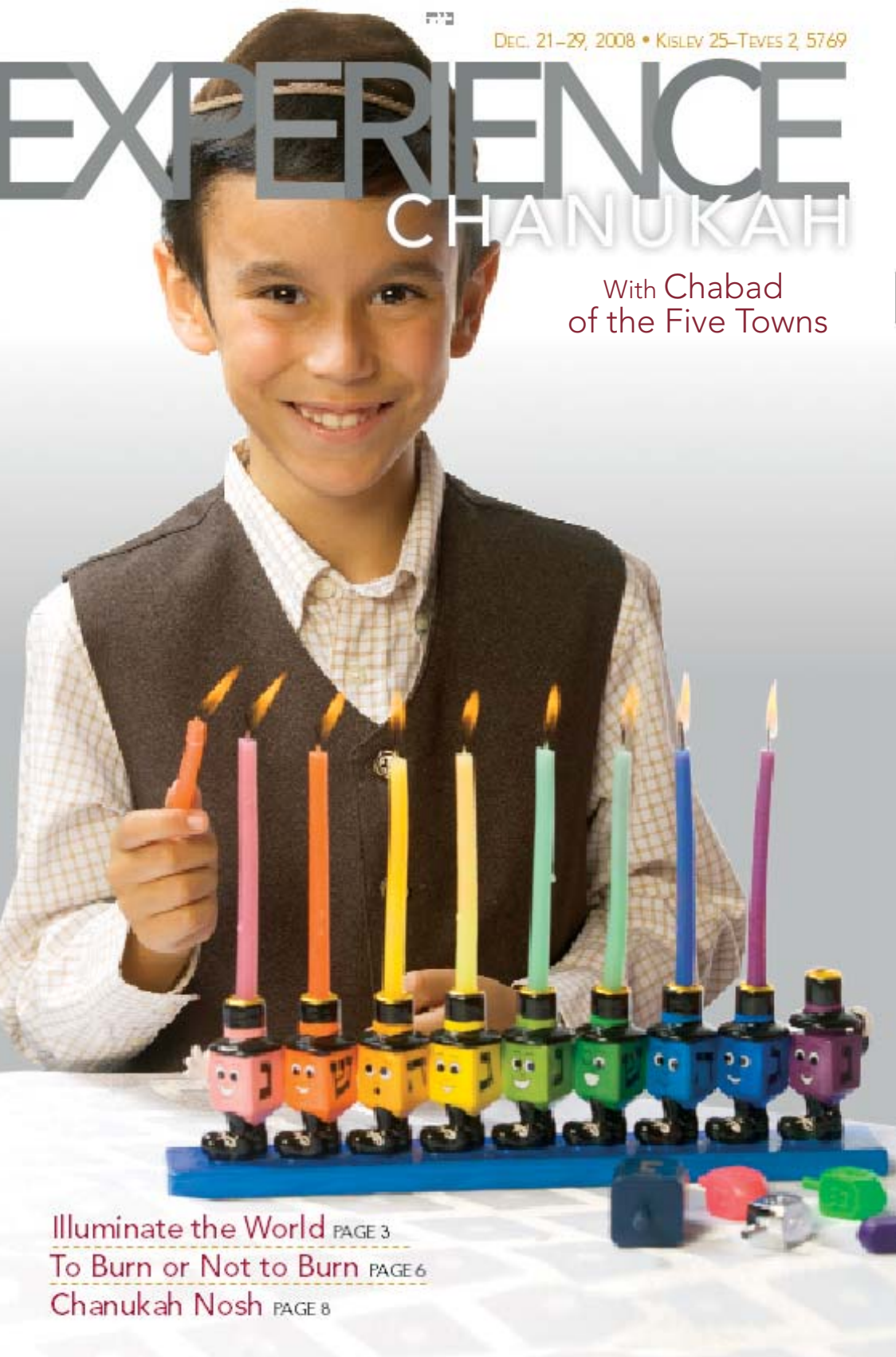


EXPERIENCE CHANUKAH

With Chabad
of the Five Towns



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Dear Friend,

Did Chanukah happen years ago, or is it happening now? Looking at the events today, you start to wonder. The story of a little candle pushing away the monster of frightening darkness, of human sensibility overcoming terror and brute force, of life and growth overcoming destruction – the battle is very much alive within each of us, and in the world outside of us.

