

revolt was raised by Mattathias and his five sons, among whom Judah towered in military prowess and courage. "Whoever is for the Lord, follow me," the aged leader proclaimed. Loyal Jews answered the call. The battle for religious freedom had begun.

Three factors helped bring miraculous victory to the vastly outnumbered Jewish forces of Judah Maccabee and his brothers. They were fighting on "home ground" where they knew intimately every cave, rock and path. Antiochus, in his pride, refused to take the revolt seriously, until it was too late. Lastly and most significantly, they fought with the reckless desperation of men who knew the high stakes involved. The alternative to victory was the disappearance of Judaism. They won because they knew they dared not lose. To the Jewish people thus goes the glory of waging and winning the first war in history for the precious right of religious freedom.

The victorious Jews symbolized their triumph by cleansing the Temple and rededicating it exactly three years after its defilement. Sacrifices were offered and lights were kindled. This celebration lasted for eight joyous days and it was decreed that an eight-day festival, beginning with the 25th of Kislev, be observed annually.

Chanukah is, therefore, a gay festival. It is marked by the lighting of candles in the home, beginning with one candle on the first night and adding one each successive night of the holiday. Their lighting is accompanied by blessings and followed by song. Special prayers of praise and thanksgiving-hymns are recited at every service. Among the many Chanukah songs, perhaps the most popular is the MAOZ TZUR which is widely sung both in the Hebrew version and in its English form as "Rock of Ages".

On the menu of these days, LATKES (potato pancakes) are prominently featured. The holiday is also marked by the giving of gifts. Of particular attractiveness to children is the HANUKKAH GELT which they have been encouraged to expect from their relatives. More enterprising youngsters try their luck at a game of DREIDEL.

A MESSAGE TO ALL MEN: While Jews alone celebrate Chanukah, its meaning and its message are charged with deep significance for all freedomloving men everywhere.

It recalls the first struggle in written history when man fought not for material possessions and for land but for ideals, especially the ideal of human liberty. It is thus a powerful inspiration for all people everywhere to resist tyranny.