

IsraelForever
bluewhiteunity.com

CELEBRATE OUR *Blue and White Light*



The background is a dark blue gradient filled with numerous small, glowing blue stars and larger, stylized white Stars of David. Some of the Stars of David are suspended by thin white lines, giving the impression of hanging ornaments. The overall effect is a festive and celebratory atmosphere.

Hanukkah, The Festival of Lights.

Every year, we commemorate the courage of the Maccabees.

Facing the threat of destruction, the struggle for Jewish freedom was strong.

A fight we still fight today.

The battle affirmed the rightful sovereignty of the People of Israel in the Land of Israel as the Second Temple was rededicated in our eternal capital, Jerusalem and the eternal flame of the Jewish people rekindled.

This year, let us keep the flame alive, and light up the world in blue and white. Standing proud as one nation, sharing our one beating heart, we celebrate what connects us from the past to the present and carries us to the future.



Shalom Friends,

Even as the pain still pulses in our hearts since [the October 7 massacre](#), and as we move farther away from the tragedy, it becomes difficult to break through the confusion of war. Our empathy for the loss of human life of the innocents is combined with our need to see justice and prevent this [continued violence](#) and ongoing abuse against Jews in Israel and around the world.

Chanukah presents the perfect opportunity to empower all who seek to build upon their belonging while our people, history, and human rights are under attack. Candles get lit in even the most secular homes, and even those who do not [know the story](#) know that we light eight nights [because of a miracle](#) in Jerusalem.

Indeed, the Maccabees give us a concrete example of what standing up for Jewish rights means [in every generation since](#) Jewish homes of all levels of observance have been lit with their own personal rededication of the eternal flame in the Second Temple on Mount Moriah, the Temple Mount. This year, the battle seems all the more personal.

We continue to seek ways to strengthen our national unity while our soldiers are still on the battlefield. We want to show our solidarity while simultaneously feeling empowered in our personal struggles with friends we've lost who refuse to acknowledge the atrocities of the Hamas' genocidal actions against our fellow Jews. We are looking for ways to fight the hate that is taking over every stream of media and public opinion, and we are looking for ways to feel better in spite of the unknown future. It is precisely at this time that we must spread our blue and white ancestral light and flood the world with our pride and resilience in the face of our Maccabee fight for our survival.

While we may not be able to drown out the lies and demonization of Israel entirely, this year, Chanukah can deepen the connection of Jews to our heritage and peoplehood. The lights we kindle take on a whole new meaning in the aftermath of the massacre, and every night gives us a chance to delve further into their significance for us as Jews today. Continuing the successful effort of [Blue and White Unity](#) of The Israel Forever Foundation, the [Light Blue and White Chanukah campaign](#) provides tangible, engaging resources to assist families, friends, communities, organizations, and groups of all ages to

explore new ways to spread the light and keep the flame of Jewish unity alive. This exclusive Blue and White kit is available for use in every setting, as blue and white candles allow us to commemorate the miracles, the wars, and the honor of being one of the Jewish nation with our national colors.

What better way to make this Chanukah come to life than by shining a light on the connection we share with the thousands of years of Jews before us? Whether you make a blue and white sand Chanukiah, bake blue and white dreidel cookies, decorate your sufganiyot with blue and white sprinkles and stars, or [wear blue and white](#) to sing a song for Israel and Jewish unity - the light we spread this Chanukah can brighten the darkness and help us heal our hearts and those who feel inspired by our act of strength. It is these small acts of kindness and connectivity that can shine brightly for our families and friends long after the candle's flames have burnt out.

Whatever your way of expression, our collective acts of solidarity bind us with our ancestral heritage in our continued battle for Jewish rights even until today. We know that this war has been forced upon us, and we know that it is not an easy one to win. Our reason and purpose must remain clear to enable our unity to outlast the tendency to politicize and, as a result, divide and weaken our resolve. We will not allow "Never Again" to be an empty slogan. We will stand up for our people, for Israel, and for the right to defend ourselves. Let our ancestral colors be a source of strength to all citizens and [Virtual Citizens of Israel](#).

*Chag Orot Sameach,
Dr. Elana Heideman*

Dr. Elana Heideman is a Jewish identity transformational leader and Jewish rights activist. A historian, educator, writer and motivational speaker, Elana is CEO/Executive Director of The Israel Forever Foundation, an apolitical nondenominational empowerment and engagement organization focused on building Jewish unity.

IDEAS FOR A NIGHT IN BLUE AND WHITE

- Choose from our delicious Chanukah treats to cook, either before the event or as an activity.
- Choose and prepare an art activity that is appropriate for your guests/friends/family.
- Choose an article to read and discuss during the evening.
- Decorate your space with blue and white streamers, balloons, Stars of David, Israeli flags, or whatever else you choose.
- When your guests arrive, start up [a Chanukah playlist](#) and get the party started!
- If you are starting after dark, light your chanukiah as the first activity - don't forget your blue and white candles! If you are beginning earlier in the evening, as soon as night falls (when 3 stars are visible), have a candle lighting activity. Say the blessings and sing your heart out.
- Don't forget to share your Blue and White pride - take video clips, photos, and share on your favorite social media platform, and tag Israel Forever as well as use our hashtags: #IsraelForever #BlueWhiteUnity
- Keep the flame burning bright even after the night ends - have everyone declare your pride as [Virtual Citizens of Israel!](#)

Unifying Israel's Blue and White Against *Sinat Chinam*

Blue and white are historically associated with Jewish traditions, and the traditional Jewish prayer shawl, known as the *tallit*, is typically white with blue stripes or fringes (*tzitzit*). These fringes were G-d's way of giving the people of Israel a tangible reminder to keep His commandments and remember His active presence, like a piece of string tied around your finger or a knot in your handkerchief. Also, when you wrap yourself in the *tallit*, often during prayer, it represents the embrace of G-d's presence and protection.

The colors of the flag of the Nation and Land of Israel, blue and white, reminiscent of the *tallit*'s stripes, serve as a unifying symbol for Israel's diverse population, tied to Jewish heritage that represents the country's landscape: the blue of the sky and the white of purity and peace. The Star of David (Magen David in Hebrew) in the center is a traditional symbol strongly associated with Judaism and Jewish identity. It is often considered a symbol of protection.

In Jewish history, several symbolic periods of darkness or tragic events have significantly impacted the Jewish community. These periods often represent moments of suffering, persecution, or tragedy, and these symbols that have stayed with us have taken on the extra layer as symbols of hope.

In Jewish history, several symbolic periods of darkness or tragic events have significantly impacted the Jewish community. These periods often represent moments of suffering, persecution, or tragedy.

Two critical symbolic periods of darkness in Jewish history included:

1. **The destruction of the First Temple (586 BCE):** The Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, destroyed Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem and exiled many Jews to Babylonia. This event began a long period of exile and mourning known as the Babylonian Exile.
2. **The destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE):** The Romans, under the command of Titus, destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem, leading to widespread devastation and the dispersion of Jews across the Roman Empire. This event marked the beginning of the Jewish diaspora.

The Talmud (Yoma 9b) discusses the reasons for the destruction of the two Temples in Jerusalem. It differentiates between the causes of the first destruction and those of the second:

Why was the First Temple destroyed? Because of three things that prevailed there: **idolatry, immorality, and bloodshed.**

Why was the Second Temple destroyed, seeing that they occupied themselves with the Torah, mitzvot, and acts of kindness during that time? Because **baseless hatred** prevailed.

One of the discerning factors for the destruction of the Temple was the disunity between the Jews themselves, called ***sinat chinam***, baseless hatred. The Talmud tells us not only that it is forbidden but also that it is seriously destructive. The severity of *sinat chinam* is apparent: even a generation of charitable scholars can be punished for this sin, and it is considered as grave as the three cardinal sins combined (Binyamin, 2016).

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, known as the Hafetz Haim, passed away on the 24th of Elul (1838-1933) in the Hebrew calendar, often falling around October. He was a renowned rabbi, revered for his teachings on Jewish ethics, proper speech, and kindness. Some of the core teachings associated with the Hafetz Haim include:

- **Lashon Hara (Evil Speech):** The Hafetz Haim emphasized prohibiting speaking negatively about others. He stressed the importance of guarding one's tongue and refraining from gossip, slander, and harmful speech.
- **Ahavat Yisrael (Love for fellow Jews):** He encouraged unity and love among Jewish people. He taught that displaying love and kindness towards others, regardless of differences, was fundamental to Jewish life.
- **Ethical Living:** His teachings focused on living an ethical and righteous life according to Jewish law (*halakha*). He emphasized the importance of honesty, integrity, and fulfilling moral obligations.

The teachings of the Hafetz Haim encouraged individuals to engage in self-reflection, repentance, and continuous self-improvement. The Hafetz Haim emphasized the significance of striving for personal growth and returning to a path of righteousness. At a difficult time in Israel's history, the Hafetz Haim's teachings continue to influence Jewish thought and ethics, serving as a guide for many on how to live a moral and spiritually enriched life within the framework of Jewish tradition.

