

☆ GLOW ☆
STRONG

**NIGHT-BY-NIGHT
HANUKKAH CANDLE
LIGHTING GUIDE**

Celebrating Resilience

The Hanukkah Story: A Story of Resilience

Hanukkah is a Jewish holiday that lasts for eight nights. It remembers a time long ago when the Maccabees stood up for their beliefs, even though they were few in number and faced a much stronger army. Against all odds, the small defeated the mighty. They were brave, determined, and unwilling to give up.

After their victory, they reopened the Temple and wanted to relight its oil lamp, a symbol of hope. But there was only enough oil to last one night. Still, they lit the lamp and then something incredible happened—the oil burned for eight nights.

This moment became a symbol of something deeper: even a small amount of light can last longer than expected when powered by courage, faith, and resilience.

At the heart of Hanukkah is the belief that the few can defeat the many, that a little hope can spark a miracle, that a tiny flame can grow stronger each night, and that resilience can make small things mighty.



How to Use This Guide

Each night of Hanukkah we light another candle and the menorah grows brighter. Similarly, this guide will help us grow our resilience one step at a time.

Each page introduces a Hanukkah symbol, highlights a resilience value, and explains how this quality builds inner strength, offers a candle-lighting intention, and ends with reflection questions for all ages.

Whether this is your first time lighting Hanukkah candles or it is your treasured tradition, may this journey help your inner light grow stronger each night.

Blessings for Lighting the Hanukkah Candles

CANDLE-LIGHTING BLESSINGS (SAID EVERY NIGHT)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של חנוכה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has made us holy through the commandments and commanded us to light the Hanukkah candles.

MIRACLE BLESSINGS (SAID EVERY NIGHT)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שפעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, she'asah nisim la'avoteinu bayamim haheim baz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days at this season

SHEHECHEYANU (SAID ONLY ON THE FIRST NIGHT)

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, שהחיינו וקיימנו והגידנו לזמן הזה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu lazman hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.

NIGHT 1

The Oil: Perseverance

“Who is strong?”

The one who has control over their spirit.”

— PIRKEI AVOT 4:1

When the Maccabees rededicated the Temple, they only found enough oil for one day — but it lasted for eight! The oil reminds us that we can keep going, even when we think we’ve run out of strength.

Perseverance helps us stick with things, even when they take time. Every time we try again, our resilience grows stronger— just like the light that kept burning.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light the first candle, may this little flame remind us that we can always try one more time, and that our light can shine longer than we think!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When have you kept trying, even when something was hard?

Who helps you feel strong when you want to give up?



NIGHT 2

The Sufganiyot: Transformation Through Challenge

“This is how to deal with crisis. Wrestle with it, refusing to let go until it blesses you, until you emerge stronger.”

— RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

Sufganiyot — the sweet jelly donuts we eat on Hanukkah — have to go through hot oil before they’re ready. Challenges can help us grow, too, teaching us new things about who we are.

Transformation happens when we learn from hard things instead of letting them stop us. Every challenge helps us become a little braver, wiser, kinder, and more resilient.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light the second candle, may this flame remind us that challenges can help us grow, and that every tough moment can bring something good.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What’s something you learned from a hard time?

How can you turn a mistake into a new chance?



NIGHT 3

The Shamash: Generosity

“The soul of a person is the lamp of God.”

— PROVERBS 20:27

The Shamash is the helper candle, used to light all the other candles in the menorah. Even after sharing its flame, it still shines just as brightly. The Shamash shows us that helping others doesn't take away from us — it actually makes the whole world brighter.

Supporting others builds resilience because being part of a caring community helps us feel stronger and more connected. When we help someone else, we grow in kindness, leadership, and confidence.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light this candle, may we remember that sharing our strength helps others shine — and helps us shine too.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When has someone helped you feel brighter inside?

How can you be a Shamash for someone else this week?



NIGHT 4

The Dreidel: Optimism

“Serve God with joy. Come before God with joyful songs.”

— PSALM 100:2

When you play dreidel, it spins, wobbles, and sometimes falls. But then you pick it back up and it spins again! The dreidel teaches us to keep playing, laughing, and trying.

Optimism helps us see the good in things. When we laugh and try again after we fall, we remember that every spin — and every new try — is a chance to start fresh.

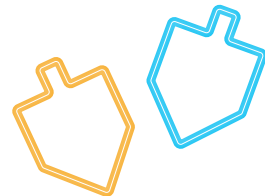
CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light the fourth candle, may this flame remind us to get back up, keep spinning, and never lose our joy!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When did you fall or fail but try again anyway?

How can you find fun even when things don't go your way?



NIGHT 5

Judith & Cheese: Courage

“Be strong and brave. Do not be afraid.”

— JOSHUA 1:9

According to tradition, Judith was a brave Jewish woman who used wisdom and courage to protect her people. She offered the enemy general salty cheese to make him thirsty, then gave him strong wine until he fell asleep — and that’s how she was able to defeat him and save her community. Cheese reminds us that courage isn’t always loud or forceful — sometimes it’s smart, brave, and surprising.

Courage helps us speak up, take action, or try something scary—even when we’re afraid. When we act with courage, we show ourselves that we are stronger and more resilient than we thought.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light this candle, may we remember that even one brave choice can change a story — just like Judith did.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When have you felt nervous but did something anyway?

What does being brave mean to you?



NIGHT 6

Gifts: Uniqueness

“Each and every person is obligated to say the world was created for me.”

— MISHNAH SANHEDRIN 4:5

Each person has special gifts — things that make them unique. These aren’t presents in boxes — they are talents, strengths, and ways we bring light to others. Some people are good listeners, some are helpers, some are creative thinkers, and some make others laugh. Hanukkah reminds us that even one person’s light can brighten the world — especially when we use our gifts to help others.

Recognizing our gifts helps build resilience because it reminds us that we have something valuable within us. When times are hard, our strengths can guide us forward.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light this candle, may we celebrate the gifts inside us and find ways to use them to spread goodness.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What is something special that you bring to others?

How does someone else’s gift make your world brighter?



NIGHT 7

Gelt: Motivation

“According to the effort is the reward.”

— PIRKEI AVOT 5:23

Gelt (chocolate coins) are often given on Hanukkah to remind us of learning, effort, and reward. Long ago, children received coins for studying Torah, practicing, and working hard. Gelt teaches us that when we put in effort — even in small steps — we grow, improve, and shine brighter.

Motivation helps us keep going when things are hard. When we believe effort matters, we don't give up easily — we keep building our resilience one step at a time.

CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light this candle, may it remind us that every little effort counts and brings us closer to our goals.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What is something you worked hard at and felt proud of?

How does it feel when someone recognizes your effort?



NIGHT 8

Latkes: Adaptability

“Who is wise? The one who learns from everyone.”

— PIRKEI AVOT 4:1

Latkes are made from simple ingredients — potatoes, oil, a little salt, and turned into something warm and delicious. When the Maccabees had little, they made the most of it. Latkes remind us that we don't need much to create something wonderful — we just need to be creative and willing to work with what we have.

Adaptability helps us stay strong when things change or don't go our way. Being resourceful shows us that we can find new paths when old ones are blocked.

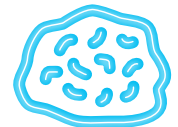
CANDLE-LIGHTING INTENTION:

As we light this candle, may we remember that we can turn small things into something great — just like potatoes into latkes.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

When have you had to change your plan and still made things work?

How can creativity help during tough times?



HAPPY HANUKKAH

