



How Well Do You Know Israel?!

By Mrs. Esther Tokayer

Special Hanukkah Edition

1. What does Hanukkah celebrate?
 - a. The end of the war
 - b. The liberation of the Temple
 - c. The unification of Hellenists and Maccabees
 - d. The demise of the Seleucid Empire
2. How long was the war of the Hasmoneans versus the Seleucid Empire?
 - a. 1 year
 - b. 3 years
 - c. 25 years
 - d. 100 years
3. There were two groups who fought the Greeks. They were:
 - a. The Hasmoneans and the Hasidim
 - b. The Hasmoneans and the Hellenists
 - c. The Hasidim and the Hellenists
 - d. The Sabateans and the Hasidim
4. Which group was interested only in religious freedom?
 - a. The Hellenists
 - b. The Hasidim
 - c. The Hasmoneans
 - d. The Am Ha'Aretz
5. Which modern city in Israel is the native city of the Hasmoneans?
 - a. Modi'in
 - b. Hashmonaim
 - c. Herodion
 - d. Caesaria
6. For how long did the Hasmoneans rule an independent state in Judea?
 - a. 142BCE – 63CE
 - b. 164BCE – 142BCE
 - c. 164BCE – 63BCE
 - d. 164BCE – 63CE
7. Hanukkah is a symbol of
 - a. the few against the many
 - b. nationalism over religion
 - c. modernity over tradition
 - d. isolation over integration
8. Who said, "And may the day come when all our enemies, who today are planning our destruction, will stand before us and hear our prayers and say, 'Amen.'"
 - a. Menachem Begin
 - b. Rav Yisroel Meir Lau
 - c. Natan Sharansky
 - d. Binyamin Netanyahu

Answers:

1. **(b)** Hanukkah is a pause in the war against the Seleucid Empire. It is the time that they liberated the Temple but did not yet regain their independence.
2. **(c)** The war of the Hasmoneans versus the Seleucid took 25 years to complete. There were periods of calm in between periods of war. The peace was negotiated with Simeon, the third of three Hasmonean brothers who ruled Judea.
3. **(a)** The war against the Seleucid Empire had Jews who were allied the Greeks. The Hellenists had chosen to assimilate into the Greek culture and become fully part of Greek culture. The Hasidim were hiding away to practice their Judaism and eventually join the Hasmoneans in a fight against the Seleucid Empire.
4. **(b)** After the liberation and rededication of the Temple, the Hasidim were not interested in continuing the war against the Seleucid Empire. The Hasmoneans believed that true and permanent freedom believed that there could only be religious freedom with political freedom.
5. **(a)** Modi'in is a thriving city in the Modern State of Israel between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, slightly past the Green Line. Archaeological evidence from the Second Temple period and the rule of the Hasmoneans was found there.
6. **(a)** The Hasmoneans rules Judea for over 200 years. Their reign comes to an end with the time period of the procurators, Roman governors.
7. **(a)** The Hanukkah story continues to inspire today with the story of courage – the many over the few, the pure over the impure, the righteous over the wicked.
8. **(c)** Natan Sharansky celebrated Hanukkah in a Soviet Gulag. He lit the candles for 6 nights and then his materials were taken away. He went on a hunger strike, but there were people from the international community who were coming to visit. Natan Sharansky refused to break his hunger strike until he was allowed to light Hanukkah candles. The commander of Gulag was not allowed to return the items to Sharansky. Sharansky suggested a compromise. The commander would keep the materials, but Sharansky would make the blessings and light. Sharansky put his hat on to make the blessing, the commander followed. Sharansky improvised an additional part of the blessing and the commander answered Amen.

Food for thought @ your Shabbat table: How has the legacy of Hanukkah shaped the modern State of Israel?