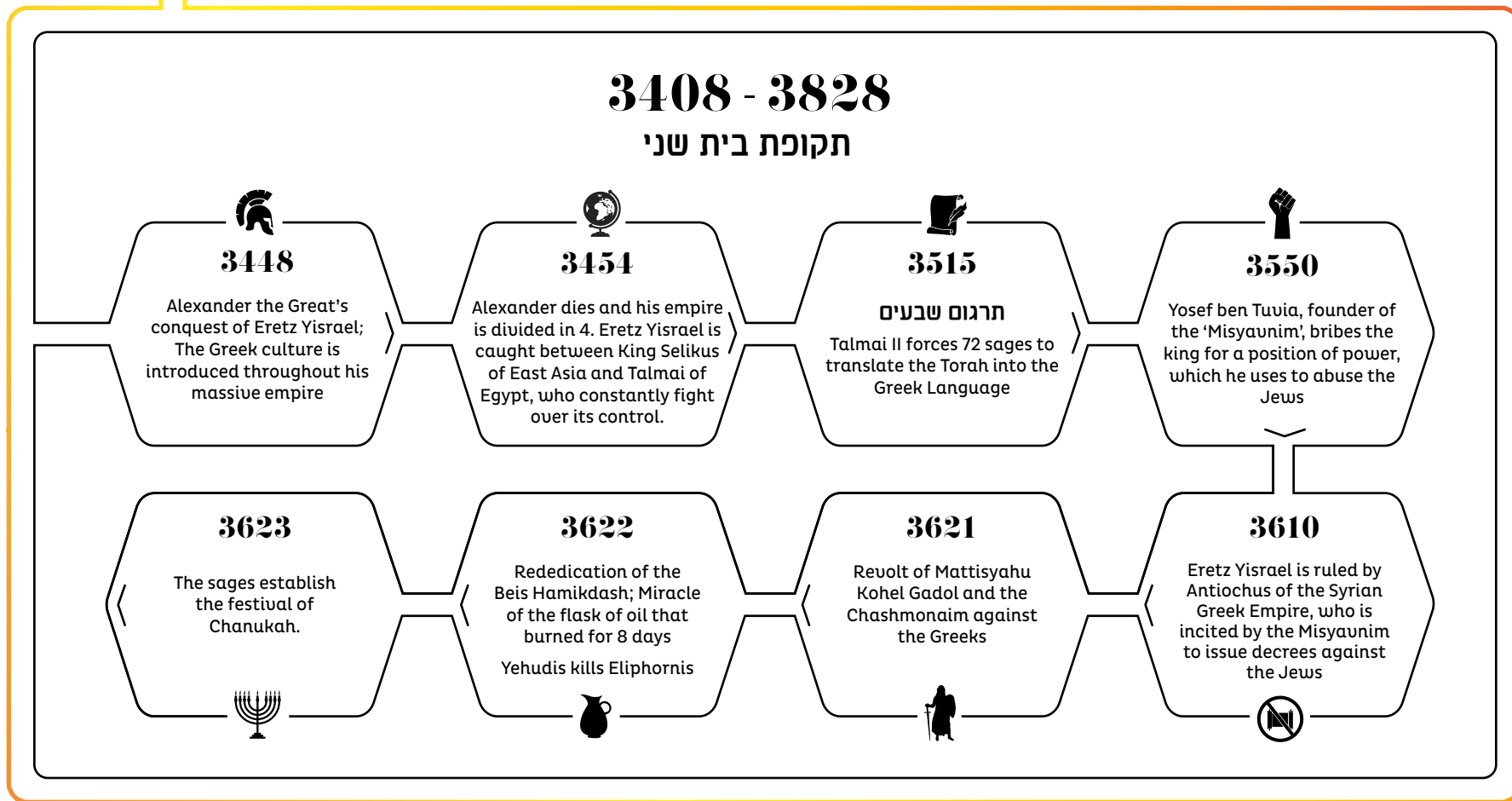
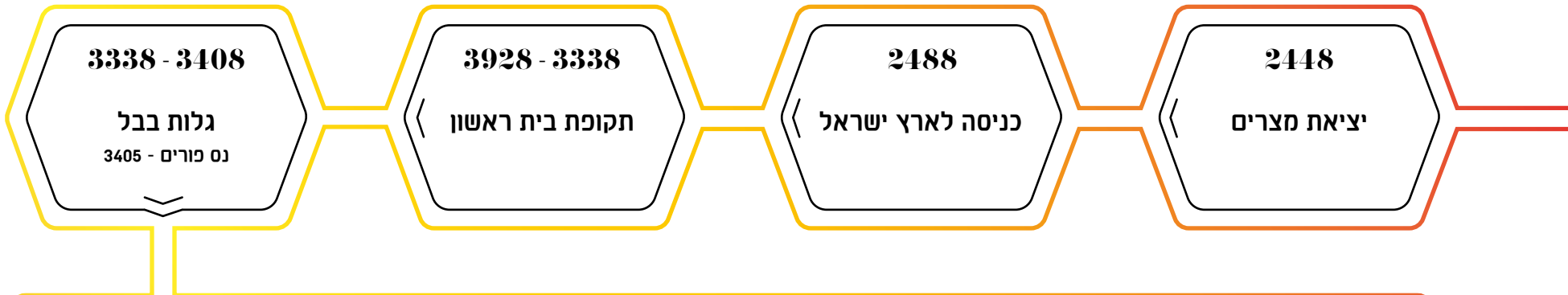


HISTORICAL TIMELINE : חנוכה



3448

Alexander the Great conquers Eretz Yisrael & introduces the Greek culture

3454

Alexander the Great dies; his successor fight over control of Eretz Yisrael

3515

חרגום שבטים

3550

Yosef ben Tuvia, founder of the 'Misyavnim', becomes the tax collector

3448

174 years before Neis Chanukah

It is unbelievable, but, as part of the procession of Pirchei Kehuna that went out to greet the emperor, I saw the scene yesterday with my own eyes: The fearsome Alexander the Great himself, ruler of the civilized world, descended from his horse and bowed down to Shimon Kohen Gadol! Baruch Hashem, our fears were unfounded; there will be peace under our new ruler after all!

