



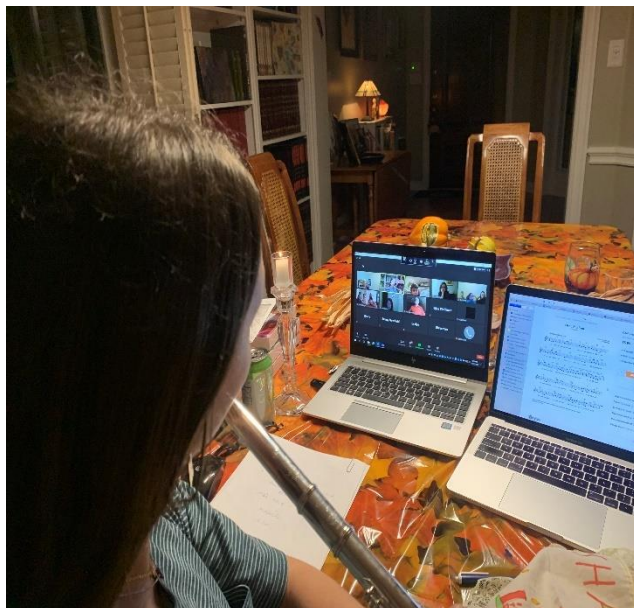
*December - Kislev/Tevet 5781*

*Chailights TBT*

*So, nu?*

**FROM THE RABBI:**

**The Rabbi** led off our services on Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup> with a special Children's service at 6:30 p.m. The children enjoyed this service as they learned the meaning behind lighting the candles. One candle can light other candles spreading hope and love. An abbreviated adult service followed. Special thanks to Priya who entertained us with her fabulous flute playing!





**The Prez Sez: [tbtpres@gmail.com](mailto:tbtpres@gmail.com)**

### **THE LITTLE LATKA WITH A BIG HISTORY**

**Most** of our memories at Chanukah revolved around making latkas with our families. Whether in the kitchen with grandparents, parents or other relatives, the smell of latkas cooking in hot oil permeated the home. You knew, "its Chanukah time!" As the oil spattered in the pan, relatives or friends spoke of the "miracle" that took place long ago, and we all waited for that golden delight to make it to the plate.

But, has one really stopped and thought "how did this little potato make such a big impact on our holiday?" As your intrepid history freak, I did some research and there are as many stories about latkas as there are recipes for them.

The name itself has ancient roots according to Wikipedia: "The word comes from the Yiddish latka, itself from the East Slavic oladka, a diminutive of oladya 'small fried pancake', which in turn is from Hellenistic Greek ἐλάδιον '(olive) oil', diminutive of Ancient Greek ἔλαιον 'oil'. Its Modern Hebrew name, levivah (לביבה), is a revival of a word used in the Book of Samuel to describe a dumpling made from kneaded dough, part of the story of Amnon and Tamar. Some interpreters have noted that the homonym levav (לבב) means "heart," and the verbal form of l-v-v occurs in the Song of Songs as well. In the lexicon of Ashkenazi Jews from Udmurtia and Tatarstan there are recorded versions of the kosher-style appellation of latkas during the eight-day Hanukkah holiday."

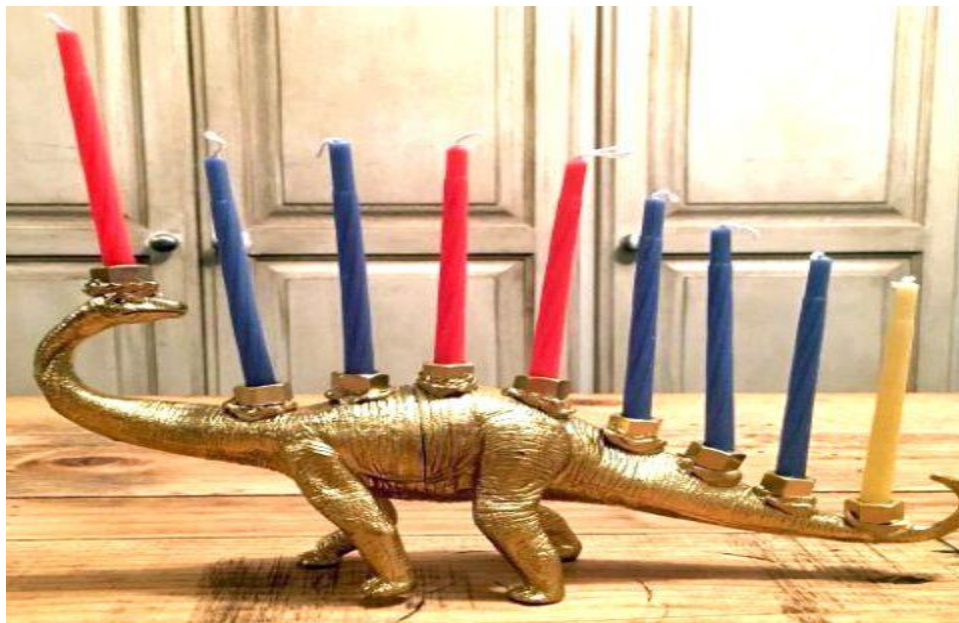
Historically, many trace it to the fearless woman, Judith, who fed the Assyrian king a ricotta cheese pancake, got him drunk, and killed him. This gave the Israelites the upper hand to defeat the Assyrians. She came before the time of the Maccabees. But this pancake was already a popular celebrated delicacy by the time the Maccabees came to power. Although, after the Maccabees victory, it is not known if they really ate the cheese pancake. However, the modern latka became synonymous with Chanukah because of the miracle of the oil.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, crop failures caused the Polish and Ukrainians to plant potatoes. It was decreed by Katherine the Great as people were starving.

