

HOW CHRISTIANS CAN COMMEMORATE CHANUKAH

The Feast of Dedication

History and Meaning



In the 2nd century BCE, Antiochus IV and the Greeks invaded Israel. They desecrated the Temple, forbade Jewish worship, and forced Jews to worship Greek gods. A small band of Jews, known as the Maccabees, revolted, defeated armies that far outnumbered them, and took back the Temple.



Legend states that after they rededicated the Temple, they only had one day's worth of oil to sustain the Temple's seven-branched menorah that was to burn continuously. It would take eight days to purify more oil, and, it is said, miraculously, the small amount of oil lasted the entire eight days.



Chanukah commemorates both the rededication of the Temple and the miracle of the oil. The word "Chanukah" means "dedication," and so it is also called the Feast of Dedication. Because of the miracle of light, it is also called the Feast of Lights.

For Messianic Jews and Gentile Believers in Yeshua (Jesus)

While celebrating the miracle of light and the Temple rededication, Believers in Yeshua as the Messiah have additional things to celebrate.



A Celebration of Light

- God is light
- The Light of the World is Yeshua
- His Word is a light to guide our paths

A Celebration of God's Provision

- Yeshua made a way for us!
- The Lord is more than enough
- Confidence in God's saving power
- Our daily needs

A Celebration of Rededication

- Rededicating our lives to Yeshua in thanks for what He has done for us
- Rededicating ourselves to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength
- Rededicating ourselves to letting God make us more Messiah-like

A Celebration of Miracles

- Yeshua, the light of the world
- The Holy Spirit given to Believers in Yeshua
- New life in Yeshua
- The power of God's word to transform us

Celebration of Chanukah



On Chanukah, a nine-branched Chanukiah is lit on each of the eight days of the festival. Eight candles represent the eight days that the oil lasted, and the ninth, known as the Shamash (or Servant Candle), is used to light the others. Each night one more candle is added to the Chanukiah. On the first night, one candle is lit; on the second night, two, and so on. Blessings are spoken at each nightly candle lighting.

Eating fried foods, such as donuts and potato latkes, commemorates the miracle of the oil.



A dreidel is a four-sided top with letters on each side that represent the words "A Great Miracle Happened There." (In Israel, the fourth letter is different and stands for "Here," rather than "There.") Today, chocolate coins are often used in the dreidel game to represent the real coins once given to the poor who could not afford the candles needed to light their Chanukah lampstands.

Gift giving was not originally a part of Chanukah but was added due to the holiday being so close to Christmas. Each night of Chanukah, gifts are given that often increase in value as the nights progress.

