

A photograph of nine lit Hanukkah candles in a menorah. The candles are arranged in a row, with the central candle being the tallest and tallest. The flames are bright yellow and orange, casting a warm glow. The background is dark, making the candles stand out. The text "Hanukkah" is written in white, and "Beauty and Prophecy" is written in blue below it.

Hanukkah

Beauty and Prophecy

Hanukkah

- Begins 25th of Kislev on Hebrew calendar, late November - mid December on Gregorian calendar.
- 2016, begins sunset on Saturday, December 24 (*through sunset on Sunday, January 1*)
- Hanukkah (*also Chanukkah*) observed for 8 days, supposedly to celebrate miracle of oil that burned for 8 days in menorah in Temple, while desecrated Temple cleansed and re-dedicated.
- Word “Hanukkah” חנוכה found often in scripture, mostly relating to Tabernacle or Temple, means **consecration, or dedication (dedicating)**

Hanukkah

- Not commanded as a Sabbath, or day of rest, so no restrictions or required activities.
- Considered a **joyful day**, marks freedom and God's light to the world in darkness.
- About ***“supposedly...”*** Story about oil burning 8 days by ***“tradition” only*** (*we've seen how dangerous “tradition” can be!*). Do not have any proof oil burned full 8 days (*doesn't mean it didn't!*).
- Real meaning in **re-dedication of Temple**, and **overall end-times prophetic implications.**

Hanukkah

Following note about the oil is from website:

<http://www.hebrew4christians.com>

A Wintertime Sukkot?

Interestingly, the story [of the oil burning for 8 days] derives from extra-biblical literature, as well as from the Apocrypha (Books of the Maccabees), except that there is no mention of the oil nor of the miracle of the oil in these sources. Only until we reach the time of the Gemara (the later part of the Talmud that was commentary on the Mishnah, completed around 500 AD) do we hear anything about the miracle of the oil in connection with the rededication of the Temple.

Hanukkah

This has led some Jewish scholars to suggest that perhaps Chanukah was originally intended to be a later celebration of Sukkot, generally considered to be the most important of all the Jewish holidays, which the Hasmoneans [Jews] did not have a chance to celebrate during their warfare with the Syrians.



Hanukkah

Traditionally (*not Biblically*), **Hanukkah celebrated with:**

- Lighting of Hanukkah menorah (*hanukkiyah*) every day. Menorah in the Temple is **only 7-branched**, but Hanukkah menorah has 9 branches. 8 branches to represent 8 days of miraculous oil supply, and one to light others, called the **Servant** (*Shamash*) candle.
- Each day of Hanukkah another candle lighted, until all 8 (*9, including the Shamash*) are burning. Represents growing light of God over darkness in the world.
- Traditional to place hanukkiyah in a window for the world to see this light.



Hanukkah

Other traditions include:

- Eating fried foods like fried chicken, potato latkes, donuts, other fried foods
- Giving small gifts each day of Hanukkah
- Parties, family and friends celebrations, decorations, singing traditional songs
- Dreidel games

