

Hanukkah

Hanukkah celebrates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem following the successful Jewish rebellion of the second century against the Seleucid Empire. The revolt, led by Judah the Maccabee, came in response to the Seleucids desecrating the Temple and outlawing Judaism.

Tradition holds that the small amount of oil remaining in the Temple upon its recapture miraculously burned for eight days. Thus, *Hanukkah* is celebrated for eight days and features the lighting of an eight-branched candelabrum, called a *hanukkiyah*. It is customary to eat oily fried foods, including *latkes* (potato pancakes). The giving of gifts is a relatively new tradition stemming from *Hanukkah's* proximity to Christmas.



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