



WHERE IS BABY'S DREIDEL?

Written and Illustrated by Karen Katz

It's Hanukkah and Baby wants to spin the dreidel, but how can that happen unless she finds it first?

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Hanukkah dates back to 165 B.C.E., when the Greek King of Syria forbade the practice of Judaism. A small rebel army of Jews, known as the Maccabees, fought against a huge Syrian army for freedom to worship as they believed. After three years, and against all odds, the Maccabees were victorious. Upon returning to their Holy Temple, the Jews found it had been desecrated; they cleaned and repaired what they could. To rededicate the Temple they needed oil to light the *menorah*, a 7-branched candelabrum. They found only enough sacred oil to burn for one night: to everyone's amazement the oil burned for eight days! *Hanukkah*, meaning “dedication,” refers to this event.

A popular game during Hanukkah is dreidel, played using a 4-sided top with a different Hebrew letter on each side. The letters represent the first letter of each word in the Hebrew sentence, *Nes gadol haya sham* (a great miracle happened there). While your little one may not be ready to spin the dreidel, there are plenty of ways to have fun with the spinning top – including playing a hide-and-seek game with it. Add this to festive gatherings where you light the *hannukiah* (9-branched menorah), eat yummy treats such as latkes (potato pancakes) and *sufganiot* (jelly donuts), sing songs, and rejoice in being free to celebrate as you wish.