

WHAT IS THE DEAL WITH HANUKKAH, ANYWAY?

The Spiel

Some of your friends celebrate it. Adam Sandler wrote a song about it. You even see decorations this time of year-- but what, exactly, is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that honors a miracle that occurred during the re-dedication of the second temple in Jerusalem in 165 BCE. A lamp with only one day's worth of oil was lit, yet the flame continued to burn for eight days and nights. This is why a candelabra called a Menorah features eight candles. A new candle is lit every evening throughout the holiday, and games like Dreidle are played while songs like *Ma'oz Tzur* are sung. *Hanukkah is also known as the "Festival of Lights."*

The Numbers

1 DAYS' WORTH OF CONSECRATED OLIVE OIL



8 DAYS & NIGHTS



25 TH OF THE MONTH BETWEEN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER



165 OR REDEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.



IV ANTIOCHUS WAS IN POWER DURING THE MACCABEAN REVOLT.



1ST & **2**ND BOOKS OF MACCABEES TELLS THE STORY OF HANUKKAH.



THE MENORAH



THE SHAMESH
The Shamesh or guardian, is lit first and is used to light the other candles, each night.

The candles are attached from right to left and then lit from left to right.

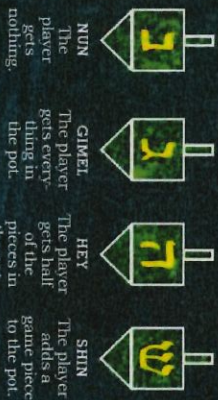


The Tchootchkes

THE DREIDLE



A four-sided spinning top game of chance is played by children. Each side bares a letter which forms an acronym, *Nes Gadol Hayah Sham* - "a great miracle happened there". Coins with chocolate inside called gelt are entered into a pot during game play.



NUN
The player gets nothing.

GIMEL
The player gets everything in the pot.

HEH
The player gets half of the pieces in the pot.

SHIN
The player adds a game piece to the pot.

GELT COINS



Used as pieces in the pot.

THE NOSH

Foods fried in oil like Latkes and Sufganiyah are customary on Hanukkah. The Latke is a potato pancake and the Sufganiyah is a doughnut like jelly filled pastry. *Hanukkah is also a dairy oriented kosher holiday.*



THE PRESENTS

Hanukkah is actually a minor holiday on the Jewish calendar and its gift giving traditions have been elevated due to the proximity to Christmas. *Other humorous add-ons include Hanukkah Harry and the Hanukkah Bush.*



THE MENCH

Judah Maccabee led the revolt that defeated the Syrians and reclaimed the temple for the Jewish people. Nicknamed the "hammer", he is considered one of the greatest warriors in Jewish history.