The potato became a big hit in the "shtetl." There was even a children's ditty that went as follows: "Sunday, potatoes; Monday, potatoes; Tuesday, potatoes . . . Shabbos, potato kugel."

It was easier to make the latkas with potato, as it was more in abundance than cheese and went well with dietary restriction. It is here where the potato replaced the cheese pancake. With the migration of Jews coming to the United States it was the Eastern European Jews who brought this recipe to the United States.

So, this Chanukah as you continue the tradition of making latkas, take a moment to think of how far this recipe has come: from a fearless woman named Judith, to our victories, to saving starving people. And, as we gather around the table to celebrate with family and friends another generation can partake in the miracle of the season. No matter how you say it or cook it, it IS the star of the Chanukah table. It has a big history for such a little potato! Bon Appetit!



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Dr. Nu (Part 1)

[Setting = Grandmother in traditional Jewish living room is sitting by fireplace with grandson, who is holding Rubik's cube, and granddaughter in lap and reading to them:]

From the book Jewish Days:

"The Zodiac sign for Kislev is Sagittarius, the Archer. In Hebrew, the symbol is called keshet, a bow. In the story of Noah and the Flood, which dominates the previous month of Heshvan, the rainbow that glows after the Flood is also called keshet. That bow symbolized G-d's covenant and continued reconciliation with humans. The bow of Kislev is a more warlike one, the archer's weapon, and perhaps G-d's as well, aimed at defeating Israel's enemies. In this month the defeated enemies are the Hellenized Syrians who sought to eliminate the Jewish religion and the highly assimilated Jews who would have allowed them to do so. The archers are Judah the Maccabee and his brothers, who saved the nation. Indeed, the prophet Zechariah is said to have foreseen the Maccabean victories when he proclaimed in G-d's name, "I have drawn Judah taut, and applied My hand to Ephraim as to a bow" (9:13).

[Grandson, who has ADD and slight Asberger's, gets bored and gets off lap and stands on head, still holding Rubik's cube].

The part of the story that has a historical basis is told in the Book of Maccabees, in the Apocrypha, an assortment of works not included in the canon of the Hebrew Bible. In the year 165 B.C.E., Judah Maccabee and a band of Jewish rebels marched into Jerusalem and within a few months cleansed the Temple, which the Syrian rulers of Judea had defiled. They proclaimed the twenty-fifth of Kislev the beginning of an eight-day holiday of rededication. The festival of Hanukkah-the name comes from the Hebrew word for dedication-has been celebrated on that day ever since. The point in the story when a miracle is said to have occurred (which is not mentioned in the Book of Maccabees) is when Judah and his men began purifying the Temple they found only one unopened, uncontaminated cruse, with enough oil to light the menorah for one day. Miraculously, the oil kept the Temple lit for eight days, until new oil was prepared, and that is the reason why the holiday has been celebrated for eight days.

[Grandson sticks nearby candles up nose and continues working with cube]

The heroism of the Maccabees has been reemphasized in the modern State of Israel, where their courage has come to stand for the courage of the nation as a whole, pitted as it was for so many years against enemies on all sides. Today, Jews



inside and outside of Israel tend to recognize both the national and spiritual aspects of the holiday by celebrating its story and kindling its lights. In doing so, they rejoice in the wondrous victory of the few over the many and the weak over the powerful. They also recall the many other dark periods in their long history that, like the Maccabean era, were illuminated by the determination of a small people to remain unique among the nations.”

[Grandson raises cube to show it has been solved].

For the rest of the story go to TBT's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Beth-Tikvah-246521018874450>



Sister  
HOOD

**Nancy Schwartz** [nancyaya14@gmail.com](mailto:nancyaya14@gmail.com)

During these pandemic months, I've spent much more time reflecting and appreciating my blessings (including each of you). My feelings of gratitude have kept me positive (mostly positive - must be honest) through 2020. There's plenty of research that shows how gratitude works its wonders within us, and I'm a believer.

1. Counting our blessings increases our overall wellbeing and a little act of kindness can raise our level of happiness too. When was the last time you sent a "just thinking of you" note to someone via snail mail? Can you remember how great it feels to receive mail other than bills?! Ever had a person in line behind you at the grocery store who only had one small item? Did you wave them along to go in front of you because you had much more in your basket, or did you happen to pick up the tab for that bottle of soda the person was there to purchase...It feels so good to do these things when the opportunity arises.

2. Make a list of things for which you are grateful - post it on your bathroom mirror so you'll see it daily, in the morning and night. Add sticky-tab notes as you think of other things for which you feel grateful.