It reoccurs at every winter solstice, at every dawn of each day, with every photon of sunlight that breaks through the earth's atmosphere bringing it warmth and life-nurturing energy. With every breath of life, every cry of a newborn child, every blade of grass that breaks out from under the soil, every decision to do good in the face of evil, to be kind where there is cruelty, to build where others destroy, to move humanity forward when others pull us toward chaos. And that is Chanukah.

Chanukah is an eight-day spiritual journey. Many people know the story of Chanukah – but only as a historical pretext to give gifts and eat latkes. We can call that the body of Chanukah. The soul of Chanukah is its meditation, joy, warmth and light. Not only in our homes with our loved ones, but with the entire world. In this tradition, Chabad presents this historic Menorah Lighting. Our hope is that by igniting our souls, everybody will follow and light the world, one candle at a time.

We look forward to having you join us for the Public Menorah Lighting Ceremony on Sunday, December 21 at 6:00 pm and making this Chanukah very special.

Sincerely,

RABBI SHNEUR Z. WOLOWIK



Illuminate THE WORLD

Excerpt of a letter from the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Chanukah, the Festival of Lights, recalls the victory—more than 2100 years ago—of a militarily weak but spiritually strong Jewish people over the mighty forces of a ruthless enemy that had overrun the Holy Land and threatened to engulf the land and its people in darkness.

The miraculous victory—culminating with the dedication of the Sanctuary in Jerusalem and the rekindling of the Menorah which had been desecrated and extinguished by the enemy—has been celebrated annually ever since during these eight days of Chanukah, especially by lighting the Chanukah Menorah, also as a symbol and message of the triumph of freedom over oppression, of spirit over matter, of light over darkness.

It is a timely and reassuring message, for the forces of darkness are ever present. Moreover, the danger does not come exclusively from outside; it often lurks close to home, in the form of insidious erosion of time-honored values and principles that are at the foundation of any decent human society. Needless to say, darkness is not chased away by brooms and sticks, but by illumination. Our sages said, “A little light expels a lot of darkness.”

The Chanukah lights remind us in a most obvious way that illumination begins at home, within oneself and one’s family, by increasing and intensifying the light of

Torah and Mitzvos in the everyday experience, even as the Chanukah lights are kindled in growing numbers from day to day. But though it begins at home, it does not stop there. Such is the nature of light that when one kindles the Chanukah lights are expressly meant to illuminate the

*The Chanukah Lights will
illuminate the everyday life
of everyone personally,
and of the society at large*

“outside,” symbolically alluding to the duty to bring light also to those who, for one reason or another, still walk in darkness.

What is true of the individual is true of a nation, especially this great United States, united under G-d, and generously blessed by G-d with material as well as spiritual riches. It is surely the duty and privilege of this Nation to promote all the forces of light both at home and abroad, and in a steadily growing measure.

Let us pray that the message of the Chanukah lights will illuminate the everyday life of everyone personally, and of the society at large, for a brighter life in every respect, both materially and spiritually.

The STORY OF CHANUKAH



When Alexander the Great made peace with Jerusalem in 348 (-313 B.C.E.), we paid our taxes and minded our own business. Eventually, a megalomaniac named Antiochus Epiphanies rose to power. Epiphanies means “beloved of the gods”, and Antiochus couldn’t handle

anyone having a relationship with any god besides himself.

He ransacked our Holy Temple in Jerusalem, and then he outlawed circumcision, Shabbat and Tefillin—basically, anything that had to do with Jewish identity and our relationship with the single and indefinable G-d.

Many Jews defied these decrees and died as martyrs. Finally, Antiochus raised statues of Zeus in the towns and demanded that people worship them. In 3621 (-140 B.C.E.), a priestly family of the Hasmonean dynasty rose up in revolt. They called themselves the Maccabees. This was the first

time a war was fought not over territory or power, but for religious freedom and rights.

