


Judaism: Celebrations and Festivals

Hanukkah



HANUKKAH

 WALT: Investigate the festival of Hanukkah and why it is important.



WHAT IS HANUKKAH?

- A very important festival for Jewish people called 'The Festival of Light'
- It lasts for 8 days
- Known as the 'Miracle of the Oil'



The Story of Hanukkah

■ The festival dates back to a time over 2500 years ago when Antiochus, a Syrian king, invaded Israel. He tried to make the Jewish people worship Greek gods.



The Story of Hanukkah

- A statue of Antiochus was erected in the Jewish temple and the Jews were ordered to bow down before him.
- The Ten Commandments **forbid** Jews to worship statues or idols and so they refused.



The Story of Hanukkah

- A small group of Jews called the **Maccabees** rebelled, and after a three year war they recaptured Jerusalem from the Syrians.
- But the temple was all but destroyed.



The Story of Hanukkah

- The Jews had to clean and repair the Temple, and when they were finished they rededicated it to God.
- They did this by lighting the lamp (Menorah) - a symbol of God's presence.



The Story of Hanukkah

■ The Menorah was lit once again but they only had enough oil for the lamp to burn for one day. They lit the lamp anyway.



The Story of Hanukkah

- Then a great miracle happened there – the oil burnt for 8 days! That gave them enough time to fetch more.
- From that time, each year Jews celebrate the festival of Hanukkah. The Festival of Lights




WHAT IS HANUKKAH?

 Hanukkah means 'dedication'. This was when the Jewish people dedicated their temple to God again.



Celebrating Hanukkah

 Hanukkah takes place in winter when the days are short. For each of the eight days of Hanukkah, candles are lit in Jewish homes. The special candle stick is called a Menorah.



MENORAH



Celebrating Hanukkah

On the first night of the festival the first candle is lit, on the second night two candles are lit and so on until by the eighth night all eight candles are alight.

The candles are lit from a separate candle. Special blessings and prayers are said before and after the candles are lit.



Celebrating Hanukkah

- Jewish people usually share this festival with their family, and children especially have a lot of fun.
- During Hanukkah children receive small presents of money. They often get chocolate money too! This gift is called 'gelt', the Yiddish word for money.



Celebrating Hanukkah

- During Hanukkah, while the candles are burning, Jewish people enjoy themselves and do not work.
- One way in which people enjoy themselves is to eat special foods, particularly fried foods.



Celebrating Hanukkah

- Traditional foods eaten at this time are doughnuts and special potato pancakes called Latkes.
- Latkes and doughnuts are eaten because oil is used when making these foods and oil is a symbol of the miracle of the first Hanukkah.



A FESTIVAL GAME- DREIDEL

- According to legend, the game of dreidel began when the Jews were ruled by the Syrians. The Jews were not allowed to study the Torah nor observe Jewish holidays.



A FESTIVAL GAME- DREIDEL

- They did so in secret. When they read the Torah or prayed they kept dreidels in their pockets.
- If the enemy came near they quickly hid their books and began to play dreidel. It then looked as if they were simply playing a game with a spinning top.



A FESTIVAL GAME- DREIDEL

- Dreidel is a spinning top with four sides. Each side is marked with a Hebrew letter.
- The game is usually played for a pot of raisins or chocolate coins.



Images associated with Hanukkah



TASK

Design your own Hanukkah card.
Remember to use some of the Jewish symbols.

If you finish, write a paragraph explaining why Hanukkah is important to Jewish people.

