

## **Hanukkah is Mentioned in the Bible**

Hanukkah is mentioned in the Bible! The history that led to Hanukkah is in the Intertestamental history - the 400 years between the Old Testament and New Testament.

Hanukkah in 2023 will begin Thursday, 7 December at sunset and ends Friday, 15 December at nightfall.

During the Syrian Era (198 – 165 BC) the Syrian Seleucid Empire took control of Judea. They wanted to spread Hellenism throughout their empire. (Hellenism is the process of adopting Greek culture and religion.) The Seleucid kings were cruel, but when Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163BC) took over, he brought cruelty to a whole new level. He forbid the Jews to practice their traditional way of life, including their religion. The Jews were persecuted. He Hellenised Jerusalem, outlawed Judaism, enforced paganism and pagan sacrifices, plundered Jerusalem, turned the Jerusalem temple into a pagan shrine and he offered a sacrifice to the god Zeus on an altar in the Most Holy Place!

**Many Jews died because capital offenses *which* included: Jewish sacrifice, circumcision, observing the Sabbath or Jewish festivals, and possessing scrolls of Scripture. *Jews were forced to eat pork and to sacrifice to idols!***

**One day an elderly priest named Mattathias** of the Hasmonean family refused to offer a pagan sacrifice. Another Jew was going to **comply**, and Mattathias killed him and then killed one of the Seleucid soldiers. The Maccabean revolt began! Mattathias, his five sons and others fled into the hills and started fighting the Seleucids. Mattathias dies and leadership fell to one of his sons, **Judas** (*called "Maccabeus".*) The revolt lasted for 3 years. The Jewish people won! Thus began The Maccabean Era (165 – 63 BC). The Maccabees retook Jerusalem, cleansed the temple, and restored worship. ***This event was commemorated with the Feast of Dedication/ Hanukkah/ Feast of Lights.*** The Jewish people had 70 years of independence before they *invited* the Roman General Pompey in to restore order. From 63 B.C. on the Jewish people lived under foreign rulers. ***(Well, until they became the country of Israel in 1948.)***

**The sermon in John 10:22-31. John 10:22-23 (NASB) At the time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. This is the**

only place in the Bible that Hanukkah is mentioned. Hanukkah is a Hebrew word for “dedication.” In John 10:22-31 Jesus is standing around on Solomons’ Porch at the temple for the *Feast of the Dedication*. John 10:22-23 KJV <sup>22</sup> And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.<sup>23</sup> And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

### What is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah is the Jewish Festival of Lights. The word 'Hanukkah' means '**Dedication**' in Hebrew. It celebrates a miracle that happened in Jerusalem over 2,000 years ago.

### When is Hanukkah?

Hanukkah (or **Chanukah** in Hebrew) is celebrated in November or December every year. It lasts for eight days.

In 2023 Hanukkah begins on the evening of **Thursday 7 December**. What is the story of Hanukkah?



1.

A long time ago a Syrian king called Antiochus banned the Jews from worshipping God. He put a big statue of himself in their temple and ordered them to bow before it.



2.

However, the Jews refused to obey him because the Ten Commandments forbid them to worship anyone other than God.



3.

A small group of Jews called the Maccabees fought back against the king's army.



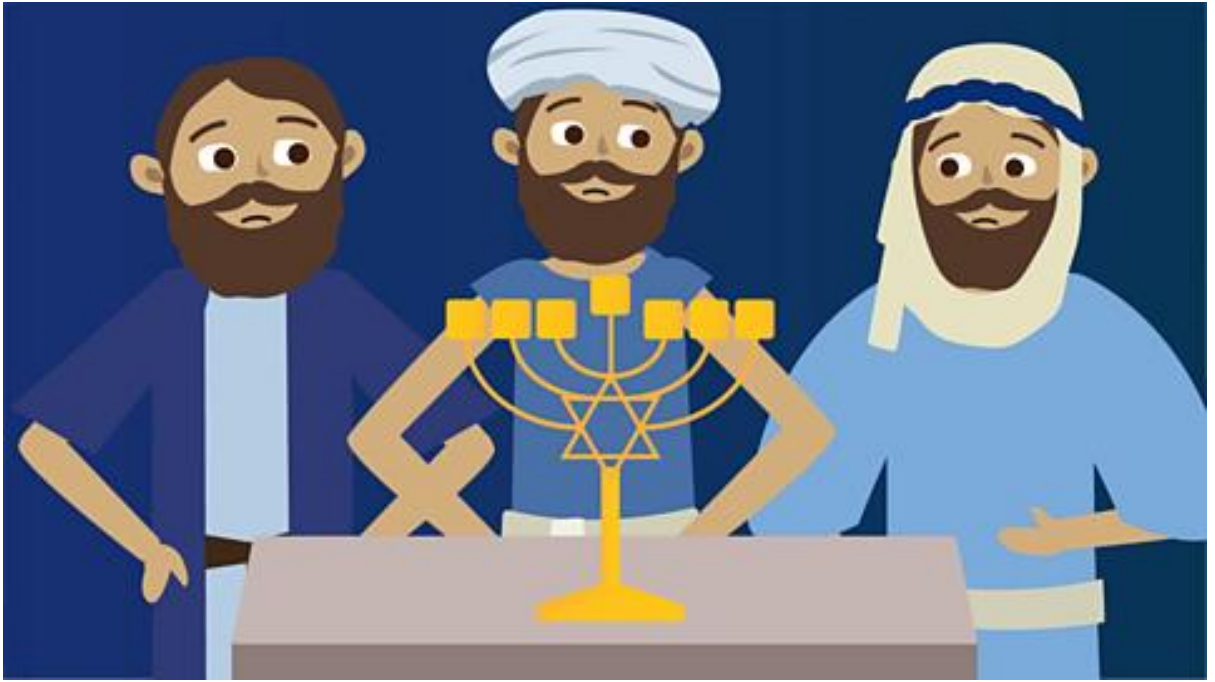
4.

After three years, they won the war and recaptured Jerusalem from the Syrians



5.

When the Jews went back to their temple, they saw that it had nearly been destroyed.



6.

They cleaned and repaired the temple. When they were finished, they rededicated it to God. They did this by lighting the lamp, which was a symbol of God's presence.



7.

They only had one small jar of oil which was only enough for one day.



8.

However, miraculously the lamp stayed alight for eight days! That is why Jews light a candle every day of Hanukkah.

## **THE GAMES**

In recognition of the bravery and skill of Judah and the Maccabees, the Maccabiah Games were created in 1932 as the Jewish Olympics. Five hundred Jewish athletes from twenty-three countries came to Israel to compete in the first Maccabiah Games. Held every four years in Israel, The Maccabiah has become the third largest international sporting event in the world. In the 2015 contest, over 9,000 athletes competed from 78 countries.

## **THE JCC Maccabi Games Fort Lauderdale 2023 Maccabi GB Community Fun Run**

The Maccabi GB Community Fun Run, (in U.K.) which took place on 25th June 2023 celebrated its 17th year, engages over 85 communal Charities and Schools and over 7,500 participants and spectators. Over £2 million has been raised over the life of this event, held at StoneX Stadium, (previously Allianz Park).

## **StoneX Stadium, Saracens**

Greenlands Lane, London NW4 1RL · ~96.1 mi