The problem was, five brothers of priestly class were no match for the most powerful army in the world. The miracle was that they won anyway. The problem was, the Greeks kept coming back with bigger armies and (to really make a point) armored elephants. Yet the battles became more and more absurdly miraculous, and the

Maccabees kept on winning. In

fact, they managed to chase those Greeks out of Jerusalem, clean up the desecrated Temple, and declare independence.

When the Maccabees recaptured Jerusalem and entered the Holy Temple, they found a disturbing mess—idols, forbidden foods, and broken pottery everywhere. So they tidied up and rededicated the Temple.

The problem was that the six-foot golden Menorah had to be lit with pure olive oil, undefiled by those who were ritually impure. All the oil in the Temple had been defiled by the Greeks. There was no one there who could make new oil, since everyone was ritually impure, having just fought a war and killed people.

The best olive oil came from the orchards of Tekoah—a three day journey away. To go there, get the oil, and come back, would take seven days. No one wanted to use second-class oil, but who wanted to wait?

Here’s where more miracles occurred: First, they found a bottle of pure oil hidden beneath the floor, still sealed with the insignia of the High Priest. Then, even though it was a single flask with just enough oil for one night, it somehow lasted for eight days!





Chanukah Gelt

The Hebrew word Chanukah shares the same root as *chinuch* (education). The Greeks were determined to force Hellenism upon the Jewish population, at the expense of the ideals and commandments of the holy Torah. Unfortunately, they succeeded in their endeavor. After they were defeated it was necessary to reintroduce Torah values to many Jews.

Appropriately, during Chanukah it is customary to give *gelt* (money) to children to teach them to increase in charity and good deeds; and to add to the festive holiday spirit.

This gentle persuasion is an essential component in the educational process. Maimonides discusses the importance of using incentives until a child can independently understand the importance and beauty of the Torah.

There is also a deeper reason for this age-old custom:

“The Greeks laid their hands upon the possessions of Israel.” —*Maimonides*

The Greeks assaulted the possessions of Israel in the same spirit in which they ruined the oil in the Holy Temple. They did not destroy the oil; they defiled it. They did not rob the Jewish people; they attempted to infuse their possessions with Greek ideals — that they be used for egotistical and impure ends, rather than holy pursuits. Chanukah *gelt* celebrates the freedom and mandate to channel material wealth toward spiritual ends.

The most significant night to give is on the fifth, the first night that there are more flames than darkness. The Lubavitcher Rebbe encouraged the admirable custom of *gelt*-giving each night of Chanukah (aside from Shabbat).

Dreidel



When the Greek Antiochus forbade Torah study, Jewish children studied together secretly in caves. When they heard a Greek officer approaching, they would hide their schoolbooks

and pretend to be playing with tops.





We play *dreidel* on Chanuka as a reminder of these brave children and their courage. The word *dreidel* comes from the Yiddish *drei*, which means “turn”. Our *dreidels* have four sides, with a Hebrew letter imprinted on each: *Nun*, *Gimmel*, *Hay*, and *Shin*. These stand for the Hebrew words *Ness Gadol Haya Sham*, which means “a great miracle happened there”, in reference to the Maccabees’ miraculous victory.

To play, you need a *dreidel* and some coins (or anything small but easily counted, like candy or cheerios). All players begin with an equal number, and also establish the “pot” by contributing equally.

The Rules:

1. Take turns spinning the *dreidel*.

If it lands on:

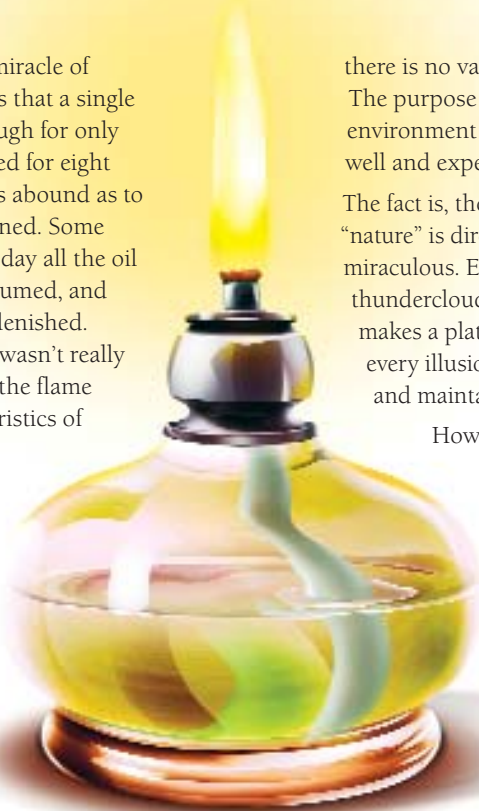
-  *Nun*—get nothing. Bang fist on table.
 -  *Gimmel*—take the whole pot. Everybody cheers.
 -  *Hay*—take half the pot. Everybody says, “Oooohhhh.”
 -  *Shin*—pay two into the pot. Everybody says, “Aaaaawwww.”
2. If the pot empties out, everyone contributes equally once again.
3. You can always raise the ante, asking everyone to match the amount you add to the pot.



The central miracle of Chanukah is that a single flask of oil, enough for only one day, burned for eight days. Theories abound as to how it actually happened. Some sources say that each day all the oil burned and was consumed, and was miraculously replenished. Some say that the oil wasn't really consumed at all, and the flame exhibited all characteristics of a flame, yet somehow was not quite a flame. Others, without going into detail, simply refer to a midrash which states that G-d can "fit an elephant through the eye of a needle".

When G-d created the world, he established specific patterns and a sense of order. We call these the laws of nature, of physics, of logic. These are an expression of G-d's desire for a world of predictable elements behaving as though they are self-governing and self-sufficient.

Only in a seemingly autonomous world is it possible to have true freedom of choice. A decision based on foreign influences is not really a choice, because it is induced by external factors. If G-d was fully revealed to us, we would be compelled to do what He wants, and free choice would not exist. Without the possibility of choosing wrong,



To Burn or Not to Burn

there is no value in choosing right. The purpose of an "independent" environment is to enable us to choose well and experience achievement.

The fact is, though, that every act of "nature" is directed by G-d, and miraculous. Every sunrise, every thundercloud, every time gravity makes a plate drop and shatter – every illusion of order is produced and maintained constantly by G-d.

How, then, would G-d fit an elephant through the eye of a needle?

Would He make the elephant smaller, or would He expand the eye of the needle?

Perhaps neither. The Creator of logic is not limited by logic. The elephant could remain big, the eye of the needle small. And He would fit the elephant through the eye of the needle. With regards to the Chanukah miracle, it's reasonable that

the flame was consuming oil, but the oil was not consumed!

G-d has created for us an extraordinary world where nature appears to proceed according to its own laws, and somehow, miracles of the highest order can occur. Each Chanukah flame has the capacity to ignite many others, the infinite contained within the finite. May the miraculous light of our menorahs chase away darkness and radiate ever outwards.



Shabbat candles are lit before dark, inside our home. By contrast, Chanukah's candles spread light into the darkness of the night, from a window facing out into the street.

Shabbat candles bring light within, but the Chanukah lights extend further, also transforming the darkness outside.



The first satellite hookup of Chanukah Menorah lightings around the world took place in 1989 and linked Jews in 10 countries. It was also the first time in modern history that images of Moscow's Jews were broadcast for an extended period of time to the Western world.

The Maccabees regained Jerusalem thanks to a brave woman named Yehudit. She served salty cheese and strong wine to the Greek governor of the city and then, as he slept a deep sleep, took his sword and decapitated him.



The ancient Jewish sages taught that the first light created was too powerful for humans to use, so G-d hid it away for the time when the world would achieve a higher state. That's the light that shines out of your Chanukah menorah.



Eight Neat Facts about Chanukah



The Menorah in the Temple in Jerusalem had only seven branches. Each one held exactly the same amount of oil, but the lamp closest to the Holy of Holies burned twice as long as the rest.

Maimonides writes that the Menorah in the Temple in Jerusalem was decorated with 22 cups – all turned upside down! This was symbolic of G-d's blessing pouring down upon the world.