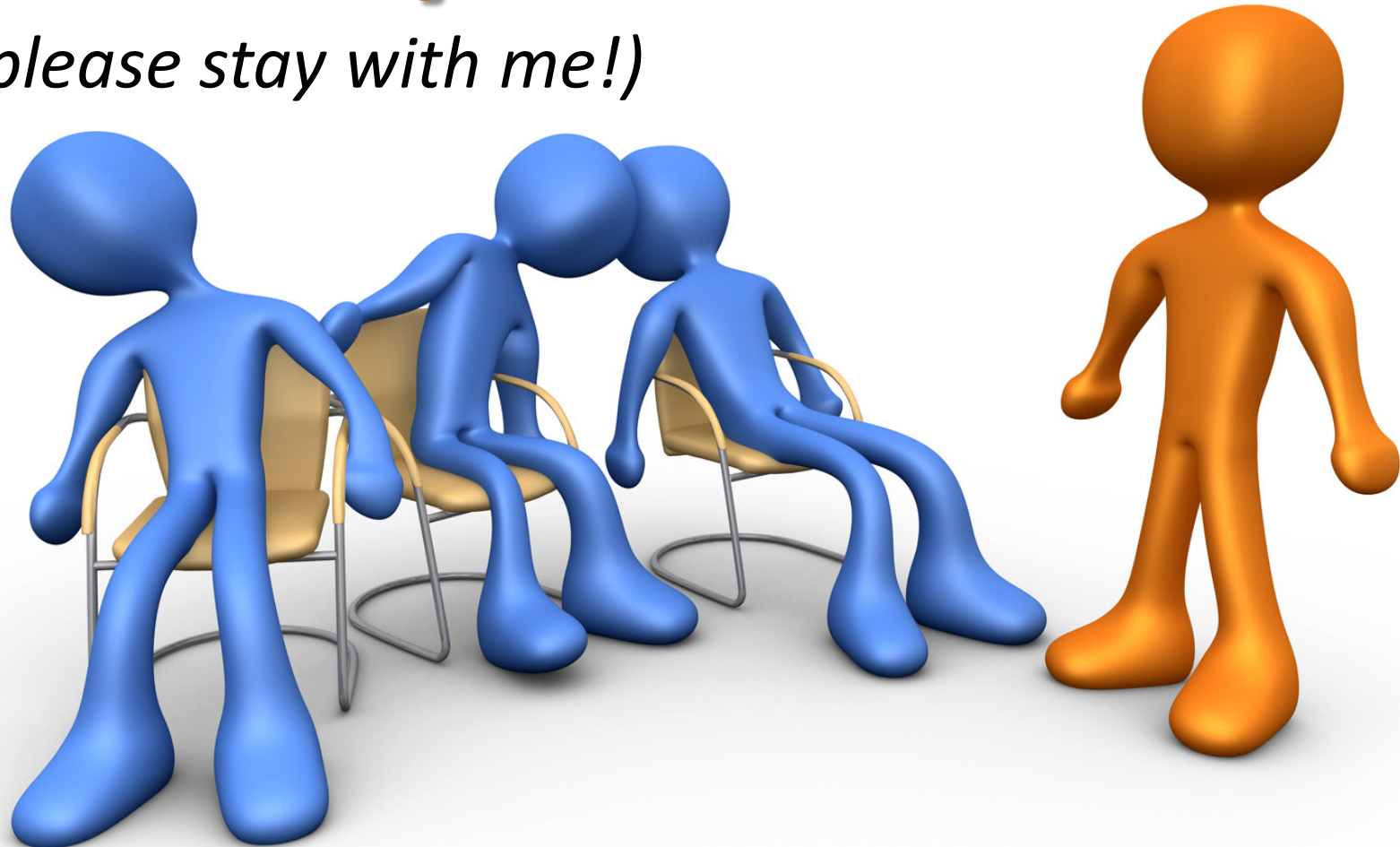


But there is so much more to Hanukkah every believer needs to know...

Hanukkah

Understanding the significance of Hanukkah
requires a **history lesson....**

(I know, but please stay with me!)



Hanukkah History Lesson

- Begins with Israel in bondage in Egypt... **cries out to Yahweh** for deliverance
- God hears cries for help, **delivers** through Moses
- Shapes them into a **nation** in wilderness, gives His Law, Feasts, etc.
- Brings them into **Promised Land**, told to conquer and cleanse the land
- **12 tribes spread out** to God-apportioned land, God governs through Judges, but people do not fully purge land of paganism, gradually seeps in.



