

FOCUS

REINVENTING CHANUKAH



You might ask: why are Jews reinventing Chanukah in 2008, more than two thousand years since the Maccabean victory in 164 B.C.E.?

The answer: we Jews have been reinventing Chanukah since its beginnings. The first Chanukah observance was improvised, not ordained in the Torah. The story of the miraculous oil lamp that burned for eight days was invented some 600 years *after* the Maccabees recaptured and repurified the Temple. And had American Jews not put a new spin on Chanukah in the late 19th century, we might not be celebrating it today—and reinventing it again and again. ➤

