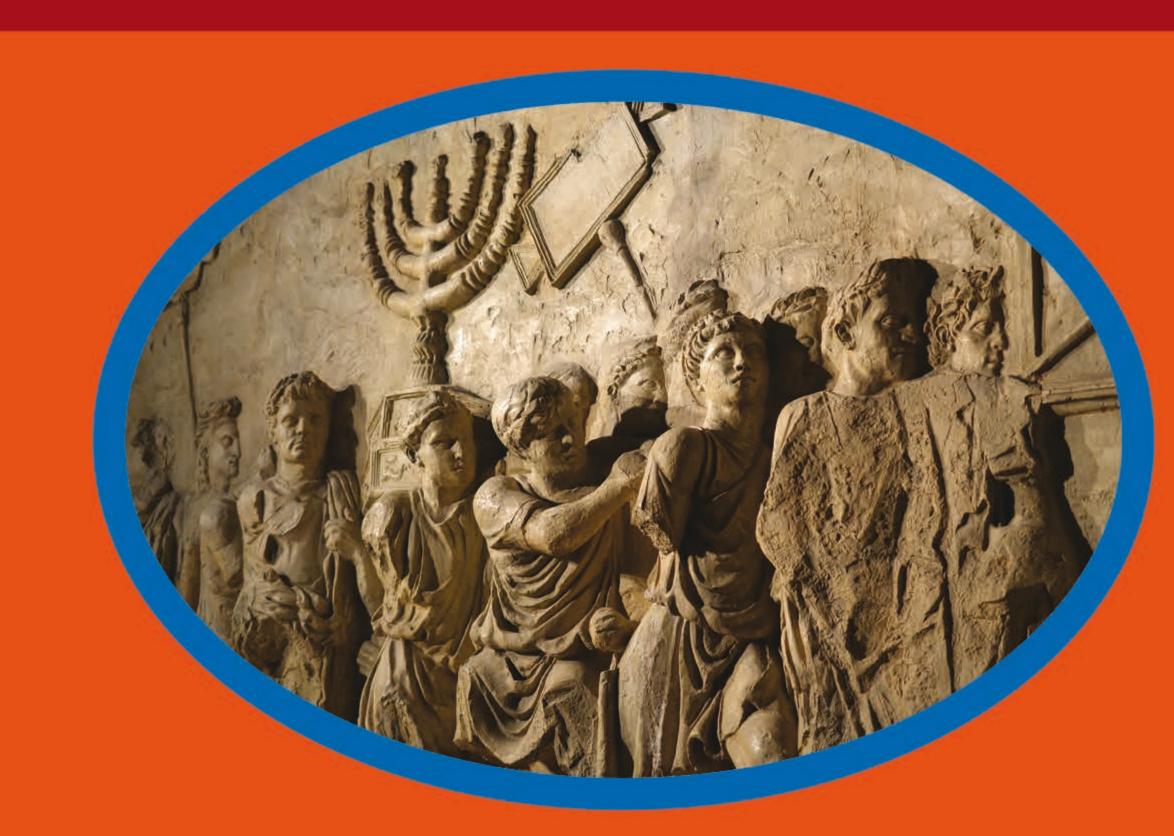






## CHANUKAH



The festival of *Chanukah* is celebrated for eight days in mid-winter. It remembers the story of Judah Maccabee and his followers, fighting the huge army of the Greek-Syrian King Antiochus, who would not allow the Jews to live a Jewish life.

After three years of war, the Maccabees surprisingly won the battle and took back the Jewish temple – a miracle. Before the temple could be used, it needed to be cleaned and repaired. The Jews wanted to relight the menorah – a large, eight-branched candlestick which was kept lit all the time, reminding the Jews of G-d being with them all the time.





They searched for the special oil to light the menorah but only one tiny jug was found. However, that oil burning kept burning for eight days – enough time for the Jews to bring more to the temple. A second miracle!

On Chanukah Jewish people light an eight-branched *chanukiah* to remember this story. A ninth candle is used to light the others, which is called the *shamash* (servant).

On the first night, one candle (or oil) is lit, on the second night two are lit, etc. The chanukiah is often displayed proudly in a window for all to see. In many families everyone lights their own chanukiah.





Traditional Chanukah food is anything that is cooked in oil ... Most popular are *latkes* (fried potato cakes) and doughnuts.

Traditionally Chanukah was a time of giving to charity, so parents gave their children a few coins as a festive gift, teaching them to give a little of that money to charity. Over time this has changed into gifts and eating chocolate money!

Many people also play the game of 'dreidel'

– a four-sided spinning top with the Hebrew
letters standing for the words 'nes gadol
hayah sham' – a great miracle happened
there. You win or lose sweets or chocolate
coins, depending on which letter it lands on!



