

personal
english



Business Capsule #31

HANUKKAH 4 GENTILES



Your supplier from Israel or your customer from NY has just posted a pic of an eight-branched candelabrum as well as of lights and gifts: has Christmas arrived beforehand this year? No, it's **Hanukkah**, which falls at the **beginning of December** and which is NOT – surprise, surprise! – the Jewish version of Christmas.

Hanukkah commemorates the **miracle of a small vial of sacred oil burning for 8 days and nights**, thus rededicating the temple of Jerusalem after the Greek invaders had desecrated it by transforming it into a temple for Zeus (167-165 BCE).

Hanukkah was viewed as a **minor celebration** until, during the **Victorian Age**, Christmas became a huge **consumerist** period involving gift-giving, especially for **children**. Hanukkah thus saw its importance increased in **connection with business** and out of the need to have Jewish children (back then for the first time in history allowed to attend and share schooling with Christian ones) **feel on a par** with their Christian classmates, who would be **lavished gifts upon** in just a few days from Hanukkah. Thus, a cultural bridge was built for that gulf.

No gift needed for your Israeli supplier or American customer, then – they're not children, for God's sake ;-). Yet, a **greeting card** is always welcome, as it shows both cross-cultural awareness (thus avoiding parochialism) and intercultural respect. **Hanukkah sameach**, folks!