Hanukkah History Lesson

- People **whine and complain**, want king, not judges
- God allows this, but not His choice for them
- Kings Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam (*united kingdom*)
- *United kingdom splits into 2 kingdoms, northern 10 tribes, called “Israel” southern 2 tribes called “Judah” (where term “Jews” comes from)*
- Northern kingdom (Israel) increasingly wicked, God sends **Assyrians** to conquer/scatter (722 BC)
- **Judah** continues, also worsening rebellion, wickedness, some good kings, mostly bad

History Lesson *Hanukkah*

- God sends **Babylonians** (who conquered Assyrians) to conquer Judah, send them into 70-year captivity in Babylon (606 BC)
- Begins “**times of the Gentiles**”
- Babylon conquered by Medes and Persians, **Persian Empire** (539 BC)
- Persians conquered by Greeks, Alexander the Great, **Greek Empire** (333 BC)



Hanukkah History Lesson

- Alexander allows people to worship own gods, introduced Greek thinking/culture – **Hellenization**, world becomes “Greek-ized”
- Alexander dies, kingdom left to 4 generals
Lysimachus rules Asia Minor/Europe; Cassander rules Macedonia; Ptolemy Egypt and Seleucus the Middle East.
- **Seleucus is the focus of this lesson.**

Hanukkah

- Becomes **Seleucid dynasty**, descendant **Antiochus Epiphanes** becomes ruler of region.
- Subject of great deal of Biblical prophecy, Daniel 11, kings of north (*Antiochus/Seleucid kings*) and kings of south (*Ptolemy, Egypt*).
- Also perfectly fulfilled prophecies regarding desecration of Temple and persecution of Jews.
(All this happens after close of OT, 2nd century BC)
- We **finally get to the event** at the center of Hanukkah...



Hanukkah History Lesson

- Under Antiochus, Jews forbidden to practice religion. No celebrating feasts, no studying Torah, no sacrifices, no circumcising, etc.
- Antiochus' goal to become **“one world” ruler, with one world religion.** Everything aimed at this end.
- Put **idol to Zeus** (sun god) in Temple, made Jewish priests slaughter pigs in sacrifice to Zeus (*pigs unclean*).
- Jews persecuted, boiled in oil, etc. Fulfillment of Daniel's prophecies of **“abomination that causes desolation.”** Started around 167 BC...and lasted 3 ½ years.... (*this should sound familiar!*)

Hanukkah History Lesson

- 2 groups opposed Antiochus: **Maccabees (family)**, and the **Hassidim** (Hassidic Jews) ultra orthodox (*later became Pharisees of Jesus' time*). Hassidim (ultra-orthodox) still around today.
- United efforts, “guerilla warfare,” ultimately overthrew Antiochus’ army, ran them out of town. **(164 BC)**. Antiochus also died of “mysterious illness” same year. *(HIS-story!)*
- Jews cleansed Temple, restored worship, *traditional Judaism*, practice and study of Torah, and all things Jewish.

Hanukkah

- Began “Hasmonean” era for 100 years (Israel self-governed), until Rome rolled in 63 BC.
- Later these events (*cleansing and rededication of the Temple – the celebration was called the **Feast of Dedication**, hence the name “Hanukkah” which means dedication*) were declared by Rabbis as a commanded celebration every year, for 8 days

Hanukkah

- **Why 8 days?** Most say it's about supply of oil needed to keep menorah burning in Temple. Greeks polluted that oil, only about 1-day supply left, but *supposedly* miraculously burned for 8 days until another supply could be made and consecrated according to Torah.
- Actual historical event of Hanukkah found in books of the Maccabees, in **Apocrypha**. (*and other non-biblical historical texts*)

Hanukkah

- Interestingly, absolutely no mention of oil miracle here. **No written historical record to support event about the oil.** But there is plenty of historical record to support actual desecration and subsequent cleansing and rededication of Temple, and persecution of the Jews by Antiochus.
- First mention of “miracle of the oil” found over 600 years later, around 500 AD. Never been proven, thought to be **merely a Rabbinical tradition.**



Hanukkah

- **As often happens, we have lost sight of real meaning of this holiday. (*sound familiar??*)**
- **Why 8-day celebration?** (*if not the oil??*)
- Under Antiochus, *Jews could not celebrate feasts.*
- After Antiochus defeated, and Temple rededicated, since Jews would not celebrate *military events (because involved deaths of people, made in God's image)*, instead they **celebrated this time as the feast they could not celebrate for almost 4 years - Sukkot, last and most glorious, a feast lasting 8 days.**

Hanukkah

- Feasts are God's prophetic calendar. Sukkot likely represents the Millennial Kingdom, and rule of God on earth during those 1000 years, from Temple in Jerusalem (Revelation 20, Isaiah, etc.).
- Hanukkah is mentioned in NT, in John 10:22-23... *"Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch."*
- **Jesus observed this "feast,"** giving it validity, even though not mentioned anywhere else in accepted canon of God's Word. Events it celebrates happened after the close of the OT, before NT opens (*references in Apocrypha*).