My friend Elyakim's baby brother had a bris this morning. He was named Alexander, in honor of the emperor. Elyakim told me that when Alexander wanted to put a statue of himself in the Beis Hamikdash, Shimon Kohen Gadol explained that it would be impossible, then appeased him by promising that the Jews would honor him in other ways, like by naming all the boys born to the kohanim, after him.



3458

164 years before Chanukah

This was a terribly sad week. Our new ruler, the wicked Talmai of Mitzrayim, who captured our territory from Selikus, forcefully took more than 100,000 Jewish captives to train for his army or sell as slaves. Baruch Hashem, I was able to avoid capture, but my brother Avinoam was taken. His poor wife and children are now left alone, without any source of livelihood. I'm sure our community will try to help him and other families in similar situations, but with the heavy taxes that Talmai levied, most of us are struggling to support our own families...



3502

120 years before Neis Chanukah

Today I overheard two Jews conversing in Greek. It's happened twice before, but the sound of it still shocks me. It seems like it's becoming more common these days...



3570

52 years before Neis Chanukah

The Misyavnim are gaining more and more power, which just makes life more miserable for us Jews who follow the chachomim.

Yosef ben Tovia keeps raising our taxes to make his friend, the king, happy; he cruelly forces us to pay and then keeps a large part of it to enrich himself.

Unfortunately, his cult of Misyavnim keeps growing. I can easily identify his followers - they dress like the Greeks, speak their language, and, it seems, they act like them as well...



3515

107 years before Neis Chanukah

Unlike his father, Talmai II is benevolent to our community, and, being a highly cultured and educated individual, he even respects our Torah scholars.

The 72 scholars that Talmai invited many weeks ago were ordered to translate the holy Torah into the Greek language. Everyone is talking about how miraculous it is that all 72 translations were identical, but still, Abba says it is a great tragedy that the Greeks now think our Torah is a chochma like any other.



3600

Antiochus of the Syrian Greek Empire issues גזירות השמ"ד against the Jews

3621

Mattisyahu and the Chashmonaim rebel against the Syrian Greeks

3622

Rededication of the Beis Hamikdash; Miracle of the oil that burned for 8 days
Yehudis kills Eliphornis

3623

The sages establish the festival of Chanukah.

3610

12 years before Neis Chanukah

I never saw Abba as angry as he was today when he discovered that I had been at the new gymnasium near the Beis Hamikdash. He forbade me from ever going near there again.

I think Abba was overreacting; the gymnasium is nothing more than a place to 'let oneself out' and build physical strength. So what if it was founded by Jason and his group of Misyannim? They don't force you to do anything against the Torah there!



3621

1 year before Neis Chanukah

The house is so empty without Abba and my two brothers; they've gone to join Mattisyahu Kohen Gadol and his sons to fight the Greeks. I pray for them all the time. (Nadau didn't join, of course; he is now of the 'other camp'. But I don't want to think about it...) Abba said before he left to trust in Hashem's salvation, but I fear that I will never see them again. How can their small army of inexperienced men possibly overcome the mighty legions and elephants of Antiochus?



3622

Neis Chanukah

Approaching the Mikdash after our miraculous victory was bittersweet; how painful it was to see her in such a state! It took over a week to clean and prepare it for service, as we also had to build new vessels to replace the original ones that had been

3618

4 years before Neis Chanukah

I am worn out and exhausted. I still have not regained my strength after our little boy was born, and this journey away from home has sapped me of the little strength I had. But of course, there was no choice. Philipus, the wicked officer in charge of enforcing the king's decrees in Yerushalayim, has made it impossible for any Torah-observant Jew to stay there.

My baby is already two months old; it breaks my heart that he has not yet had a bris. It is too risky, though; Yoau is afraid of the informers who lurk all over. Still, I refuse to feed him with a horn that denies our connection with Hashem. I keep one with that awful inscription on the shelf just to show the soldiers who come to check, but I cannot bring myself to use it for my precious child.

Our Beis Hamikdash has been captured and defiled; so many Jews are killed each day al kiddush Hashem. Oy, Ribono Shel Olam, how much longer can this continue?



plundered by the evil Greeks.

Finally, 4 days ago, at the Chanukas Habayis, Yochanan Kohen Gadol lit the menorah with the one little flask of pure oil that was found (it bore the seal of Yehoyada Hakohen from more than 1000 years ago!) Again, the joy was overshadowed by the fact that the menorah was from simple iron and wood, and by the knowledge that we would have to wait another week to light the menorah again, when more pure oil can be procured.

Imagine the joy when we discovered the flames still burning the next day! And they continue to burn - perhaps they will remain lit another few days, until the new oil is ready! I can stare at those miracle flames forever - the sight of it makes my heart sing. Blessed be Hashem, Who delivered us from the hands of the Greeks, and continues to perform miracles for His nation!