Consummate with this, the ability to read and interpret religious texts and teachings has been a source of identity, literacy, strength, and empowerment for Jewish communities throughout history.

Symbolically, Jewish history is rich with moments of light, resilience, and significance. One can take enormous lessons from the teachings of Hafetz Haim, especially regarding the divisions in Israel and the overwhelming reactions in thought and deed against one another in the period preceding October 7th, and the tremendous outpouring of love, kindness, and tzedakah afterward.



FIND YOURSELF IN OUR



BLUE AND WHITE LIGHT OF UNITY

Lighting the candles this year is one of the most important things we must do to pierce the darkness that has fallen over the world.

Chanukah reminds us to find the everlasting light within. A reminder that, even in the midst of tragedy, we must keep our flame burning.

We must keep alive the strength, connection, determination, the hope that empowered the Maccabees and empowers us today.

Shine a light in your home and in your heart. Learn about the different ways we can spread light throughout Israel and the Jewish world. Every night of Chanukah, we must seek our flame of inspiration and strength from the unity and pride of being a part of the Jewish nation.

No matter how dark and difficult times are, we can find the light within.

Everybody has a light to give. The more people that share our Blue and White Pride, the brighter the world will be.



SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Carving wood blocks - we recommend long ones, like in the picture, but you can also stack cubes. You will need to ensure that one is taller than the rest.
- Large wood plaque, plate or board to serve as the base
- Blue, white, black and gold acrylic paints.
- Mod Podge, watered white glue, or other shellac
- Wood or tacky glue
- Candle bases, either for wax candles or empty oil cups
- Pencils/Hebrew letter stencils (optional)

STEPS TO CREATING YOUR "WOODS OF STRENGTH" CHANUKIAH

FOR THE CANDLES

1. Paint the background design onto your wood blocks with acrylic paint. To get the gradient effect in the image, mix blue and white to make a lighter blue (or use 2 shades of blue paint), and paint from darkest to lightest (white). You could also do stripes, alternating white and blue blocks, or any other pattern that you prefer. However, if adding the words, we recommend nothing too busy or it will be hard to read.
2. Once the background layer dries, if desired (as shown in the image), recognize that the light of the Jewish people is eternal, and we will always keep it burning. On each of the blocks, carefully write with pencil (or stencil on) the names of some of the communities hit hardest by the October 7 Black Shabbat Massacre. In the image, they are very carefully aligned, but if you can't get the alignment perfect, what is important is the order. (You can also just do the key part - the letters of Am Yisrael Chai - עם ישראל חי - across your blocks, but the full effect of the image is so powerful!) *Note: if using cubes, to help with alignment, you can do one letter on each cube and then add blank ones where needed.*

NAMES OF FEATURED COMMUNITIES



photo credit: Eliyahu Regev via Sivan Rahav Meir on Facebook

- Re'im - רעים
This name means "Friends" in Hebrew
- Kerem Shalom - כרם שלום
This name means "Vineyard of Peace" in Hebrew
- Zikim - זיקים
This name means "Sparks" in Hebrew
- Sderot - שדרות
This name means "Boulevards" in Hebrew
- Kfar Aza - כפר עזה
This name means "Gaza Village" in Hebrew
- Be'eri - בארי
This name means "My Well" in Hebrew
- Nachal Oz - נחל עוז
This name means "River of Strength" in Hebrew
- Chulit - חולית
This name means "Sand Dune" in Hebrew
- Nirim - נירים
This name means "Plowed Furrows" in Hebrew

3. Once you are happy with your letters (if using them), paint them on in black, with your Am Yisrael Chai - עם ישראל חי - in gold, pulling one letter from each name (use the image for reference)

FOR THE CHANUKIAH

1. Prepare your base, especially if using unfinished wood; you can either paint it with your paints and some other inspiring message, or leave it blank. We recommend covering it at least with Mod Podge or shellac, to protect and seal it and make it shiny. (You can also do the same for your blocks, to give them that extra sheen.)
2. Using your wood or tacky craft glue, carefully glue one candle base or oil cup to the top of each block (or topmost cube).
3. Glue all blocks in a straight, with the shamash/tallest block in the middle, onto your base.
4. If using cubes, glue and stack the cubes to form your candle "towers". Be very careful to get them in the right order - design a schematic, if needed, to have on hand to avoid errors.
5. Once the glue dries, have fun and Light Blue and White!

WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR BLUE AND WHITE LIGHTS!

Send us your selfies and group pics for a shoutout throughout our global Jewish community who loves sharing the connection with their fellow Virtual Citizens of Israel around the world. Follow us on social media and you can post your pic online and tag us in your post as well as use our hastags, #IsraelForever #BlueWhite Unity

Find unique ways to incorporate the Israeli flag and the flag of the country in which you reside into your art and photos as well, so that the world can see the vast number of nationalities of our VCI artists!

Israeli Levivot



INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion
- 1 zucchini
- 1 sweet potato
- 4 potatoes
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup chick-pea flour
- 1-2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1/8 tsp. white pepper
- Oil for frying

DIRECTIONS

1. Shred potatoes, zucchini and onion.
2. Strain out excess liquid.
3. Add flour to coat all vegetables.
4. Add eggs and seasonings.
5. Mix well and let rest for 10-20 minutes in fridge.
6. Pour 1 inch of oil into a deep frying pan and heat on medium high flame.
7. Using two spoons, drop heaping tablespoons into the hot oil and press down with backside of the spoon.
8. Fry until golden brown on each side then rest on a plate/tray covered with paper towel to absorb the excess oil.
9. If cooking in large batches, lay on a wire rack and keep warm in the oven set at a low heat.



Sufganiyot



INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp yeast
- 2 Tbsp + 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 4-5 cups flour
- 1 egg + 1 yolk
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 4 Tbsp butter at room temp
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup jam, custard, caramel, chocolate, halva, marshmallow...

DIRECTIONS

1. In stand mixer or large bowl proof yeast by mixing with 2 tbsp sugar and water. Let sit for 10 minutes until frothy.
2. Add 3 cups flour, baking powder, egg, yolk, and remaining sugar and mix well.
3. Add 1 cup flour, salt, then add 1 tbsp of butter at a time until incorporated.
4. Knead for 5-7 minutes adding extra flour as needed for a smooth consistency.
5. Set in warm place to rise for 45-60 minutes.
6. Gently pull off handfuls of the dough and lightly form into balls. Rest on a baking sheet for second rising (they will double in size).
7. Heat oil in wide pot on medium high for 10 minutes. Test with a bit of dough - if it is the right temp, bubbles should form immediately around the dough.
8. Fry 2-3 doughnuts at a time. Be sure not to crowd in pot or they will not cook right.
9. Rest on wire rack lined with a paper towel to cool for 10-15 minutes.
10. Pipe your filling into the doughnut using a piping bag, or a nozzled bottle with tip big enough for filling to squeeze through.
11. Sprinkle top with powdered sugar.



Moroccan Sfinge



INGREDIENTS

- For sfinge:**
- 1 kilo flour
 - 60 grams dry yeast
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 3 tbsp. powdered sugar
 - 3-4 cups luke-warm water
 - Oil for frying
- For syrup:**
- 1 liter water
 - 1 kilo white sugar
 - 1 tbsp. rose water *OR*
 - 1 tbsp. lemon zest
 - 1/4 tsp. ginger

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix together all dry ingredients and then add water. (Batter will be moist and sticky.)
2. Let batter rise for 1 1/2 hours.
3. Punch the air out of the dough and let rise again for 30 minutes.
4. Cover fingers with oil and take 1 handful of batter.
5. Shape it into a ring by rolling it into a ball and poking finger through to make the hole.
6. Drop it into hot oil and fry both sides until golden brown.
7. Remove and lay on paper towel to soak up excess oil.
8. Boil syrup ingredients together and drizzle over the top of the sfinge, or leave on side for dipping.