Hanukkah

- John makes point of providing *specific time*, the Feast of Dedication – in winter – **Jesus was in Jerusalem to celebrate this feast.** He did not spend a lot of time in Jerusalem. Most of His ministry outside city because of resistance by Jews
- **But He made a point of attending** not only the ordained feasts of God, *but also this one.* **Why?**
He wanted to call attention to it.
- Perhaps He wanted us to look carefully at what this feast means, and to see that ***He is the ultimate fulfillment*** to its prophetic nature...

Hanukkah

*but there's
more to it
than that...*
(as usual!)



Hanukkah

**So, what is the story
of Hanukkah?**

**Why is it important
for us?**

*From the beginning...
in 10 steps*



Hanukkah

1. **God desires to dwell with His people**, *sin separates* them, so He told them to build a dwelling place for Him among them (Tabernacle)
2. **God's people were disobedient** and rebellious.
3. **God disciplines** (*those He loves!*) sends them into worldly bondage (Babylonian Empire, then Greek Empire, **Antiochus Epiphanes** – *eventually Roman Empire at time of Yeshua*)
4. **God's people persecuted**, practice of faith forbidden

Hanukkah

5. **God's dwelling place desecrated** (*abomination of desolation*)
6. **"One world religion"** promoted by Antiochus
7. Events occurred for **3½ years** (167 – 164 BC)
8. True believers stand up for truth, fight back
9. **God intervenes**, raises up *deliverers*, "crushes" enemy (*name Maccabee = "hammer"*)
10. **Believers, with God's help, cleanse Temple**, rededicated to God to welcome Him again (*He once again dwells with His People.*)

Hanukkah

When viewed in this way,
**THE STORY OF HANUKKAH IS ESSENTIALLY
THE STORY OF GOD'S ENTIRE PLAN OF
REDEMPTION.**

All history can be summed up in this way!
Hanukkah does not just celebrate one
victory over evil, but Yeshua's entire
sacrifice and victory over the evil one, once
and for all time and for all people.

Hanukkah

But this event also has **specific prophetic application and *meaning...and should sound familiar...***

- Prophetically, fulfillment of first “**abomination of desolation,**” under Antiochus Epiphanes, as Daniel predicted in chapter 11.
- As with *many* prophecies, both a “near” (*local, early*) fulfillment that becomes a type for a later fulfillment, a “far” (*later, end times*) fulfillment. **Hanukkah celebrates near fulfillment under Antiochus in 164 BC, but also points to a far fulfillment in the future, at the end of time.**

Hanukkah

The exact same thing
will happen again,
at end of time.

Hanukkah

- Comes from prophecies from Daniel, and books of 2 Thessalonians and Revelation. (Daniel 11....)

“... no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.... “So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹ And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation. ³² Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

Hanukkah

³³ And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. ³⁴ Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue ³⁵ And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time. ³⁶ "Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies...

Hanukkah

...against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. ³⁷ He shall regard neither the God [or gods] of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. ³⁸ But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. ³⁹ Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.”

Hanukkah

- Passage covers **both** near (local) fulfillment at time of Antiochus Epiphanes, as well as far fulfillment that occurs at end of time.
- Covers specific near events, but also casts its prophecies well into future at end of time. 2 Thessalonians and Revelation all deal with **far/end time**, fulfillment. *(in a moment...)*
- Jesus made reference to another event which He also referenced with the words ***“abomination of desolation.”*** (Matthew 24:15-22.)

