

קריאת התורה לחנוכה

THE TORAH READINGS OF CHANNUKAH

The Torah Readings for the Eight Days of Channukah are taken from Sefer BeMidbor.

*According to one custom they begin, on the First Day of Channukah,
with Possuk 22 of Chapter 6.*

According to another custom the First Day of Channukah Reading starts at Chapter 7.

*The universal custom is that the Eighth Day of Channukah Torah Reading
ends with Possuk 4 of Chapter 8.*

On Shabbos Channukah, the Channukah Reading becomes the Maftir.

1. Channukah is that annual festival instituted by our Chachommim to commemorate how HaShem saved us from the yoke of oppression of the Syrian Hellenists and their king Antiochus Epiphanes. They had overrun Eretz Yisroel during the time of the Second Beis HaMikdash and had subjected our People to horrendous cruelties in their attempts to make us give up our Torah way of life and our loyalty to HaShem.
2. After years of brave fighting by the small bands of Jewish fighters led by Mattisyohu and his twelve sons and followers against the huge armies of the Syrian Hellenists, the Syrian soldiers were at last thrown out of the land. The Beis HaMikdash was cleansed by us of its defilement by the Syrians — they had transformed our Beis HaMikdash into a temple dedicated to the Greek gods — and the Menorah was kindled once again in purity and holiness with the only cruse of uncontaminated olive oil that was found intact with the seal of the Kohen Ga'dol. Ordinarily, this small amount of oil would have burned for only one day. But a miracle occurred and it burned for eight days, enough time for new oil to be produced from olives that were fetched from a distance of four days' journey. This miracle was a demonstration that our efforts were pleasing to HaShem and that He had taken us back again as His People. The following year, the Chachommim of the day established the anniversary of this miracle of the oil as a Rabbinical Yom Tov, to be observed each year for eight days, starting on the twenty-fifth day of Kislev, the anniversary of the liberation of the Beis HaMikdash, with lights kindled in each Jewish home for each of the eight days.
3. Channukah is a Rabbinical Yom Tov on which it is permitted to do Melochoh. It has neither the sanctity nor the severity of prohibition of work because nobody, not even our Chachommim, can institute a festival that it should be the same as the Torah-ordained Yom Tov. However, as it is a semi-Yom Tov, it does share some of the characteristics of a Yom Tov, and one of these is that there is a public Torah Reading each day of Channukah during the Morning Service. As the events of Channukah occurred only after the Torah

was given, Channukah is of course not one of the Yommim Tovim concerning which the Torah commands a Korban Mussaf and therefore there cannot be any corresponding Tefillas Mussaf on Channukah. But full Hallel is recited on Channukah. (*See the DINNIM OF CHANNUKAH Sheets for further information about Channukah.*)

4. As said, Channukah marks the reconsecration of the Beis HaMikdash after its defilement and thus it shares the same theme as the first Consecration of the Mishkan in the Wilderness. But not only do the two events share the same theme of Consecration: in a certain respect they share the same date, too. For the Mishkan with all its components was completed and could have been consecrated in the month of Kislev in the year 2449, on the same date as the later-to-happen Channukah, on the very date that later marked the first day Channukah — it was for other reasons that that consecration was in fact postponed to the month of Nissan. This all makes it almost obvious that the account of the Consecration of the Mishkan in the Wilderness should be the appropriate Torah Reading for Channukah. (Nevertheless, because Channukah is a working day, therefore our Chachommim did not institute a Haftorah for the weekdays of Channukah.)
5. The Channukah Torah Reading is taken from Sidra Nosso in Sefer BeMidbor. (*See SIDRA OF THE WEEK : נשא.*) According to one custom, the first day's Reading starts with the account of the Korbannos of that first day's consecration, namely, the first Possuk of Chapter 7. But others have the custom to start just before that, with the paragraph which teaches of the Mitzvah of the Kohanim to bless the Jewish People because the victory of Channukah was due to the valiant efforts of the priestly family of the Chashmono'im. On each weekday of Channukah, three people are called up.
6. In any case, the first Aliyoh ends with Possuk 11 of Chapter 7. The second Aliyoh consists of the next three Pessukim and the third Aliyoh ends the day's Reading with Possuk 17. During the other days of Channukah, the first two Aliyos will read three Pessukim each from that day's Korbannos and the third Aliyoh will read the whole next paragraph in anticipation of the next day's Korbannos.
7. On the eighth day of Channukah, the first two Aliyos are read as usual, that is, three Pessukim each of the eighth day's Korbannos and the third Aliyoh then continues right through to the next Sidra of **בהעלותך** to the Mitzvah of the kindling of the Menorah in the Mishkan and ends fittingly with the description of the Menorah itself.
8. On Shabbos Channukah, the Channukah reading of the day is read as one paragraph and becomes the Maftir and the Haftorah is the special Haftorah of Channukah. This Haftorah displaces the regular weekly Haftorah and indeed even displaces the Haftorah of Rosh Chodesh (which can sometimes fall to be on Shabbos Channukah) because the spreading of the knowledge of the miracles of Channukah takes precedence.