Latkes: The Real Food Version



EFRAT PETEL

INGREDIENTS

- 3 potatoes grated – use different types
- 1 onion grated
- 1 leek grated
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- ½ cup chopped green onions
- 2 TB thyme
- 1 TB oregano
- ½ - 1 cup flour – like: gluten free oat or mix of almond and sesame flour or any type you like
- 1 egg (optional)
- coconut/ olive oil

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl mix the ingredients without the flour.
2. Add ½ a cup of the flour and mix, if the mixture does not stick together add some more. You don't want to have too much flour.
3. On a medium heat, heat a pan with a little coconut or olive oil (covered with a thin layer depending on the pan and its non-stick level).
4. Spread the mixture on the pan. Cover and simmer for about 5 minutes.
5. Then, with a plate, turn it carefully and return to the frying pan so that the other side is cooked for about 5 minutes.
6. Oven - on baking paper, brushed with olive oil and bake, spread the mixture in a round shape. Bake it for about 20-25 minutes, until golden brown.
7. You can eat it with your favorite plain yogurt on the side



Butternut Squash Chili Pepper Latkes



CHEF ZISSIE

INGREDIENTS

- ½ butternut squash peeled, seeds removed
- ½ cup Bulgarian cheese crumbled
- 2 eggs beaten
- ½ onion finely chopped
- ¾ teaspoon salt Pink Himalayan
- ½ cup chili pepper chopped, seeds removed for less heat
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 scallions chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Hand grate the butternut squash.
2. Add the butternut squash and onion into a strainer and using your hands, squeezing out any excess liquid.
3. Place in bowl and add the rest of the ingredients except the olive oil. Mix well.
4. Prepare a large skillet on high heat. Add ½ cup of olive oil and get hot for about 1 minute.
5. Prepare the mixture in the palm of your hands making a small but thick latkeh.



Fried Cheese Puffs



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups soft white cheese (Israeli gvina levana, or farmer's cheese, cottage cheese, ricotta, or sour cream)
- 1 ½ cup flour
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 6 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup raisins (optional)
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- Oil for frying
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar for decoration

DIRECTIONS

1. Whip together eggs, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy.
2. Add cheese and mix well.
3. Fold in flour, cinnamon, and powdered sugar until just combined (Batter can be made up to 5 hours in advance and kept in refrigerator.)
4. Drop spoonfuls into hot oil.
5. Fry until brown on all sides.
6. Remove from oil and sprinkle with powdered sugar.



Sufganiyot Gluten Free Gold



INGREDIENTS

- 350 ml soy, almond, milk
- 1 tbsp yeast
- 3 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 ½ cup all purpose GF flour of choice
- 1 cup almond flour
- 1 cup arrowroot flour
- ¼ cup coconut flour
- ½ cup buckwheat flour
- ½ cup cassava flour
- 1 tsp psyllium husk
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 2 tbsp vanilla pudding mix
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp cream of tartar
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- 1 egg, separated
- ½ tsp apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup Israeli olive oil
- 1 tsp salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Warm the milk slightly and pour into mixing bowl. Add the yeast and sugar, mix gently with whisk, and allow to rest for 15 minutes in a warm environment covered with a cloth.
2. Add all the rest of the ingredients EXCEPT FOR the salt, oil and egg white. Beat on low for 5 minutes.
3. Add the oil and salt, then beat on high for another 5 minutes.
4. Bring the dough together into a ball shape formation and transfer to a well oiled bowl. Using oiled hands, turn the dough so that it is covered on all sides by the oil.
5. Let rest, covered with a cloth, for at least 2 hours.
6. Gently scoop out balls of dough with an oiled ice cream scoop, deep ladle, or your hands. Shape gently into a ball and rest on your baking pans.
7. This multipurpose dough can also be refrigerated for up to 2 days. While cold, you can scoop out balls and shape them, best with oiled hands. Lay on your baking pans (or small baking sheet squares if frying) to rise for 1-1 ½ hours.
8. Preheat oven to 200C/357F.
9. Baked gluten free sufganiyot often fall flat if just scooped onto a baking sheet, but I have found that baking into large muffin tins or these fantastic round silicone molds make for the perfect shape kids especially are hoping to get.
10. Place baking pans near center of the oven. Bake for 19-24 minutes or until golden brown on all sides.

TO FRY

- If frying, you can cut the baking sheet into small squares the size of your preferred sufganiyot. This makes it easier to pick them up one at a time and drop them into the oil. (Although I've also learned that they plop perfectly right out of the round silicone molds, too!)
11. Heat up your oil to a steady heat, around 150. I use a medium flame and then reduce the heat to low ensure the outside won't burn before the inside is cooked through. Gluten free dough fries up to a burn very fast, so better to cook on a lower flame!
 12. Drop only 2 or 3 sufganiyot into the oil at a time, being careful not to crowd, and not to splatter.
 13. Using an open-slotted utensil, gently turn them until brown on all sides, then move to a paper towel covered platter to soak up the remaining oil.



FILLING

14. Let the sufganiyot cool for at least an hour.
15. Take a knife and gently slide into the sufganiyah, turning the knife so that it creates a cavity. Fill with your favorite ingredients - seedless jelly, vanilla cream, chocolate ganache, caramel. (Or just leave plain and give your guests the fun adventure of dipping their own sufganiyot into their topping of choice). Sprinkle the top with powdered sugar and voila - Chanukah deliciousness at your fingertips!
16. Using two spoons, drop heaping tablespoons into the hot oil and press down with backside of the spoon.
17. Fry until golden brown on each side then rest on a plate/tray covered with paper towel to absorb the excess oil.
18. If cooking in large batches, lay on a wire rack and keep warm in the oven set at a low heat.

See more recipes in the [Everlasting Oil Cookbook](#)



Chanukah Candle Lighting

Put the candles in your chanukiah from right to left, to show the growing miracle.
Light them from left to right to mark the newest night first.

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam
asher kiddishanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
l'hadlik ner shel chanukah.*

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

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to light the Chanukah candles.

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam
she-asah nisim la'voteinu bayamim ha-ahem
ba-zman ha-zeh.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם
בְּזִמַּן הַזֶּה

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this time.

On the first night or first time you light only, say the following blessing

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam
she-heh-kheh-yanu, v'kee-y'-manu,
v'he-ge-anu la-zman ha-zeh.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמַּן הַזֶּה

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Whose power enlivens us, sustains us, and enables us to reach this moment of joy.

It is traditional to recite or sing Hanerot Halalu and Maoz Tzur immediately after lighting.

HANEROT HALALU הנרות הללו

Transliteration

Hanerot halalu anachnu madlikin
Al hanissim ve'al haniflaot
Al hatshu-ot ve'al hamikhamot
She-asita la'avoteynu
Bayanim bahem, bazman hazeh

Al yedey kohanecha hakdoshim,
Vechol shmonat yemey Chanukah
Hanerot halalu kodesh hem,
Ve-ein lanu reshut lehishtamesh bahem
Ela lirotam bilvad
Kedai lehodot leshimcha
Al nissecha veal nifleotecha
ve-al yeshuotecha

Translation

We light these lights
For the miracles and the wonders,
For the redemption and the battles
That you made for our forefathers
In those days at this time.

In the hands of Your holy priests
And all eight days of Chanukah
These lights are sacred
And we are not permitted
to make use of them
But to look at them only
In order to express thanks and praise
to Your great Name
For Your miracles, Your wonders
and Your salvations.

Hebrew

הנרות הללו אנו מדליקין
על הניסים ועל הנפלאות
ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות
שעשית לאבותינו
בימים ההם, בזמן הזה

על ידי כוהניך הקדושים
וכל שמונת ימי החנוכה
הנרות הללו קודש הן
ואין לנו רשות להשתמש בהם
אלא לראותם בלבד
כדי להודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול
על ניסוך ועל נפלאותיך ועל ישועותיך

MA'OZ TZUR מעוז צור

Transliteration

Ma'oz Tzur yeshu'ati, lekha na'eh leshabe'ach.
Tikon beit tefilati, v'sham toda nezabe'ach.
Le'et takhin matbe'ach mitzar hammabe'ach.
Az egmor beshir mizmor chanukat hamizbe'ach.

Ra'ot save'ah nafshi, b'yagon kochi kala.
Chayai mereru v'koshi, b'shi'abud malkhut egla.
Uvyado hagdola hotzi et hasgula.
Cheil par'o v'khol zar'o yaredu ke'even bimtzu'a.

D'vir kodsho hevi'ani, v'gam sham lo shakateti.
Uva noges v'higlani, ki zarim avadti.
V'yein ra'al masakhti, kim'at she'avarti.
Ketz bavel zerubavel, l'ketz shiv'im nosha'ati.

K'rot komat berosh bikesh, agagi ben hamdatah.
v'niheyata lo l'fach ulemokesh, v'ga'avato nishbata.
Rosh y'mini niseta, ve'oyev shmo machita.
Rov banav v'kinyanav al ha'etz talita.

Y'vanim nikbetzu alai, azai bimei Chashmanim.
Ufartzu chomot migdalai, v'tim'u kol hashmanim.
Uminoter kankanim na'asa nes lashoshanim.
B'nei vina y'mei shmona kav'u shir ur'nanim.

Chasof z'ro'a kodshekha, v'karev ketz hayeshu'a.
N'kom nikmat (dam) avadeikha me'uma haresha'a.
Ki arkha hash'a, v'ein ketz limei hara'a.
D'cheh admon betzel tzalmon, hakem lanu ro'im shiv'a.

Translation

O my mighty Rock of Salvation! To praise You is a delight.
Let our house of prayer be restored, and there we will offer thanks.
When You will have prepared the destruction of the screaming foe.
Then we will celebrate with song and psalm the altar's dedication.

