The Dreidel

The source of the dreidel, the traditional spinner that is played with on Chanukah, is that at the time of the Syrian-Greek decrees against the Jews, one of the harshest decrees was prohibiting Jews to study the Holy Torah. Any Jew that was caught studying or teaching Torah was put to death. This of course did not deter the Jews to continue studying Torah, even when they were caught and imprisoned. The Jews came up with a creative way of avoiding being caught. They prepared spinners that when the enemy soldiers inspected the homes of the Jews or the cells of the prisoners; they found them spinning their dreidels. While “playing” with their spinners they would discuss Torah topics. The soldiers didn’t catch on that they were actually engaged in Torah study.

See more reasons for using Dreidels on Chanukah throughout the site.