



Hanukkah

Extended Code Unit 36 more spellings of m/oo/n

Hanukkah is a festival celebrated in the Jewish religion. Hanukkah celebrates an event that happened over two thousand years ago in the city of Jerusalem. At that time, the city was ruled by the Greeks and they decided to stop Jewish people from being able to worship their God. They turned the Jewish Temple into an altar to the Greek God Zeus in order to exclude the Jews. This act was very disrespectful and took away the freedom of the Jewish people to choose their own faith.

A group of Jews called the Macabees knew that this was unfair. Their anger grew and grew and, in the end, they rebelled against the Greeks. They freed Jerusalem, took back the Temple and built a new altar so that they could worship again.



Once the Temple was restored, they lit the menorah, an oil lamp, as an important religious symbol. They only had enough oil to burn the candle for just one day and they hadn't a clue how they would continue to keep the flame alight. Legend has it that the small amount of oil kept the lamp alight through eight whole days until more supplies of oil could be brought to the Temple. They attributed this to an act of God and called it a miracle. Now, Jewish people remember this miracle and the story of their Temple in Jerusalem each year with the celebration of Hanukkah.



The festival routine lasts eight days to commemorate the eight days that the menorah burned for. Each day, a new candle is lit on the Hanukkah. Blessings are made and songs are sung. Families cook traditional Jewish foods such as potato latkes (fried potato pancakes) and sufganiyah (jam donuts) too. Youths also play a traditional game called the dreidel, which is a four-sided spinning top and sing songs. Some families give gifts to the children too on each day of Hanukkah. Sounds like a hoot! Do you know anyone that celebrates Hanukkah?

