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NEW FOR HANUKKAH

ISRAEL BONDS INTRODUCES MAZEL TOV BOND GIFT CARD

With a theme of 'Celebrate the Miracle of Hanukkah and the Wonder of Israel,' the Israel Bonds organization has launched a new campaign to strengthen the connection between the events celebrated during Hanukkah and modern Israel.

The centerpiece of the campaign is the introduction of a gift card to facilitate the purchase of State of Israel Mazel Tov bonds.

To simplify the process, the card comes with a detachable investment form, making it easy to purchase the bond. The gift card is then presented to the recipient.

Bonds President and CEO Joshua Matza observed, "Connection to Israel is a special gift. Many parents are seeking 'values' gifts to present on one or more nights of Hanukkah, and one of the strongest Jewish values is our bond with Israel."

The combined gift card/investment form was designed to be a hassle-free gift-giving experience, as well as a meaningful alternative to games, electronics and other items considered to be 'conventional' gifts.

Mazel Tov bonds, available for a minimum purchase of \$100 (with the option of additional \$50 increments), are a significant, personal means of expressing pride in Jewish heritage and optimism for the future.

The cards are available in multiple locations, including Israel Bonds offices, synagogues, and Jewish community centers.

For additional information, call 617-723-2400 or visit
www.israelbonds.com

(This is not an offering which can only be made by prospectus. Read the prospectus carefully before investing to fully evaluate the risks associated with investing in State of Israel Bonds. Issues subject to availability.)



Not Just A Bond.
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Chanukah

FOOD & PLANNING

The gifts that count

By Linda K. Wertheimer

The clerk in the Burlington Mall store shoved a colorful slip of paper at me. "Would you like a LEGO wish list for your child?" I recoiled. My son is 2½ years old. He just recently began peppering conversations with "I want": "I want my blanket. I want chocolate. I want to watch Clifford." The last thing I want is to help whet his appetite for material things.

Chanukah is almost here, and once again, my husband and I are committing to make the eight days more about a Jewish celebration than about materialism. We are not asking Simon what he wants. We are not prowling shopping malls and online toy sites in search of the perfect gifts. Like last year, my husband and I will not give Chanukah presents to each other. Like last year, we will not fill our living room with presents for our only child.

We are not scrooges out to steal the joy of Chanukah from our child. Nor are we depriving our child of toys. He has plenty and receives new or used toys on a fairly regular basis as he outgrows the ones he has. I did, after all, buy him a small LEGO set the other day. We just prefer to avoid gift-giving productions, and as parents, we want to figure out how to instill values in our child that stem from us, our religion and Chanukah itself.

Confession: I adore presents. I still remember my favorite Chanukah present from childhood – a Barbie house. I also adore buying or making gifts for those I love. It took persuasion from my husband, Pavlik, for me to abandon the idea of gift-giving aplenty during Chanukah. He reminded me of what I already knew. We light candles each night of Chanukah not to signal it's time to unwrap presents, but to commemorate a supposed miracle. After the Maccabees defeated the Syrians, they entered a ruined temple and found some oil. The oil lasted eight days when it should have just lasted one. The temple's Eternal Flame stayed lit. We celebrate that miracle, and we also celebrate the Maccabees' victory over those who wanted to tell them what to believe.



Linda K. Wertheimer lighting the menorah last year with her son, Simon Mintz, then 1½.

In America, starting as early as Halloween, the pressure is on to start buying gifts for winter holidays. Can we de-emphasize gifts at Chanukah without making our children feel too different than they may already as Christmas approaches?

"It's not to get caught up in should we or shouldn't we?" said Rabbi Elaine Zecher of Temple Israel of Boston. "How do we create meaning in our own celebration of it? If it starts to be 'it's just what Jews do to be like everybody else,' we're missing the meaning of Chanukah. The meaning of Chanukah is, how do we be Jews as a Jewish community?"

Last Chanukah, after we lit candles each night, I gave Simon a gift bag with a new dreidel. He pulled out a top each night, and grinned. Then, he asked us to spin the dreidel again and again. He was joyful. So were we. Some relatives gave Simon and us presents, and we accepted them with pleasure. But my favorite memories of last year's Chanukah are simple ones. We lit the menorah and watched the flames dance and reflect in our living room window. We played with dreidels. We laughed, and we sang. We ate latkes with friends.

This fall, my husband and I agreed not to give each other tangible gifts for our birthdays, which fall within 10 days of each other.

We had as a couple bought a new camera together. In lieu of presents on my birthday, we went canoeing on the Concord River. Herons waded at the shore line. Turtles rested on logs. Ducks floated by. The next weekend, on my husband's birthday, we watched owls, eagles and turkey vultures at a raptor sanctuary in Vermont. On our birthdays, we lit candles, ate cake and sang. The presents we gave each other were priceless – the gifts of time and togetherness.

We will give Simon something special when he turns 3 in late January. This Chanukah, he will receive a small token each night that relates to Chanukah as we add something new – a theme for different nights, a tradition Rabbi Zecher has practiced for years with her family. On book night, we will give Simon a book about Chanukah – and read it together. Maybe we'll have craft, music and dreidel nights. And one night, we intend to try another Rabbi Zecher idea: tzedakah night. Because Simon is so young, we will teach this lesson simply – and give him his very first tzedakah box. Lessons about giving to others will begin a penny at a time.

I know it will get tougher to play down presents when Simon reaches school age and his peers ask, "What did you get?" My wish for this Chanukah does not fit on a store form. I wish that for my son, no night of Chanukah will ever be just about the contents of a gift-wrapped box.

Linda K. Wertheimer, The Boston Globe's former education editor, is writing a memoir about how losing a brother led her deeper into Judaism. She blogs about faith and family at jewishmuse.com. Email her at linda@lindakwertheimer.com.



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