My soul was sated with misery, my strength was spent with grief.
They embittered my life with hardship, when enslaved
under the rule of Egypt.
But with His mighty hand He brought out His treasured people;
While Pharaoh's host and followers sank like a stone
into the deep.

He brought me to His holy abode. Even there, I found no rest.
The oppressor came and exiled me, because
I served strange gods.
And I drank poisonous wine, yet scarcely had I left,
When Babylon fell to Zerubabel, and at the end of seventy years
I was saved.

The Agagite, son of Hammedatha, plotted to cut down
the lofty cypress;
But it proved a snare to him, and his insolence was silenced.
You raised the Benjamite leader, but the enemy's name
You blotted out.
His numerous sons and his household
You hanged upon the gallows.

The Greeks gathered against me, in days of the Hasmoneans.
They broke down the walls of my towers, and defiled all the oils.
But from the last of the flasks a miracle was
wrought for the Jews.
[Therefore] the sages established eight days
for song and rejoicing.

Bare Your holy arm and hasten the end of salvation.
Avenge the vengeance of Your servants' blood from
the wicked nation.
For the triumph is too long delayed for us,
and there is no end to days of evil,
Repel the enemy in the nethermost shadow
and establish for us the seven shepherds.

Hebrew

מעוז צור ישועתי לך נאה לשבח
תכון בית תפילתי ושם תודה נזבח
לעת תכין מטבח מצר המנבח
אז אגמר בשיר מזמור חנכת המזבח

רעות שבעה נפשי ביגון כחי כלה
חיי מררו כלשי בשעבוד מלכות עגלה
ובידו הגדולה הוציא את הסגולה
חיל פרעה וכל זרעו ירדו כאבן במצולה

דביר קדשו הביאני וגם שם לא שקטתי
וכא נוגש והגלני כי זרים עבדתי
ויון רעל מסכתי כמעט שעברתי
קצ בבבל זרובבל לקצ שבעים נושעתי

כרות קומת ברזש בקש אגגי בן המדתא
ונהיתת לו לפח ולמוקש וגאותו נשבתה
ראש ימיני נשאת ואויב שמו מחית
רב בניו וקניניו על העץ תלית

וינים נקבצו עלי אזי בימי חשמונים
ופרצו חומות מגדלי וטמאו כל השמינים
ומנוותר קנקנים נעשה נס לשושנים
בני בינה ימי שמונה קבעו שיר ורננים

חשוף זרוע קדשו וקרב קצ הישועה
לקם וקמת עבדיך מאמה הרשעה
כי ארכה השעה ואין קצ לימי הרעה
דחה אדמון בצל צלמון הקם לנו רועים שבעה

על הנסים AL HANISIM

Transliteration

Al hanissim,
v'al hapurkan,
v'al hag'vurot
v'al hat'tshuot
v'al hamilkamot
sh'asita lavoteinu
bayamim ha'em baz'man hazeh.

Translation

In honor of the miracles
and deliverance,
Heroic deeds
and salvation wrought
And wars You fought,
for our fathers,
In days of yore and in present time.

Hebrew

על הנסים
ועל הפורקן
ועל הגבורות
ועל התשועות
ועל המלחמות
שעשית לאבותינו
בנקים ההם בזמן הזה

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

Light one candle for the Maccabee children
With thanks that their light didn't die
Light one candle for the pain they endured
When their right to exist was denied
Light one candle for the terrible sacrifice
Justice and freedom demand
But light one candle for the wisdom to know
When the peacemaker's time is at hand

Chorus (x2)

Don't let the light go out!
It's lasted for so many years!
Don't let the light go out!
Let it shine through our hope and our tears.

Light one candle for the strength that we need
To never become our own foe
And light one candle for those who are suffering

Pain we learned so long ago
Light one candle for all we believe in
That anger not tear us apart
And light one candle to find us together
With peace as the song in our hearts

Chorus (x2)

Don't let the light go out!
It's lasted for so many years!
Don't let the light go out!
Let it shine through our hope and our tears.

What is the memory that's valued so highly
That we keep it alive in that flame?
What's the commitment to those who have died
That we cry out they've not died in vain?
We have come this far always believing
That justice would somehow prevail
This is the burden, this is the promise
This is why we will not fail!

Chorus (x2)

Don't let the light go out!
It's lasted for so many years!
Don't let the light go out!
Let it shine through our hope and our tears.

Don't let the light go out!
Don't let the light go out!
Don't let the light go out!

מי ימלא MI YIMALEL

Transliteration

Mi yimalel gvurot Yisrael,
Otan mi yimne?
Hen be'chol dor yakum ha'gibor
Goel ha'am!

Shma!

Ba'yamim ha'em ba'zman ha'ze
Maccabi moshia u'fode
U'v'yameinu kol am Yisrael
Yitached yakum ve'yigael!

Translation

Who can retell the things that befell us,
Who can count them?
In every age, a hero or sage
Came to our aid.

Hark!

In this time of year in days of Yore
Maccabees the Temple did restore
And tonight our people as we dream
Will arise, unite, and be redeemed.

Hebrew

מי ימלא גבורות ישראל
אותן מי ימנה
הן בכל דור יקום הגיבור
גואל העם

שמע

בימים ההם בזמן הזה
מכבי מושיע ופודה
ובימינו כל עם ישראל
יתאחד, יקום ויגאל

The Light of Chanukah: Jewish Freedom and the Dark Times in Between

By Daniel Greenfield

A candle is a brief flare of light. A wick dipped in oil burns and then goes out again. The light of Chanukah appears to follow the same narrative. Briefly there is light and warmth and then darkness again.

Out of the exile of Babylon, the handful that returned to resettle and rebuild the land faced the might of new empires. The Jews who returned from the exile of one evil empire some twenty-six hundred years ago were forced to decide whether they would be a people with their own faith and history, or the colony of another empire, with its history and beliefs.

Jerusalem's wealthy elites threw in their lot with the empire and its ways. But out in the rural heartland where the old ways were still kept, a spark flared to life. Modi'in. Maccabee.

And so war came between the handfuls of Jewish Maccabee partisans and the armies of Antiochus IV's Seleucid empire. A war that had its echoes in the past and would have it again in the future as lightly armed and untrained armies of Jewish soldiers would go on to fight in those same hills and valleys against the Romans and eventually the armies of six Arab nations.

The Syrian Greek armies were among the best of their day. The Maccabees were living in the backwaters of Israel, a nation that had not been independently ruled since the armies of Babylon had flooded across the land, destroying everything in their path.

In the wilderness of Judea a band of brothers vowed that they would bow to no man and let no foreigners rule over their land. Apollonius brought his Samaritan forces against the brothers, and Judah, first among the Maccabees, killed him, took his sword and wore it for his own.

Seron, General of the army of Coele-Syria, brought together his soldiers, along with renegade Jewish mercenaries, and was broken at Beit Haran. The Governor of Syria dispatched two generals, Nicanor, and Gorgias, with forty thousand soldiers and seven thousand horsemen to conquer Judea, destroy Jerusalem and abolish the whole Jewish nation forever. So certain were they of victory that they brought with them merchant caravans to fill with the Hebrew slaves of a destroyed nation.

Judah walked among his brothers and fellow rebels and spoke to them of the thing for which they fought; "O my fellow soldiers, no other time remains more opportune than the present for courage and contempt of dangers; for if you now fight manfully, you may recover your liberty, which, as it is a thing of itself agreeable to all men, so it proves to be to us much more desirable, by its affording us the

liberty of worshipping God.

"Since therefore you are in such circumstances at present, you must either recover that liberty, and so regain a happy and blessed way of living, which is that according to our laws, and the customs of our country, or to submit to the most opprobrious sufferings; nor will any seed of your nation remain if you be beat in this battle. Fight therefore manfully; and suppose that you must die, though you do not fight; but believe, that besides such glorious rewards as those of the liberty of your country, of your laws, of your religion, you shall then obtain everlasting glory.

"Prepare yourselves, therefore, and put yourselves into such an agreeable posture, that you may be ready to fight with the enemy as soon as it is day tomorrow morning."

Though the Maccabees were but three thousand, starving and dressed in bare rags, the God for whom they fought and their native wits and courage, gave them victory over thousands and tens of thousands. Worn from battle, the Maccabees did not flee back into their Judean wilderness, instead they went on to Jerusalem and its Temple, to reclaim their land and their God, only to find the Temple and the capital in ruins.

The Maccabees had fought courageously for the freedom to worship God once again as their fathers had, but courage alone could not make the Menorah burn and thus renew the Temple service again. Yet it had not been mere berserker's courage that had brought them this far. Like their ancestors before them who had leaped into furnaces and the raging sea, they had dared the impossible on faith - faith in a God who watched over his nation and intervened in the affairs of men.