Hanukkah

“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”

Hanukkah

- If “abomination of desolation” that Daniel spoke of had already happened with Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 BC, **what was Jesus referencing?**
- **Something still in future.** Something at “end of time.”
- We know this because Jesus said it would happen as Daniel described it, and Jesus was speaking almost 200 years ***after the first abomination of desecration*** in 164 BC.
- Person **at center of evil** is Antiochus Epiphanes. Throughout Daniel, he is “type” (*representative, symbol*) for end times “antichrist.”

Hanukkah

- The desecration he (Antiochus) facilitated then will happen again, under the final world ruler (antichrist).

“Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, ² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. ³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

Hanukkah

⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶ And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ...

Hanukkah

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

STRONG DELUSION

¹¹ And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹² that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
(2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

Hanukkah

- Seems that Hanukkah is a dress rehearsal for coming world events under antichrist, who also promotes “one world government” and will also desecrate the Temple and persecute people of God.
- Conditions under Antiochus were horrible, but, **“you ain’t seen nothin’ yet.”** When antichrist begins rule, conditions will be beyond our comprehension.
- Events under Antiochus Epiphanes lasted 3½ years, a number clearly spelled out in Daniel and Revelation, as **the “great tribulation”** that final time period Jesus also spoke of.

Hanukkah

- While Hanukkah is celebrated with joy as God overcame darkness with His light, it is also a forecasting of horrors to come to completely fulfill this prophetic event.
- Like then, God will send His Deliverer, the Anointed One Jesus, to end all darkness, crush all rebellion, and restore fellowship with man.

Hanukkah

Hanukkah (*cleansing/dedication*), serves **two big purposes**, one physical, one spiritual:

1. Reminder that what happened then will happen again at the end of time following the same pattern, with the same outcome –
 - Completely evil enemy-inspired final world ruler will rise and persecute God's people and desecrate Temple again.
 - God will crush enemy completely, "Temple" (*literal temple in Jerusalem yet to be rebuilt, or apply spiritually to believers as "Temple of the Holy Spirit"*) will be cleansed, (*believers will be changed with incorruptible bodies*), and dedicated to God.

Hanukkah

- Because we know what happened with the first fulfillment, we can be prepared as we stand guard and watch what is happening around us.
 - We are people of the day, not night. We are not in darkness, *nor are we ignorant.* We are to **know** about these things, **watch** for these things, **be prepared** for these things.
2. Call to cleanse our temples and rededicate them to God. Jesus is Light of the World, and so are we. He said so. We cannot shine the light of truth in the world until our Temples are cleaned out.

Hanukkah



The Holy Spirit shows us how to get clean and rekindle our lamps of truth. This is a great personal spiritual activity for us to honor this celebration and rededicate our Temples to Him.

Hanukkah

- Remember that **Hanukkah is essentially the entire story of redemption and restoration.**
- Celebrate the 8 days of Hanukkah as a way to look forward to the return of Yeshua and His Kingdom on earth in the Temple at Jerusalem.
- The 8-day feast of Sukkot (*Feast of Tabernacles, including the “Eighth Day” of Shemini Atzeret*) is the final feast in the 7-feast cycle, and represents the Millennial Kingdom. The number 8 in scripture signifies “new beginnings.” (*Some think this is what was celebrated at original cleansing of the Temple*)

Hanukkah

- Celebrate that this first event in 164 BC was a **“dress rehearsal”** for another event, *exactly the same*, when final world ruler will desecrate the Temple, set himself up as God, and persecute saints. *We don't celebrate the horrors, but **God's faithfulness to His Word.***
- As before, God will crush the resistance, doom the enemy, and rededicate the current Temple (*the saints!*) to Himself for all eternity. We will also be cleansed, with new *incorrupt* bodies.



Hanukkah

- Celebrate by **cleansing your own Temples**. You are the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and YOU are the Light of the World right now.
- **Does your light shine brightly, or is it dimmed by sin? What needs cleansing in your life today? Do you need to rededicate your Temple to God?**
- Celebrate that you are part of the Vine. He is the vine, we are the branches. We are forever joined to Him.



Hanukkah



- He is the Light in the darkness of this world.
- **He told us WE are also the Light of the World.**
- We take that Light wherever we go.
- We eagerly look forward to our reunion with Him, and His return as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.