The windows of the Holy Temple were wider outside than in. Rather than let the sunlight in like all other windows, the Temple windows were built to let the light of the Menorah out, to shine into the rest of the world.



Estimated number of latkes to be eaten at public Menorah lightings this year: 500,000.



Latkes

By the light of the Chanukah Menorah, young and old enjoy this crisp, holiday treat!

INGREDIENTS:

5 large potatoes, peeled

1 large onion

3 eggs

1/3 cup flour

1 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. pepper

3/4 cup oil for frying

Use: 10-inch skillet

Yields: 4 to 6 servings

Grate potatoes and onion and strain through a colander, pressing out excess water.

Add eggs, flour, and seasoning.

Mix well.

Heat 1/2 cup oil in skillet. Lower flame and place 1 large tablespoon batter at a time into hot sizzling oil and fry until golden (approx 5 min).

Turn over and fry for 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove from pan and place on paper towels to drain excess oil. Continue with remaining batter until finished, adding more oil when necessary.

Serve with a side of applesauce.



Since the miracle of Chanukah happened with oil (the olive oil in the menorah), we eat oily foods on Chanukah, such as donuts and potato latkes. (The miracle is that we eat them for eight days and survive.)

Oil also symbolizes the secret wisdom of the Torah known as the Kabbalah. Like oil seeps through a fabric, this wisdom permeates every aspect of the Torah. Yet, just as oil remains separate and floats above water, the true depth of Kabbalah always remains just beyond our grasp.



How to Light

The menorah brings light into our homes and radiates onto the street. We, too, have the capacity to transform the outside world by spreading goodness and kindness, and significantly weaken the spiritual darkness. Here's how to light the menorah properly:



1. All the lampholders of your menorah should be of even height and in an even line, except for the shamash (service candle), which should be at a distinctly different height than the rest.

2. The optimum place for a menorah is in a doorway, opposite the mezuzah. You can also use a window that is visible from the street.

3. A married couple or family is considered one unit, so the husband can light for everyone. If you are living alone, you also need a menorah. To get the kids involved, they can light their own menorahs.

4. On the first night, light the candle furthest to the right. Each day, add another to the left of the original. Always light the newly added candle first.

5. The right time to light is at nightfall (about 20 minutes after sunset). Your menorah should remain lit for at least a ½ hour past nightfall. You may light earlier, but make sure it is able to stay lit for the requisite ½ hour past nightfall.

6. Got home late? As long as someone's around to see the menorah, you can still light it with a blessing. After that, light the menorah without a blessing.

7. On Friday afternoon, both your menorah and Shabbat candles should be lit 18 minutes before sunset. Don't even think of lighting after sunset. Your menorah may need more fuel to last until ½ hour after nightfall.

8. Women, take a break. Women played a very important role in the victory of the Maccabees (the story of Yehudit). For this reason women have the custom to take time out from doing household chores while the Menorah burn. How long? At least half an hour.

YOUR CHANUKAH CALENDAR



FIRST NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Sunday, December 21, 2008—Kislev 25, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1, 2 and 3, and kindle one light on your menorah.



SECOND NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Monday, December 22, 2008—Kislev 26, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle two lights on your menorah.



THIRD NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Tuesday, December 23, 2008—Kislev 27, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle three lights on your menorah.



FOURTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Wednesday, December 24, 2008—Kislev 28, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle four lights on your menorah.



FIFTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Thursday, December 25, 2008—Kislev 29, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle five lights on your menorah.



SIXTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Friday, December 26, 2008—Kislev 30, 5769
Before sunset recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle six lights on your menorah. The menorah must be lit BEFORE lighting the Shabbat Candles (18 minutes before sunset).
Light Shabbat Candles (see chabad.org for your local times.)



SEVENTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Shabbat, December 27, 2008 - Tevet 1, 5769
After nightfall recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle seven lights on your menorah.
The menorah must be lit AFTER Shabbat ends and the Havdalah is recited.



EIGHTH NIGHT OF CHANUKAH

Sunday, December 28, 2008 - Tevet 2, 5769
After sunset, recite blessings 1 and 2, and kindle eight lights on your menorah.