And so on faith they poured the oil of that single flask in the Menorah, oil that could only last for a single day. And then having done all they could, the priests and sons of priests who had fought through entire armies to reach this place, accepted that they had done all they could and left the remainder in the hands of the Almighty.

If they had won by the strength of their hands alone, then the lamps would burn for a day and then flicker out. But if it had been more than mere force of arms that had brought them here, if it had been more than mere happenstance that a small band of ragged and starving rebels had shattered the armies of an empire, then the flames of the Menorah would burn on.

The sun rose and set again. The day came to its end and the men watched the lights of the Menorah to see if they would burn or die out. And if the flame in their hearts could have kindled the lamps, they would have burst into bright flame then and there. Darkness fell that night and still the lamps burned on.

For eight days and nights the Menorah burned on that single lonely pure flask of oil, until more could be found, and the men who for a time had been soldiers and had once again become priests, saw that while it may be men who kindle lamps and hearts, it is the Almighty who provides them with the fuel of the spirit through which they burn.

120 years after the Maccabees drove out the foreign invaders and their collaborators, another foreign invader, Herod, the son of Rome's Arab governor, was placed on the throne by the Roman Empire, disposing of the last of the Maccabean kings and ending the brief revival of the Jewish kingdom.

The revived kingdom had been a plaything in the game of empires. Exiled by Babylon, restored by Persia, conquered by the Greeks, ground under the heel of the remnants of Alexander's empire, briefly liberated by the Parthians, tricked into servitude and destroyed by Rome. The victory of the Maccabean brothers in reclaiming Jerusalem was a brief flare of light in the dark centuries and even that light was shadowed by the growing darkness.

The fall of the Roman Republic and the civil wars of the new empire, its uncontrollable spending and greed made it hopelessly corrupt. Caesar repaid Jewish loyalty by rewarding the Arab-Idumean murderers of Jewish kings, and his successors saw the Jewish state as a way to bring in some quick money. Out went the Jewish kings, in came the son of Rome's tax collector, Herod.

The promises made by Senate to the Maccabees ceased to matter. Imperial greed collided with Jewish nationalism in a war that for a brief shining moment seemed as if it might end in another Chanukah, but ended instead in massacre and atrocity. The exiles went forth once again, some on foot and some in slave ships. Israel became Palestine. Jerusalem was renamed and resettled. The long night had begun.

But no darkness lasts forever.

Two thousand years after the Jews had come to believe that wars were for other people and miracles meant escaping alive, Jewish armies stood and held the line against an empire and the would be empires of the region.

And now the flame still burns, though it is flickering. Sixty-eight years is a long time for oil to burn, especially when the black oil next door seems so much more useful to the empires and republics across the sea. And the children of many of those who first lit the flame no longer see the point in that hoary old light.

But that old light is still the light of possibilities. It burns to remind us of the extraordinary things that our ancestors did and of the extraordinary assistance that they received. We cannot always expect oil to burn for eight days, just as we cannot always expect the bullet to miss or the rocket to fall short. And yet even in those moments of darkness the reminder of the flame is with us for no darkness lasts forever and no exile, whether of the body or the spirit, endures. Sooner or later the spark flares to life again and the oil burns again. Sooner or later the light returns.

It is the miracle that we commemorate because it is a reminder of possibilities. Each time we light a candle or dip a wick in oil, we release a flare of light from the darkness comes to remind us of what was, is and can still be.

Originally published [here](#)

Everlasting Oil

By David Eastman

The year is 165 BCE...

The Maccabean revolt has successfully overthrown the Greek oppressors, and the Jews have recaptured Jerusalem and the Temple. They are deeply pained by the profanity the Greeks have brought into their holiest sanctuary.

They are tired from the long war, and yet they seek to make a symbol of their freedom by lighting the Menorah, as was the regular service in the Holy Temple before they lost control.

Their hopes are soon dimmed as they see that all the oil seals have been broken, making them unfit for use in the Holy Temple. Still they search on. It seems that there is no hope. Suddenly, amidst the gloomy atmosphere, a Jew begins to shout cheers of joy and praise to Hashem.

Deep under the ruins of the Greek impurity, tucked into a small crevice is one vial of oil with its seal unbroken. The amount of oil is only enough for one day - but miraculously, it remains lit for a whole eight days.

Thousands of years later...

The sky is black. The stars are scattered among the drifting rain clouds. Three hundred and twenty soldiers stand around a wooden table. Their faces are painted. Their boots are heavy from the thick dried mud. They are tired. Their feet are sore, their backs ache. They are dressed in full battle gear.

A cold winter wind tears through their light winter gear. The battalion commander, who is not religious, stands with a burning candle in his hand. He raises his eyes to look at his men. They have been through almost a week and a half of intense war training. His eyes are filled with pride.

"Men of the 890th Airborne Battalion," he says in his raspy voice, "today WE are the Maccabees. We must be strong and fight against our enemies. No one else will do it for us."

With that he lowers his eyes to the small golden chanukiah resting on the wooden table. At his signal the whole group of soldiers begins to chant the blessings before the lighting. As they finish he lights the chanukiah and the soldiers begin to sing "Hanerot HaLalu".

Our Temple has been destroyed and burned.

They have sacked our most religious of sites.

There are Jews scattered throughout the world, many without even a clue as to what it means to be a Jew. Darkness seems to outweigh light. Our souls have been attacked by the lusts and cravings of the surrounding nations.

But deep under the ruins, under the dust and ashes, if one really seeks it out, you could find the small untainted vial of oil.

What is oil?

Oil is the potential for flame. It lays dormant until ignited. It is nothing and yet everything.

Every Jew has an untainted vial of oil deep inside his precious soul. A spiritual potential untouched by the impurities of the world. The oil may seem only to be enough "for one day," but the flame it brings forth can never be extinguished.

This is the miracle of Chanukah. This is what so attracts the Jewish soul. It is the holiday celebrating the eternal potential that lies within each one of us in the Nation of Israel.

This is the miracle the Maccabees experienced then, and this is the miracle I witnessed only a few nights ago with 319 other soldiers.

May we all be given the strength to search hard enough to discover the untainted oil within our fellow Jews, and most of all within ourselves.

May we have the courage to ignite it.

Chag Chanukah Sameach!

Discussion Questions and Activity

- What has always been your favorite Hanukkah tradition that you inherited from your family?
- Share a Hanukkah memory when you remember the lights burning in a unique place and time in your life.
- How can we help others understand the Jewish fight for freedom is a just and moral endeavor?
- What can we learn from the resistance against the Maccabees that can help us in facing the resistance we have to face in today's fight for Jewish rights?
- Like then, there are many in our global Jewish world today who do not believe the Jewish fight for Jewish rights is justified. How can we use the lessons of history to teach us not to give in to the pressures to assimilate and forsake our unique identity, faith, and heritage as Jews?
- Who is a Maccabee you believe should be honored today? What do you think needs to be done to encourage the Next Generation to take Jewish leadership responsibility seriously?

Act out a debate of the Maccabees fighting for Jewish Freedom at that time, as if they were facing the social media wars of today.



Make your declaration of Jewish Rights!

Chanukah Creativity

Our art is our expression of light. In blue and white or all colors of the rainbow, these are the crafts that make the memories for families and friends, and are fun for all ages.

TO LIGHT A CANDLE.

Just as Hanukkah candles are lighted one by one from a single flame, so the tale of the miracle is passed from one man to another, from one house to another, and to the whole House of Israel throughout the generations.

Is not Hanukkah a symbol of Israel, and its light a symbol of his immortality?

—Ran Shirdan





SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 4x12 ceramic tile base, in any color of your liking
- Small glass vials, 9 per chanukiah
- Blue and white sand
- Small funnels
- White glue (such as Elmer's)
- Industrial glue (such as E6000) or rubber cement
- Candle bases, 9 per chanukiah
- Small square tiles to raise up the shamash candle
- Bowls and spoons for sand distribution
- Plastic tablecloth
- Glitter glue, Chanukah confetti, or stickers (optional)
- Mod Podge (optional)

STEPS TO CREATING YOUR SAND ART CHANUKIAH

1. Cover table with tablecloth.
2. Place sand into bowls and put in the center of the table. Place a few spoons in each bowl for easy access.
3. Place one 4x12 ceramic tile, 9 glass vials, and one funnel at each place an artist will sit.
4. A kosher chanukiah must have all 8 candles lined up in a straight line. Each artist should place 8 glass vials down on their ceramic tile, and make sure they are as straight as possible.
5. The shamash, the 9th candle, must be distinct in some way, so it is clearly not one of the 8 candles. We do this by placing it separately and/or making it higher than the others.