3. How about a mitzvah a day...helping others while staying physically distant is still possible to do. Remember, having a feeling of gratitude spreads easily. It warms the heart of both, the giver and receiver.

Living daily with gratitude increases our own happiness while also spreading gratefulness to others. Try it and ENJOY. Let me know how it's going for you.

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO NANCY SCHWARTZ FOR SENDING THESE AWESOME LATKA RECIPES!**

### **Potato Latkes**

**6 med. taters, peeled (about 4 cups)**

**1/2 tsp. baking soda**

**2 eggs, well beaten**

**2 med. onions, grated**

**1-2 tsp. salt and pepper (to taste)**

**1/8 - 1/4 tsp. ground or finely chopped fresh parsley**

**1/8 - 1/4 tsp. ground or finely chopped fresh oregano**

**1/8 tsp. ground nutmeg**

**Dash (or more) Paprika**

**1/2 C. flour, unsifted**

**Veggie or Olive oil for frying**

**Finely grate the taters and mix with baking soda. Squeeze dry. Into beaten eggs, stir potatoes, onions, salt, herbs and spices. Stir in spices. Stir in flour to coat lightly. Pour oil into skillet 1/4" depth. When oil is hot, drop mixture by large spoon. Fry until crisp and golden on each side, turning**

only once. Drain on inside-out brown paper bags. Serve with sour cream, applesauce or your favorite spicy sauce. Yields about 20 latkes.

### Fluffy Potato Latkes

Use same recipe as above, and replace above measurements with the following:

3 eggs, well beaten

1 medium onion, finely grated

2 tsp. salt

3/4 C. coarse, fresh breadcrumbs

Butter or Oil for frying

Combine all ingredients except oil. Drop from a large spoon onto a hot, oiled skillet and fry until golden on each side. Use low heat.

**How about a recipe for...Homemade Kahlua - yep!**

**Great for gifts**

1 jar (2 oz.) instant coffee

3 C. Sugar

2 C. boiling water

A fifth of bourbon (doesn't have to be expensive)

1 Vanilla bean (or several to split if pouring into individual bottles before aging)

1 gallon container

small bottles for gifting (label the bottles with the recipe and directions for aging).

Mix coffee, sugar and water and stir well. Add bourbon and pour into a gallon container. Split vanilla bean and drop into container. Age for at least two weeks.

The logo for 'BOOKCLUB' is displayed in a rectangular box. The word 'BOOKCLUB' is written in a stylized, multi-colored font where each letter is a different color. The letters are: B (blue), O (green), O (yellow), K (orange), C (red), I (purple), L (brown), U (grey), B (black).

Our next meeting is Sunday December 13th at 12:30 on Zoom. We will discuss the book "Exile" by Richard North Patterson. It is a "political thriller which engages the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a fictional trial for an accused Palestinian political assassin being defended by her former lover, a Jewish-American lawyer. "We will also start a book list for next year. 2021! Hopefully, a better year. Jeanne Sheinberg



## DECEMBER SCHEDULE- ALL ON ZOOM

- 4<sup>TH</sup>- ISJL JULIAN WILL LEAD SERVICES 7 P.M.
- 5<sup>TH</sup>- Adult Education along with CBI-Galveston and Julian 10 a.m.
- 6<sup>th</sup>- Julian and Religious School
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting 7 p.m.
- 11<sup>th</sup>- Chanukah with the Rabbi and Myrna 7 p.m.
- 13<sup>th</sup> – Book Club at 12:30 p.m.
- 20<sup>th</sup> – Shabbat with Myrna 7 p.m.
- 27<sup>th</sup> – Shabbat with Rabbi 7 p.m.

If you have any suggestions for creative Shabbat services or ideas on how you want to take TBT forward, please email [tbtpres@gmail.com](mailto:tbtpres@gmail.com) We would LOVE to hear from you!

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

- 1<sup>ST</sup> – Erin Moeller
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Elyssa Klann
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Devon Login
- 4<sup>th</sup> Forest Levy
- 5<sup>th</sup> Katelin Zelon
- 6<sup>th</sup> Christine Paul
- 10<sup>th</sup> Charles South
- 11<sup>th</sup> Blake Levy
- 13<sup>th</sup> Allen Buchner
- 13<sup>th</sup> Katherine Stein
- 14<sup>th</sup> Ivette Kestenbaum
- 19<sup>th</sup> Emma Maierson
- 20<sup>th</sup> Julian Morales
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Cindy Lou Henderson
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Shawn Dunegan
- 25<sup>th</sup> Evelyn Brass
- 27<sup>th</sup> David Salinsky
- 29<sup>th</sup> Alice Levy
- 29<sup>th</sup> Adam Maierson
- 31<sup>st</sup> Marsha Henderson



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**HEY KIDS! HERE IS A MENORAH & DREIDEL YOU CAN PRINT OUT AND COLOR!**

**WE WISH YOU A WONDERFUL CHANUKAH AND MAY THE LIGHTS SURROUND YOU WITH PEACE, LOVE AND HAPPINESS!**