BLESSINGS

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו, וצונו להדליק
נר חנוכה.

Baruch Atah Ado-noi, Elo-hei-nu
Melech Ha-olam, Asher Ki-de-sha-nu
Be-mitz-vo-sav, Ve-tzi-vanu
Le-had-lik Ner Chanukah

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם,
שעשה נסים לאבותינו, בימים ההם
בזמן הזה.

Baruch Atah Ado-noi, Elo-hei-nu
Melech Ha-olam, She-asa Nisim
La-a-vo-sai-nu, Ba-ya-mim
Ha-haim Biz-man Ha-zeh.

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם,
שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיימנו לזמן הזה.

Baruch Atah Ado-noi,
lo-hei-nu Melech Ha-olam,
She-heh-che-yah-nu Ve-ki-ye-ma-nu
Ve-hi-gi-ah-nu Liz-man Ha-zeh.

After lighting, say or sing this:

הללו Ha-nei-ros Ha-la-lu
Onu Mad-li-kin, Al Hat-shu-os,
Ve-al Ha-nisim, Ve-al Ha-nif-la-os,
She-a-si-sa La-avo-sei-nu
Ba-ya-mim Ha-haim Biz-man
Ha-zeh, Al yi-dei Ko-ha-ne-cha
Hak-doshim. Ve-cho! Shmo-nas
Yi-mei Chanukah, Ha-nei-ros
Ha-la-lu Ko-desh Heim, vi-ein
La-nu Ri-shus Li-hish-ta-meish
Ba-hein, Ela Lir-o-san Bil-vad,
Ki-dei Li-ho-dos Uli-ha-lel
Le-shim-cha Ha-ga-dol, Al
Ni-se-cha Ve-al Nif-le-o-se-cha
Ve-al Ye-shu-o-se-cha.

מקוץ צור Ma-oz Tzur Yi-shu-asi,
Licha Na-eh Li-sha-bei-ach.
Ti-kon Beis Te-fi-la-si, Ve-sham
Todah Ne-za-bei-ach. Li-eis
Ta-chin Mat-bei-ach, Mi-tzur
Ha-mi-na-bei-ach, Az Eg-mor
Be-shir Miz-mor Cha-nu-kas
Ha-miz-bei-ach.

Chabad of the Five Towns Presents
Community-wide Chanukah Festivities!

874

Join us for the annual

Chanukah Wonderland

A Place Where Chanukah Truly Comes Alive!
Experience the joy of Chanukah all day long
with Chanukah-themed entertainment and
activities for the whole family.

Open to the Entire Community

DECEMBER 21ST – 29TH

Sunday – Thursday, Dec. 21–25 • 10 AM – 7 PM
Friday, Dec. 26 • 10 AM – 3 PM
Motzei Shabbat, Dec. 27 • 7 PM – 10 PM
Sunday, Dec. 28 • 10 AM – 7 PM
Monday, Dec. 29 • 10 AM – 5 PM

FEATURING:

Arts-n-Crafts • Oil Quest
Legoland • Chanukah Computer Center
Face Painting • Olive Press Show
Decorate-a-Donut • Chanukah Theater
Meet Yehudah Hamaccabi & more!

Location to be Announced

To schedule an appointment for
your school call 516-295-2478 or visit
www.chabad5towns.com

Lighting of the Largest Menorah in the Five Towns

Community leaders and dignitaries
will be leading the Menorah Lighting
Ceremony every evening in

CEDARHURST PARK

corner Cedarhurst & Summit Avenue

Sunday, December 21 – 6:00 PM
Monday, December 22 – 6:00 PM
Tuesday, December 23 – 6:00 PM
Wednesday, December 24 – 6:00 PM
Thursday, December 25 – 6:00 PM
Friday, December 26 – 3:15 PM
Motzei Shabbat, December 27 – 6:00 PM
Sunday, December 28 – 6:00 PM

MUSIC!
HOT LATKES!
GIFTS FOR CHILDREN!

For more information, please call **516-295-2478**
or visit www.chabad5towns.com

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