HANUKKAH IN 300 WORDS
ESTEE MOSKOVITZ

Hanukah is a Jewish holiday, celebrated by Jewish people.

Hanukah is a happy holiday that lasts 8 days (and nights) and celebrates religious freedom. The holiday is connected to something that happened a long time ago in the holy temple in Jerusalem, when a King made it against the law for Jewish people to practice the religion or pray the way they wanted to pray.

A group of Jewish people called the Maccabees successfully took back the Temple from evil King, but they were really sad when they discovered that the King had not taken care of their holy space it was filled with trash and idols to the King's religion.

When the Maccabees were cleaning the Temple, they found only enough holy oil to light the menorah (lamp in the temple) for one day – but miraculously, that small amount of oil lasted for eight days, which is exactly how long it took to get new oil.

They lit the menorah and rededicated the Temple and made it holy again. That's where the word "Hanukkah" comes from, it means "dedication," and it comes from the moment when the Temple made holy again for the Jewish people. That's why the holiday is called Hanukkah – the holiday of dedication.

Every year during Hanukkah, Jews light menorahs, for eight days to remember the miracles that happened long ago and to share the message that everyone should be free to practice their religion the way they want, where they want.

Other things Jewish people do during Hanukah is eat foods made with oil (especially doughnuts and potato pancakes known as latkes) and playing a game called dreidel.

One other thing we want to say, Hanukkah is NOT the Jewish Christmas, even though the holidays happen around the same time of year they are totally different holidays about totally different things.