

CHANUKAH - חנוכה

FEAST OF DEDICATION

Can Christians Celebrate Chanukah?

CHANUKAH

- John 10:22
- Meaning: Dedication or Consecration
- Terms:
 - Feast of Dedication
 - Festival of Lights (Hag Haorim)
- Hillel versus Shammai (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanukkah>)
 - The name "Hanukkah" derives from the Hebrew verb "חנך", meaning "to dedicate". On Hanukkah, the Maccabean Jews regained control of Jerusalem and rededicated the Temple.
 - The name can be broken down into they rested [on the] twenty-fifth", referring to the fact that the Jews ceased fighting on the 25th day of Kislev, the day on which the holiday begins.
 - Hanukkah is also the Hebrew acronym for "Eight candles, and the halakha is like the House of Hillel". This is a reference to the disagreement between two rabbinical schools of thought — the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai — on the proper order in which to light the Hanukkah flames. Shammai opined that eight candles should be lit on the first night, seven on the second night, and so on down to one on the last night (because the miracle was greatest on the first day). Hillel argued in favor of starting with one candle and lighting an additional one every night, up to eight on the eighth night (because the miracle grew in greatness each day). Jewish law adopted the position of Hillel.

HISTORY

- Daniel 8:9-14, 21-22 & 11:21-35
- Greek Worldview vs. Hebraic Worldview
 - Greek: Human supremacy (god in image of man)
 - Hebraic: God's supremacy (man in image of God)

History (cont.)

- 198 BCE: Armies of the Seleucid King Antiochus III (Antiochus the Great) oust Ptolemy V from Judea and Samaria.
- 175 BCE: Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) ascends the Seleucid throne. [Theos Epiphanes (God Manifest) or Epimanes (The Mad One)]
- 168 BCE: Under the reign of Antiochus IV, the Temple is looted, Jews are massacred, and Judaism is outlawed.
 - Tactics against the Jewish people: Torah Study, Sabbath Observance, Circumcision, Family Values, New Month Celebrations

History (cont.)

- 167 BCE: Antiochus orders an altar to Zeus erected in the Temple. Mattathias, and his five sons John, Simon, Eleazar, Jonathan, and Judah lead a rebellion against Antiochus. Judah becomes known as Judah Maccabe (Judah The Hammer).
- 166 BCE: Mattathias dies, and Judah takes his place as leader. The Hasmonean Jewish Kingdom begins; It lasts until 63 BCE
- 164 BCE: The Jewish revolt against the Seleucid monarchy is successful. The Temple is liberated and rededicated (Hanukkah).

History (cont.)

- Temple Dedication: Miracle of the Oil
- Sources:
 - Daniel
 - 1st & 2nd Maccabees
 - Talmud: Shabbat 21

TRADITIONS

- Dates : 25 Kislev
- Chanukia
 - 9 Branches
 - Samash Candle: Servant Candle
- Gifts & Games
 - Dreidal
 - נס גדול היה שם (*Nes Gadol Haya Sham*, "A great miracle happened there")
 - נ ([Nun](#)), ג ([Gimel](#)), ה ([Hey](#)), ש ([Shin](#))
 - Gelt: Yiddish for “money”

Traditions (cont.)

- Foods
 - Latkes - לאטקע Potato Pancakes
 - Sufganiyot – סופגניה (jelly donuts- Israeli Jews)

SIGNIFICANCE

- Torah Readings
 - Offerings & Menorah: Numbers 7:1 – 8:4
 - Story of Joseph: Genesis 37:1 – 40:23
- Symbolic of Messiah
 - Light of the World: John 1:4-14 & Isaiah 9:2
 - Messiah Son of Joseph (Mashiach ben Yosef)
 - Luke 1: 26-33; Zechariah 9:9; Isaiah 53:6-7;
Matthew 27:50-51; Hebrews 6:19-20 & 10:19-22

APPLICATION

- Hanukkah Haggadah: “The purpose of the celebration of Hanukkah is to welcome the Messiah. Peace is the Messiah.”
 - Luke 2:14 – “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”
- Lights in the World:
 - Philippians 2:14-16 & 1 Thessalonians 5:4-6
- Ambassadors for Christ: 2nd Corinthians 5:20

Application (cont.)

- What Are We to Do in *Such a Time as This*?
 - Story of Chanukah:
 - Standing for God and against darkness (Ephesians 5:8-21)
 - Spiritual transformation (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Can Christians Celebrate Chanukah? YES!