

# The Chanukah Story

## What is it all about, and what does it mean to me?

### A. The Chanukah story is about *resisting* unrighteousness

During the cruel **reign** of **Antiochus IV** (approx. 165 B.C.),  
the **Jews** were *oppressed severely*, and *persecuted*.  
The **Temple** was **desecrated** and the **Jews** were being **forced** to  
accept **foreign culture** and **beliefs** that were **contrary to God**.

At this point they had **no choice** but to **resist**,  
and there arose a **small band** of **warriors** led by a family known as the  
**Maccabees**. They waged a “**miraculous**” **rebellion** against **Antiochus**,  
and drove his “**vastly superior**” **Syrian army** out of **Israel**.

→ As *believers*, we too are called to *resist* **unrighteousness**:

You who **love the LORD**, **hate evil!**  
**He preserves** the **souls** of **His saints**;  
**He delivers** them out of the hand of the **wicked**. (Psalm 97:10)

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Put on the **full armor of God**, so that you will be able  
to **stand firm** against the **schemes** of the **devil**.

For **our struggle** is not *against* **flesh and blood**,  
but against the **rulers**, against the **powers**,  
against the **world forces** of this **darkness**,  
against the **spiritual forces of wickedness** in the **heavenly places**.  
(Ephesians 6:11-12)

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For though we **walk** in the **flesh**, we do not **war** according to the **flesh**,  
for the **weapons** of our **warfare** are not of the **flesh**, but **divinely powerful**  
for the **destruction** of **fortresses**. We are **destroying speculations**  
and every **lofty thing** raised up **against** the **knowledge of God**,...  
(II Cor. 10:3-5a)

### B. The Chanukah story is about *rejoicing* in an **amazing** victory.

We *rejoice* that a **small group** of **zealous Jews**, by **God's grace**,  
were able to **overcome** and **defeat** the **mighty Syrian army** of **Antiochus**.  
The **victory** over a **dreaded foe** makes **Chanukah** a time of  
**true joy** and **celebration**.

→ As *believers*, we too can *rejoice* in our victory, the **victory** we have in **Messiah Yeshua**, who delivered us from **two powerful enemies—sin and death**.

**O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?**

**O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?"**

The **sting of death** is sin, and the **power of sin** is the law; but **thanks** be to **God**, who gives us the victory through our **Lord Jesus the Messiah**.

(I Corinthians 15:55-57)

C. The **Chanukah story** is about *rededication*— the **rededication** of the Temple and its service after it had been **desecrated** by the **evil Antiochus**.

“Now **Maccabeus** and his **followers**, the **Lord** leading them on, **recovered the Temple** and the **city** and they **tore down** the **altars** which had been built in the **public square** by the foreigners and also *destroyed* the **sacred precincts**. They **purified** the sanctuary and made another **altar of sacrifice**...

It happened that on the **same day** on which the **sanctuary** had been **profaned** by the foreigners, the **purification** of the sanctuary took place, that is, on the **25th day of Kislev**.

They **celebrated** it for *eight days* with rejoicing...

they offered hymns of **thanksgiving** to **Him** who had given **success** to the purifying of **His own holy place**.

They *decreed* by **public ordinance** and **vote** that the whole **nation** of the **Jews** should **observe *these days*** every year.”  
(The Second Book of Maccabees 1:1-9 and 10:1-8)

→ As **believers**, we too acknowledge the importance of dedicating and consecrating our “temples” (our **bodies**), in **service** to the **Lord**.

“Do you not know that **you** are a temple of God and *that* the **Spirit of God** dwells in you?”  
(I Corinthians 3:16)

“Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the *mercies* of **God** that you present your bodies a *living* and *holy sacrifice*, **acceptable to God**, *which* is your *spiritual service* of **worship**.”  
(Romans 12:1)

D. The **Chanukah story** is about the *retelling* of God's "**miraculous**" provision, and the traditions that have been embraced as a **result**:

1. the **miraculous victory** of the **Jews** over a **superior enemy**-- another historical **example** of God's **miraculous preservation** of the **Jews**
2. the "**miraculous**" 8 days of oil during the Temple's **rededication**
3. the *traditions* of the **menorah**, the **special prayers**, **foods**, **gifts**, and **games**

→ As **believers**, it is important for us to "**retell**" the **story**, **learn**, and even *celebrate* how **God** has been faithful to **His people**, and how **He** has **continually preserved** them according to **His promises**.

"For whatever was **written** in *earlier times* was written for **our instruction**, so that through *perseverance* and the *encouragement* of the **Scriptures** we might have **hope**." (Romans 15:4)

E. The **Chanukah story reveals** a **prophetic "type"** in the person of **Antiochus** (Daniel 8), a "**type**" of **evil ruler** who will come in the **last days**. This **ruler** is the **anti-christ**, who will seek to **subjugate** and destroy the **people of God** *prior* to his own **destruction** at the **2<sup>nd</sup> coming** of **Messiah**.

"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through **Daniel the prophet** (Dan. 9:27), **standing** in the **holy place**... then those who are in Judea must flee to the **mountains**...

For then will be a **great tribulation**, such as not occurred since the **beginning** of the world until now,..." (Matthew 24:15-16, 21)

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Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the **apostasy** comes **first**, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called **god** or object of worship, so that **he** takes **his seat** in the temple displaying himself as **being God**. (II Thess. 2:3-4)

## Closing Comments