in 165 B.C.E. On the 25th of Kislev, the Maccabees reclaimed the Jewish Temple, which was, at that point, almost unrecognisable as a place of Jewish worship. The Jews achieved independence under the leadership of Judah's brother Simon who became an authoritarian ruler.

The story of Chanukah is documented in the Apocrypha which is not part of the biblical canon. These books are set aside from the bible as historical documents rather than divinely inspired texts

THE CHANGING FESTIVAL

The story of the miracle of Chanukah tells us how with the help of God the Jewish people were able to rededicate the temple to God. Maccabean Jews recaptured Jerusalem and the Temple. This war ended in the fall, around October. However, the victorious Maccabees waited until the Winter Solstice Festival, then called Nayrot (which means "lights"), to rededicate the Temple. They changed the name of Nayrot to Chanukah, which means "dedication"

The story written in the Talmud hundreds of years after the military victory, dismissed the political uprising and added the story of the oil that miraculously lasted for eight days. Oil was needed for the menorah in the Temple, which was supposed to burn throughout the night every night. According to the rabbis, there was only enough oil to burn for one day, yet miraculously, it burned for eight days, the time needed to prepare a fresh supply of oil for the menorah. The rabbis declared an eight-day festival to commemorate this miracle. According to this explanation, the holiday commemorates the miracle of the oil, not the military victory. It shifts the emphasis from the military skill of the Maccabees to the supernatural intervention of God

One explanation as to why Chanukah lasts for 8 days is because after the temple had been rededicated the Maccabees realised that they had not observed the festival of Succot while they had been fighting:

'They celebrated it for eight days with rejoicing in the manner of the feast of tabernacles, mindful of how a little while before at the festivals of tabernacles they had been wandering about like wild beasts in the mountains and caves.

2 Maccabees 10.6 - 7

The modern Zionist movement took the story of Chanukah as a metaphor for the national revival of the Jewish people. The 'Hovevi Zion' (Lovers of Zion) movement in Russia proposed that Chanukah should be the official holiday of the Zionist movement - it worked for both religious and secular Zionists. It became known as the festival of the 'Hasmoneans' rather than 'Chanukah' - rededication. They saw the Maccabee revolt as a secularist revolt to redeem the nation. A common song in Israel became 'no miracle of oil befell us, no cruse of oil did we find'. Weizmann - the first president of Israel lit a Chanukiah with the candles stuck into Jaffa oranges, marking the festival as a truly Israeli holiday. In this way they managed to do what Herzl thought the Jewish people needed to do - turn the Chanukiah '*from its petrified menorah form, and to water its roots again as if it were really a tree*'.

In what ways do the stories, legends and messages of Chanukah have relevance to us?

Can you relate to the myth of the 'miracle of Chanukah'?

REDEDICATION

The Hebrew word chanukah means 'dedication'. The tradition of lighting the channukia dictates that that we are to relight the candles each night so that on the first night we light one, and on the second night we light two, on the third night we light three and so on. We light them from the beginning each night, going from right to left. As we relight the whole set repetitively, we rededicate something each night of Chanukah.

What do you rededicate each night: the miracle of oil or a memory of human activism?

Adam: Performing Jewish rituals that we may not understand or agree with for the sake of being part of community or because we are humans and take 'good with the bad or do we need to find meaning in ritual.

Adam: Assimilation/reform/secular and maccabi's.

Chanuka blessing:

Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam.
Asher kidishanu ve'mitzvotav le'hadlik ner
shel chanuka.

Baruch ata adonai eloheinu melech ha'olam.
She'asah nisim la'avoteinu
ba'yamim ha'hem, ba'zman ha'zeh.

CHANUKAH SONG

Maoz Tzur

Maoz tzur yeshua-si
Lecha na-eh li-sha-beyach
Tikone bais ti-fee-lasi
Vi-sham todah ni-za-beyach.

Alternative Chanuka Blessing:

Baruch Ha-Or Ba'olam
Baruch Ha'or Ba'-Adam
Baruch Ha'or Ba'chanukah

Blessed is the light in the world.
Blessed is the light of humanity.
Blessed is the light of Hanukkah.

ALTERNATIVE CHANUKA READING

To Be of Use (Marge Piercy)

The people I love best
Jump into the work head first
Without dallying in the shadows
And swim off with sure strokes almost out
of sight.
They seem to become natives of the
element,
The black sleek heads of seals
Bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an
ox to a heavy cart,
Who pull like water buffalo, with massive
patience,
Who strain in the mud and muck to move
things forward
Who do what has to be done again and
again.

I want to be with people who submerge
In the task, who go into the fields to
harvest
And work in a row and pass bags along,
Who are not parlor generals and field
deserters
But move in a common rhythm
When the food must come in or the fire