The shamash can be placed in the following places on your Chanukiah:

- At either end of the line of 8, raised up
- In the middle of the line of 8, raised up
- Centered, in front or behind the line of 8
- In one of the corners of the tile



One-of-a-Kind SAND ART CHANUKIAH

6. Once you like the positioning of row of 8 and the shamash, use your industrial glue to glue down the vials into place, as well as the small tiles to raise up the shamash, if needed. (Younger children may need assistance with this step, especially if using industrial-strength glue.) You will have only a few minutes to reposition them before the glue sets, so you can fix it a bit but try your best to decide on placement before attaching.
7. Place a funnel into the first vial and begin layering your colored sand.
8. When the vial is full, carefully pour white glue on top of the sand so it keeps in place.
9. Use your industrial glue to glue the candle base into the top of the vial.
10. Repeat until all vials are full.
11. Once finished, you may decorate the rest of your ceramic tile with glitter glue, Chanukah confetti, or stickers. Paint over these decorations with Mod Podge or watered-down white glue to seal them.
12. Let dry for 24-48 hours and use.

WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR BLUE AND WHITE LIGHTS!

Send us your selfies and group pics for a shoutout throughout our global Jewish community who loves sharing the connection with their fellow Virtual Citizens of Israel around the world. Follow us on social media and you can post your pic online and tag us in your post as well as use our hastags, #IsraelForever #BlueWhite Unity

Find unique ways to incorporate the Israeli flag and the flag of the country in which you reside into your art and photos as well, so that the world can see the vast number of nationalities of our VCI artists!



Chanukah Foil Art Activity

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Aluminum foil, preferably heavy duty
- Permanent markers
- Stencils of Chanukah shapes (you can draw the symbols on tag board and cut them out), Israel Forever Color Me Maccabee drawings, or your own imagination!
- Paper/cardboard/backing boards
- Glue
- Black mats to frame your work (optional)
- 11x14 picture frame (optional)
- Masking tape to tape down your foil

STEPS TO CREATING YOUR CHANUKAH FOIL ART

1. Roll out your tin foil and tape to the paper - taping it down can help younger artists but is not necessary.
2. For a more advanced technique (not recommended for younger children), don't tape your foil to your background paper. Instead just lay it flat on the table and hold it down as you work gently!
3. Draw or trace your Chanukah image directly onto the aluminum foil. Use the side of your sharpie marker instead of the tip so you do not break through the foil. If your student does rip the foil, emphasize that there are no mistakes in art and how unique their drawing will be. Tell them it adds character!
4. To use the Israel Forever Color Me Maccabee images, print and cut out the image of your choosing and trace with the sharpie carefully onto the foil.
5. If the artist wants, he/she can fill in the paper underneath with the same color and they will blend together.
6. When finished with your drawing/coloring, gently wrinkle up the aluminum foil into a large ball. Do not crinkle too tightly or it will be too challenging to unwrinkle your artwork!
7. Gently unwrinkle the ball, separating the foil and being careful not to rip it!
8. Once finished, carefully flatten out the aluminum foil to reveal your super cool art!
9. You can buy black mats to frame your artwork and then place your image in an 11x14 frame, or you can buy the mat complete set which will allow you to either use the white backing board for this project or another one!
10. Once completed, you can place your beautiful artwork directly into a frame (with or without the black mat) for all your guests to enjoy!



SUPPLIES NEEDED

FOR PAPER MOSAICS:

- Thick paper, cardboard, poster board, etc for background, any rectangular size
- Blue and white construction paper or mosaic tiles
- Glue or glue sticks
- Pencil & eraser
- Ruler

FOR TILE MOSAICS:

- Rectangular wood/masonite board
- Blue and white ceramic, glass or plastic tiles precut in random shapes
- Elmer's or other white glue
- Premixed white grout
- Grouting supplies, palette knife, sponge, bucket/bowl for water

STEPS TO CREATING A PAPER MOSAIC

1. Print an image of the Israeli Flag to trace
2. Place your white paper over the printed Israeli flag image. Hold together with a paperclip if necessary
3. Trace the lines of the Magen David and the stripes. You can also use a ruler to draw the stripes.
4. Begin ripping your blue ACID FREE construction paper into small-medium random shapes. Some people like to use scissors for an exact cut. You are welcome to do as you please. However, please note that the cut pieces do not have to be exact squares. They can be any size shape that will fit into the pencilled outlined design.
5. Glue down your paper into both blue stripes and the Magen David (Star of David)
6. Repeat with your WHITE paper, however this time you will place your white paper above and below both blue stripes, all around the Magen David, including the center, and the entire middle of the flag. It may seem silly to glue white paper on top of white paper, but when it's done it looks really neat. When you rip the white paper, you get that very natural torn paper edge, which creates a special look and texture for your flag.

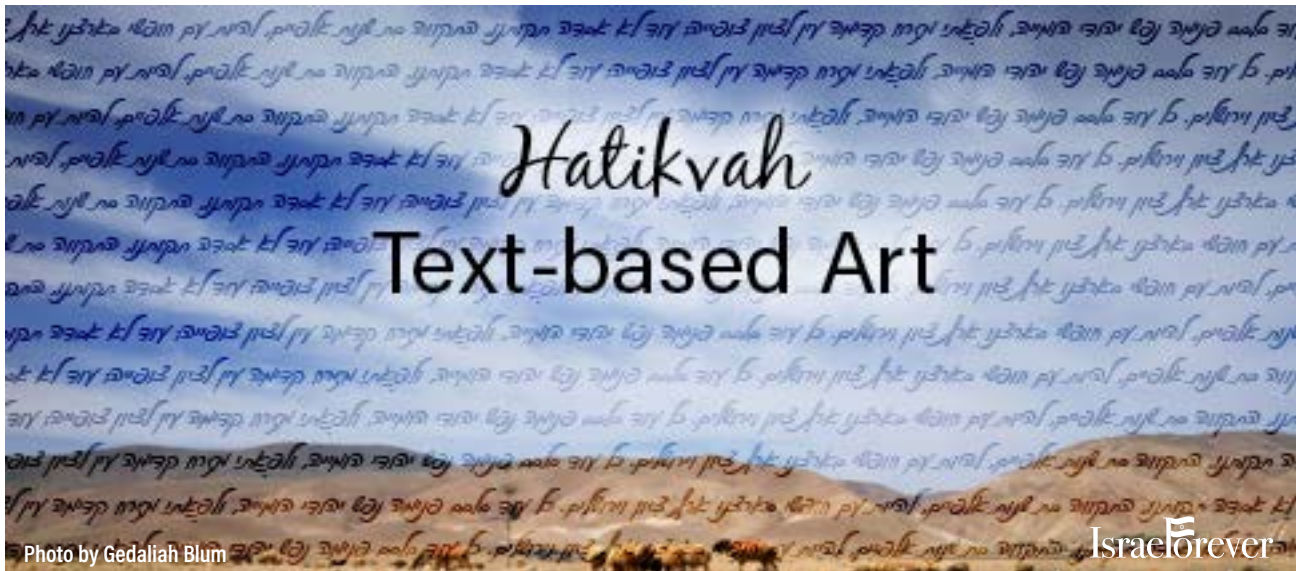
STEPS TO CREATING A TILE MOSAIC

1. Print an image of the Israeli flag to trace
2. Place your white paper over the printed Israeli flag image. Hold together with a paperclip if necessary
3. Trace the lines of the Magen David (Star of David) and the stripes. You can also use a ruler to draw the stripes.
4. Begin placing your blue tiles into the two stripes and the Magen David
5. Glue down your tiles into both blue stripes and the Magen David. The farther apart you glue your tiles, the MORE grout there will be in between each tile. Follow the instructions on your grout container to determine the closest the tiles can be.
6. Repeat with your WHITE tiles, however this time you will place your white tiles above and below both blue stripes, all around the Magen David, including the center, and the entire middle of the flag.
7. If you'd like to hang your mosaic, you can purchase a picture hanging kit at your local hardware or craft store. They are simple and easy to install. You can also use your mosaic tile as a trivet, a centerpiece on your coffee table, and so much more!

WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOUR BLUE AND WHITE PRIDE!

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Find unique ways to incorporate the Israeli flag and the flag of the country in which you reside into your art and photos as well, so that the world can see the vast number of nationalities of our VCI artists!



SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Sketch paper/copy paper to sketch ideas and practice writing the Hatikvah in Hebrew
- Thick, smooth paper - paper without texture or "tooth" so your letters come out nice and smooth. (Often called "bristol vellum smooth" paper.)
- Images of Israel that inspire you and that you feel comfortable to draw freehand ie: the Israeli flag, a map of Israel, your favorite sites in Israel (the Montefiore Windmill, the Old City of Jerusalem, the Teyelet in Tel Aviv or the Jaffa port.), or any freehand drawing from your imagination that symbolizes hope, being hopeful and free.
- Pencils, erasers, sharpener
- Ultra fine point pen suitable for tracing over pencilled letters (one that won't bleed)

STEPS TO CREATING YOUR HATIKVAH TEXT ART

1. Gather images of Israel that appeal to you and that you feel comfortable to draw freehand or print the image and then trace it onto a blank piece of paper.
2. Trace or sketch your drawings on paper. Make as many sketches as you want until you have one that you want to make for your first Hatikvah Art. The goal here is to create beautiful art that is meaningful from your heart. Remember: this is the song of 2000 years of Hope and your artwork should reflect that. It can be as basic as an Israeli flag, a butterfly or as detailed as you would like.
3. Now it is time to practice writing Hatikvah in Hebrew and English, or your native language. You can write the words of the song line by line or paragraph by paragraph. It is up to you. The words should be filled in where ever you want them to be, and they should be systematically placed so that they stand out. Viewers will be able to see the words of Hatikvah and will inevitably begin to sing!
4. The parts of your picture that do not have the text can be filled in with colored ink of any kind. Since you are using a smooth texture, you can use any dry medium: colored pens, markers (although some may bleed, so try testing them on your practice sheet first!)
5. Sign and date your beautiful creation and hang it up in your home for all to see and sing together from time to time!

הַתְּקוּהָה



כָּל עוֹד בְּלִבָּב פְּנִימָה
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדֵי הוֹמִיָּה,
וּלְפָאֵתֵי מִזְרַח קְדִימָה
עֵינֹן לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה-

עוֹד לֹא אֶבְדָּה תְּקוּמַתִּי,
הַתְּקוּהָה בְּת שְׁנוֹת אֲלָפִים,
לִהְיוֹת עִם חוֹפְשֵׁי בְּאֶרְצֵנוּ
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

As long as deep in the heart
The soul of a Jew yearns,
And towards the East
An eye looks to Zion-

Our hope is not yet lost,
The hope of two thousand years,
To be a free people in our land
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.



Kol od baleivav p'nima
Nefesh yehudi homia, U-lfa'atei
mizrach kadimah
Ayin letzion tzofia-

Od lo avda tikvateinu,
Hatikvah bat shnot alpayim,
Lih'yot am chofshi be'artzeinu
Eretz tzion viyerushalayim.



ששעשה

WHO PERFORMED נסים

MIRACLES

FOR OUR ANCESTORS לאבותינו

במים ההם

IN THOSE DAYS

בזמן הזה

AT THIS TIME

8 Short Thoughts for 8 Chanukah Nights

By Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, zt"l

Rabbi Sacks, community leader and former Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, has become known for his sharing of wisdom for Jews around the world. He has written eight short thoughts, one for each night of Chanukah. Print and read one with your loved ones just before you light your own Chanukah lights this year, or go through all of them over the course of the holiday. Each one contains at least one powerful quote and question for discussion, to spark your own conversations.

Chanukah sameach!

1. INSPIRED BY FAITH, WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Twenty-two centuries ago, when Israel was under the rule of the empire of Alexander the Great, one particular leader, Antiochus IV, decided to force the pace of Hellenisation, forbidding Jews to practice their religion and setting up in the Temple in Jerusalem a statue of Zeus Olympus. This was too much to bear, and a group of Jews, the Maccabees, fought for their religious freedom, winning a stunning victory against the most powerful army of the ancient world. After three years they reconquered Jerusalem, rededicated the Temple and relit the menorah with the one cruse of undefiled oil they found among the wreckage.

It was one of the most stunning military achievements of the ancient world. It was, as we say in our prayers, a victory of the few over the many, the weak over the strong. It's summed up in wonderful line from the prophet Zechariah: not by might nor by strength but by my spirit says the Lord. The Maccabees had neither might nor strength, neither weapons nor numbers. But they had a double portion of the Jewish spirit that longs for freedom and is prepared to fight for it.

Never believe that a handful of dedicated people can't change the world. Inspired by faith, they can. The Maccabees did then. So can we, today.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What are some values we associate with the Maccabees? How can we carry the Maccabee spirit into our lives today?

2. THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRIT NEVER DIES

There's an interesting question the commentators ask about Chanukah. For eight days we light lights, and each night we make the blessing over miracles: she-asah nissim la-avotenu. But what was the miracle of the first night? The light that should have lasted one day lasted eight. But that means there was something miraculous about days 2 to 8; but nothing miraculous about the first day.

Perhaps the miracle was this, that the Maccabees found one cruse of oil with its seal intact, undefiled. There was no reason to suppose that anything would have survived the systematic desecration the Greeks and their supporters did to the Temple. **Yet the Maccabees searched and found that one jar. Why did they search? Because they had faith that from the worst tragedy something would survive. The miracle of the first night was that of faith itself, the faith that something would remain with which to begin again.**

So it has always been in Jewish history. **There were times when any other people would have given up in despair: after the destruction of the Temple, or the massacres of the crusades, or the Spanish Expulsion, or the pogroms, or the Shoa. But somehow Jews did not only sit and weep. They gathered what remained, rebuilt our people, and lit a light like no other in history, a light that tells us and the world of the power of the human spirit to overcome every tragedy and refuse to accept defeat.**

From the days of Moses and the bush that burned and was not consumed to the days of the Maccabees and the single cruse of oil, Judaism has been humanity's ner tamid, the everlasting light that no power on earth can extinguish.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What does being an Eternal Nation mean? What is the implication, positive or negative, of that title? What is a belief, faith, or hope that helps keep you going even during challenging times?

3. CHANUKAH IN TIMES OF GOOD AND BAD

Back in 1991 I lit Chanukah candles with Mikhail Gorbachev, who had, until earlier that year, been president of the Soviet Union. For seventy years the practice of Judaism had been effectively banned in communist Russia. It was one of the two great assaults on our people and faith in the twentieth century. The Germans sought to kill Jews; the Russians tried to kill Judaism.

Under Stalin the assault became brutal. Then in 1967, after Israel's victory in the Six Day War, many Soviet Jews sought to leave Russia and go to Israel. Not only was permission refused, but often the Jews concerned lost their jobs and were imprisoned.

Around the world Jews campaigned for the prisoners, Refuseniks they were called, to be released and allowed to leave. Eventually, Mikhail Gorbachev realized that the whole Soviet system was unworkable. Communism had brought, not freedom and equality, but repression, a police state, and a new hierarchy of power. In the end, it collapsed, and Jews regained the freedom to practice Judaism and to go to Israel.

That day in 1991 after we had lit candles together, Mr. Gorbachev asked me, through his interpreter,

what we had just done. I told him that **twenty-two centuries ago in Israel after the public practice of Judaism had been banned, Jews fought for and won their freedom, and these lights were the symbol of that victory.** And I continued: Seventy years ago, Jews suffered the same loss of freedom in Russia, and you have now helped them to regain it. So you have become part of the Chanukah story. And as the interpreter translated those words into Russian, Mikhail Gorbachev blushed.

The Chanukah story still lives, still inspires, telling not just us but the world that though tyranny exists, freedom, with God's help, will always win the final battle.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

While we light proudly today, Jews have lit Chanukah candles during some of the toughest periods of their history.

What is the significance of the Chanukah story to the story of the Jewish people? What difficulties are you facing, personally or communally, that you hope your candles will be a prayer towards overcoming?

4. THE FIRST CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS

One of the key phrases of our time is the clash of civilisations. And Chanukah is about one of the first great clashes of civilisation, between the Greeks and Jews of antiquity, Athens and Jerusalem.

The ancient Greeks produced one of the most remarkable civilisations of all time: philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, historians like Herodotus and Thucydides, dramatists like Sophocles and Aeschylus. They produced art and architecture of a beauty that has never been surpassed. Yet in the second century before the common era they were defeated by the group of Jewish fighters known as the Maccabees, and from then on Greece as a world power went into rapid decline, while the tiny Jewish people survived every exile and persecution and are still alive and well today.

What was the difference? **The Greeks, who did not believe in a single, loving God, gave the world the concept of tragedy. We strive, we struggle, at times we achieve greatness, but life has no ultimate purpose.** The universe neither knows nor cares that we are here.

Ancient Israel gave the world the idea of hope. We are here because God created us in love, and through love we discover the meaning and purpose of life.

Tragic cultures eventually disintegrate and die. Lacking any sense of ultimate meaning, they lose the moral beliefs and habits on which continuity depends. They sacrifice happiness for pleasure. They sell the future for the present. They lose the passion and energy that brought them greatness in the first place. That's what happened to Ancient Greece.

Judaism and its culture of hope survived, and the Chanukah lights are the symbol of that survival, of Judaism's refusal to jettison its values for the glamour and prestige of a secular culture, then or now.

A candle of hope may seem a small thing, but on it the very survival of a civilisation may depend.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One of the early names for the Jewish people is Ivri, translated as "the other".

How are Jews the same or different from other nations, and how does that impact world history and culture? Have you ever felt personally that "being a Jew" made others view or treat you differently?

5. THE LIGHT OF WAR AND THE LIGHT OF PEACE

There is a law about Chanukah I find moving and profound. Maimonides writes that 'the command of Chanukah lights is very precious. One who lacks the money to buy lights should sell something, or if necessary, borrow, so as to be able to fulfill the mitzvah.'

