

Beulah Heights University

The Festival of Hanukkah

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By

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Victories are occasions that merit celebrations. If in the secular world they are practiced, then we can ask ourselves why it would be problematic if as Christians we celebrate miracles!

Jimmy's grandson worked and practiced hard on the basketball team. At 16 years old he was selected to represent his school. Nationally. Prior to this many people thought and said with all the competition from other players it was virtually impossible for this to happen, but God According to Jewish history, they were experiencing some very difficult times. " Around 200 B.C., Judea—also known as the Land of Israel—came under the control of Antiochus III, the Seleucid king of Syria, who allowed the Jews who lived there to continue practicing their religion. His son, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, proved less benevolent: Ancient sources recount that he outlawed the Jewish religion and ordered the Jews to worship Greek gods. In 168 B.C., his soldiers descended upon Jerusalem, massacring thousands of people and desecrating the city's holy Second Temple by erecting an altar to Zeus and sacrificing pigs within its sacred walls."

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/hanukkah> (Accessed Feb. 25, 2020)

When one is bullied and manipulated there will come the time when the decision is to retaliate regardless of how end will be. Therefore the Jews felt the time came so they revolted. In the midst of their revolution they needed light for eight days but unfortunately they only had oil in one lamp, which miraculously lasted for the eight days allowing them to be victorious over their enemy. "Hanukkah is the Jewish Festival of Lights and it remembers the rededication of the second Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, in Israel. This happened in the 160s BCE/BC (before Jesus was born). (Hanukkah is the Hebrew and Aramaic word for 'dedication'.) Hanukkah lasts for eight days and starts on the eve of the Kislev 25, the month in the Jewish calendar that occurs at about the same time as December. Because the Jewish calendar is lunar (it uses the moon for its

dates), Kislev can happen from late November to late December”.

<https://www.whychristmas.com/customhanukkah.shtm>

Hanukkah celebration was based on their military successes but because of in house betrayal by the Maccabees descendants who violated their own Jewish law and tradition that caused great devastation and thousands of lives, Rome was now in full control of Israel. In AD. 68-70 and again in A.D. 133-135 the Jews launched passionate revolts to rid their land of this foreign and oppressing power.

War no longer seemed an effective solution to the Jews’ tribulations on the stage of history.

In response, a new ideology deemphasized the idea that Jews should or could change their destiny through military action. What was required, rabbis asserted, was not battle but perfect observance of God’s moral and ritual law. This would lead to God’s intervention in history to restore the Jewish people’s control over their own land and destiny.

Hanukkah celebrated God’s miracle.

This is symbolized by the kindling of an eight-branched candelabra (“Menorah” or “Hanukkah”), with one candle lit on the holiday’s first night and an additional candle added each night until, on the final night of the festival, all eight branches are lit. The ninth candle in the Hanukkah is used to light the other. <https://theconversation.com/hanukkahs-true-meaning-is-about-jewish-survival-88225> (Accessed Feb. 25, 2020.)

Yes it is a Christian observance. Although the Jews never accepted Jesus as the Son of God that does not make Jesus less than who he is. As Christians we believe Jesus when he said he is

in the Father and the Father is in him John 14: 9, Let us make man Genesis 1: 26-28. The Jews have realized this and regard Hanakkuh as a miracle.

Hanukkah is a victorious celebration for the Jewish community. It was later revised by the Rabbis to be a celebration of a miracle from God to be symbolized by the observance by God's moral and ritual law. As Christians when we consider the confrontation of Jesus and Nicodemus, where as a teacher of the Jews his lack of knowledge about spirituality (John 3: 1-15, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16) and (Galatians 3: 28), that states that there is neither Jew nor Gentile... qualify us to observe and celebrate God's miracles whether you are a Jew or a Christian. Christmas is celebration for all God's children and like Christmas, Hanukkah is celebration for all God's children.

Bibliography

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1. <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/hanukkah> (Accessed Feb. 25, 2020)
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