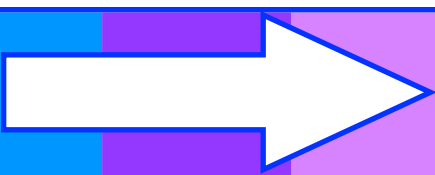


# Jewish Celebrations

Learning Objective:

To find out about the festival of Hanukkah.



**What would you do if you believed something was wrong but you were forced to do it anyway?**



**What if  
your teacher told you to be  
mean to your parents? Would  
you do it?**

**What if  
someone ordered you to hit  
someone in the playground.  
Would you do it?**



Today we are going to be finding out about the Jewish festival of Hanukkah. It is the story of Jewish people who refused to go against their beliefs, even though they faced death if they refused.

**Have you heard this story before? Let's read it together...**



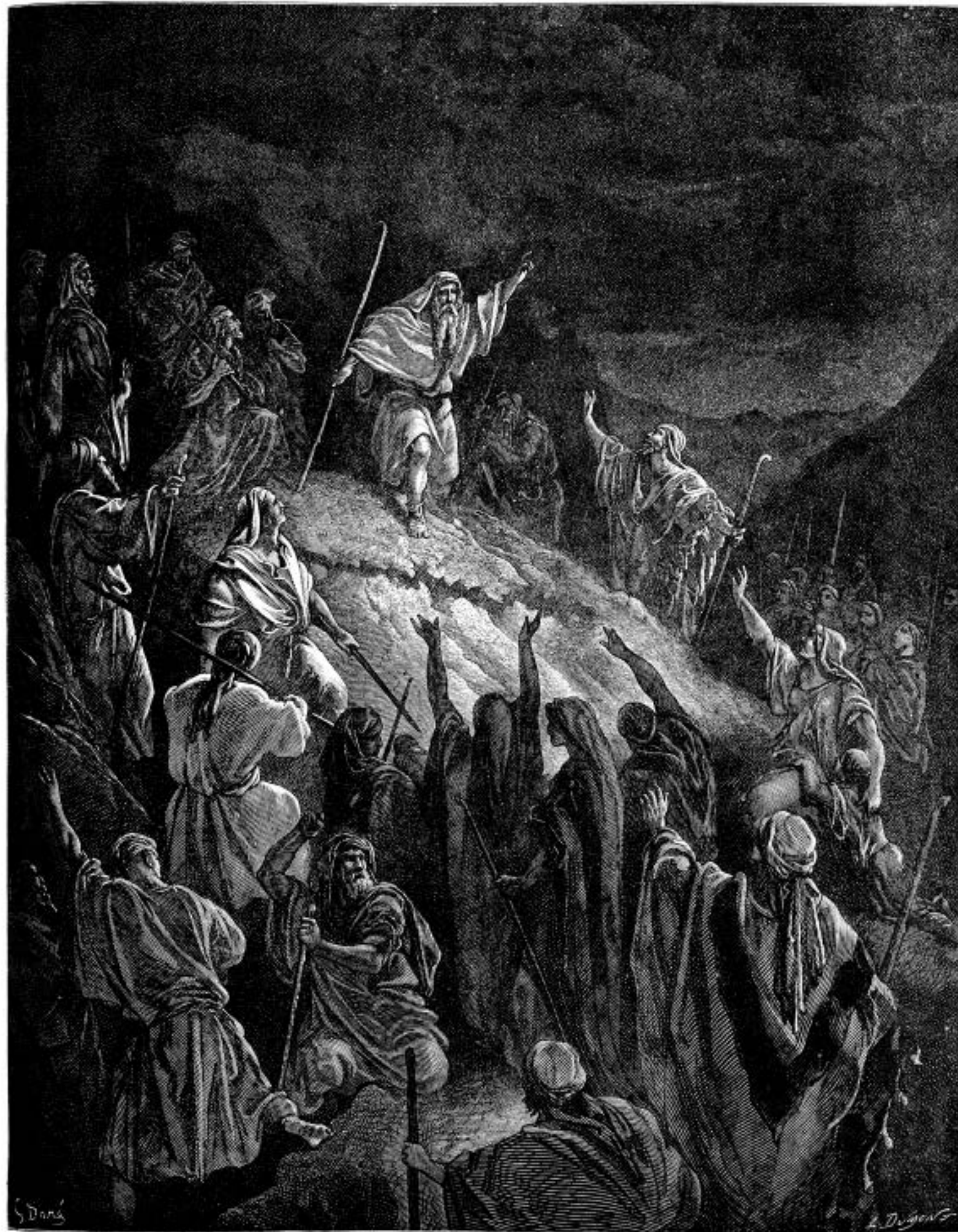


More than two thousand years ago, there were Jews living in Syria who were under the rule of Antiochus, a Greek king. Antiochus didn't like the Jews - he wanted to move them away from their own beliefs and make them fit in with Greek beliefs.

Antiochus took over the Jewish temple and put statues of Greek gods inside. He made the Jews bow down and worship these gods. If they didn't, they were killed. The Jews hated having to bow down before other gods as it goes against God's commandments to them.







MATTATHIAS APPEALING TO THE JEWISH REFUGEES.

There was a man called Mattathias who had five brave sons. These men, the Maccabees, decided that they weren't going to go along with the commands of Antiochus any longer. Mattathias and his sons gathered a small Jewish army to rebel against the Greeks. They managed to defeat Antiochus and get their temple back - but there was a problem. Jewish temples always have a special lamp burning called the "Eternal Light". This is an oil lamp that always stays lit and doesn't go out. By the time the Maccabees got the temple back, there was only enough oil left for one night.



They lit the lamp anyway and then a miracle occurred! The lamp stayed lit for eight whole days which was enough time for the Maccabees to make more oil!



**During the eight-day festival of Hanukkah, Jews remember the Miracle of Oil which made the light shine for eight days. They remember the bravery of the Maccabees and how God was looking after them.**





One of the most important parts of the Hanukkah festival is the menorah (candlestick). Every night during Hanukkah, one more candle is lit until all eight have been lit. Hanukkah menorahs have eight candles - one for each day and one to light the others.

**A menorah for Hanukkah is called a hanukkiyah!**





During Hanukkah, Jewish families enjoy eating fried foods. Foods fried in oil remind them of the oil that lasted for eight whole days.



**These fried potato latkes are eaten during Hanukkah.**

**Jam doughnuts and other fritters are also eaten. Yummy!**





During Hanukkah, families give each other gifts, play games together and enjoy spending time together. The most popular and traditional Hanukkah game is the dreidel. A dreidel is a spinning top. Each player has some tokens (these can be sweets, raisins, counters or anything else) and a dreidel. You spin the dreidel and have to give away or take tokens, depending where the dreidel falls.



On each of the four sides of the dreidel is a Hebrew letter - the names of these letters are nun, gimmel, hey and pey. These are the first letters of the words 'Nes gadol hayah poh' which means 'A great miracle happened here'.



**What miracle  
do you think  
they are  
referring to?**