The question then arises, What if, on Friday afternoon, you find yourself with only one candle? What do you light it as — a Shabbat candle or a Chanukah one? It can't be both. Logic suggests that you should light it as a Chanukah candle. After all, there is no law that you have to sell or borrow to light lights for Shabbat. Yet the law is that, if faced with such a choice, you light it as a Shabbat light. Why?

Listen to Maimonides: 'The Shabbat light takes priority because it symbolises shalom bayit, domestic peace. And great is peace because the entire Torah was given in order to make peace in the world.'

Consider: Chanukah commemorates one of the greatest military victories in Jewish history. Yet Jewish law rules that if we can only light one candle — the Shabbat light takes precedence, because in Judaism the greatest military victory takes second place to peace in the home.

Why did Judaism, alone among the civilizations of the ancient world, survive? Because it valued the home more than the battlefield, marriage more than military grandeur, and children more than generals. Peace in the home mattered to our ancestors more than the greatest military victory.

So as we celebrate Chanukah, spare a thought for the real victory, which was not military but spiritual. Jews were the people who valued marriage, the home, and peace between husband and wife, above the highest glory on the battlefield. In Judaism, the light of peace takes precedence over the light of war.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What does it mean to be a "moral" army, like the IDF? Have you ever been forced to do something in conflict with your moral principles? How do you cope with that?

6. THE THIRD MIRACLE

We all know the miracles of Chanukah, the military victory of the Maccabees against the Greeks, and the miracle of the oil that should have lasted one day but stayed burning for eight. But there was a third miracle not many people know about. It took place several centuries later. After the destruction of the second Temple, many rabbis were convinced that Chanukah should be abolished. After all, it celebrated the rededication of the Temple. And the Temple was no more. It had been destroyed by the Romans under Titus. Without a Temple, what was there left to celebrate?

The Talmud tells us that in at least one town, Lod, Chanukah was abolished. Yet eventually the other view prevailed, which is why we celebrate Chanukah to this day.

Why? Because **though the Temple was destroyed, Jewish hope was not destroyed. We may have lost the building but we still had the story, and the memory, and the light. And what had happened once in the days of the Maccabees could happen again. And it was those words, od lo avdah tikvatenu, “our hope is not destroyed,” became part of the song, Hatikvah, that inspired Jews to return to Israel and rebuild their ancient state. So as you light the Chanukah candles remember this. The Jewish people kept hope alive, and hope kept the Jewish people alive. We are the voice of hope in the conversation of humankind.**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How can we celebrate even during dark times? How can we hold on to our hope and our faith even when it is challenged?

7. INSIDE / OUTSIDE

There is more than one command in Judaism to light lights. There are three. There are the Shabbat candles. There is the havdalah candle. And there are the Chanukah candles. The difference between them is that Shabbat candles represent shalom bayit, peace in the home. They are lit indoors. They are, if you like, Judaism’s inner light, the light of the sanctity of marriage and the holiness of home.

The Chanukah candles used to be lit outside — outside the front door. It was only fear of persecution that took the Chanukah candles back inside, and in recent times the Lubavitcher Rebbe introduced the custom of lighting giant menorahs in public places to bring back the original spirit of the day.

Chanukah candles are the light Judaism brings to the world when we are unafraid to announce our identity in public, live by our principles and fight, if necessary, for our freedom.

As for the havdalah candle, which is always made up of several wicks woven together, it represents the fusion of the two, the inner light of Shabbat, joined to the outer light we make during the six days of the week when we go out into the world and live our faith in public.

When we live as Jews in private, filling our homes with the light of the Shekhina, when we live as Jews in public, bringing the light of hope to others, and when we live both together, then we bring light to the world.

There always were two ways to live in a world that is often dark and full of tears. We can curse the darkness or we can light a light, and as the Chassidim say, a little light drives out much darkness. May we all help light up the world.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Jews are called “a light unto the nations”.

How can we bring more light to the world? What can we do to combat the darkness and the hate? How do you actively bring light and hope into both public and private spheres?

8. TO LIGHT ANOTHER LIGHT

There’s a fascinating argument in the Talmud. Can you take one Chanukah light to light another? Usually, of course, we take an extra light, the shamash, and use it to light all the candles. But suppose we don’t have one. Can we light the first candle and then use it to light the others?

Two great sages of the third century, Rav and Shmuel, disagreed. Rav said No. Shmuel said Yes. Normally we have a rule that when Rav and Shmuel disagree, the law follows Rav. There are only three exceptions and this is one.

Why did Rav say you may not take one Chanukah candle to light the others?

Because, says the Talmud, ka mach-chish mitzvah. You diminish the first candle. Inevitably you spill some of the wax or the oil. And Rav says: don’t do anything that would diminish the light of the first.

But Shmuel disagrees, and the law follows Shmuel. Why?

The best way of answering that is to **think of two Jews: both religious, both committed, both living Jewish lives. One says: I must not get involved with Jews who are less religious than me, because if I do, my own standards will fall. I’ll keep less. My light will be diminished.** That’s the view of Rav.

The other says No. When I use the flame of my faith to light a candle in someone else’s life, my Jewishness is not diminished. It grows, because there is now more Jewish light in the world. When it comes to spiritual goods as opposed to material goods, the more I share, the more I have. If I share my knowledge, or faith, or love with others, I won’t have less; I may even have more. That’s the view of Shmuel, and that is how the law was eventually decided.

So share your Judaism with others. Take the flame of your faith and help set other souls on fire.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

What does Judaism mean to you? What can you learn from other Jews who may relate differently? In what ways can you help spread your light, your faith, and your knowledge with those around you?

Lighting the Spark of Unity

By Dr. Elana Heideman

Mi Yimalel Gvurot Yisrael

Who can retell the things that befell us?

Who can count them?

In every age a hero or sage came to our aid.

Hark!

In days of yore, in Israel's ancient land

Brave Maccabees led the faithful band.

But now all Israel must as one arise,
Redeem itself through deed and sacrifice.

Every year people around the world sing this joyful song in celebration of the holiday of Chanukah. Our homes and hearts are filled with light, hope, and family.

As we set upon honoring this festive time, it is important that we consider the modern relevance of the historical events that took place.

Not only was this a triumph of the Jewish people in our commitment to the Jewish faith; it was a triumph of the Jewish nation in our struggle for independence in the one ancient homeland to which we are bound.

After nearly 600 years of subjugation, the Jews were again masters of their own fate.

Most people don't realize that during this whole time, the Temple stood in Jerusalem and Jews lived within its vicinity, continuing to practice the religion of our ancestors. But we were not independent. We did not have freedom.

We were continuously persecuted in our own land on the whim of every ruler who conquered Judea, as it was then called being named after the very Children of Israel from whom we descend.

What the Maccabees achieved was a small miracle in itself: a rebellion against a world set out to destroy us.

It is this miracle that we should also invoke as we light the Chanukah candles this year - the miracle of the Jewish People and our commitment to the Jewish land and the history that links us to it FOREVER.

Theodore Herzl once said, "The Maccabees will rise again - a wondrous generation of Jews will spring into existence. We shall live at last as free men on our own soil. The world will be liberated by our emancipation, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness. Whatever we accomplish there for our own welfare will spread and rebound powerfully and beneficially for the good of all humanity."

Indeed these words have been fulfilled and we now live as free men on our soil.

Has the persecution of Jews ended? Sadly, no.

Are we still attacked from all sides by those who refuse to accept, understand, or respect us? Yes.

But the resounding echo of AM YISRAEL CHAI allows us to overcome these challenges to our existence.

The truth is that this connection has become for many, too hard to discover beneath the verbal and visual attacks that turn everything and anything connected to Israel into something political.

Israel, above all else, is history, it is tradition, it is culture, it is a nation, it is memory.

Without Israel, what is the future of the Jewish People? For what is a people without its past, without its land, and without its history?

Just as Chanukah encourages us to annually rekindle the lights of the Maccabees, so too shall we endeavor to continuously reignite our connection to Israel that has the power to unite Jews around the world.

If we were indeed to leave our politics at the door, we would agree that Israel is an integral part of the future of the Jewish People, wherever we may be in the world. It is the heart, it is the soul, and we must help each other find a way to take that personally.

We at The Israel Forever Foundation are proud to be a part of that movement, initiating a revival of Ahavat Yisrael that Jews have carried since the days of Abraham, the Maccabees, and for 2000+ years.

Let us not allow our enemies to divide us and strip us of this part of our ancestral legacy we have carried so proudly for generations. And let us kindle the Chanukah lights this year determined not only to recount the things that befell us, but to arise as one and be proud of our accomplishments we can admire, of our failures from which we learn, of our mistakes to which we seek to correct, and of the hope that shall forever bind us together with the homeland and history which connect us all.

BANISH THE DARKNESS



*Spread the Light
of Blue and White*

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