

The Feast of Dedication, also known as Hanukkah, means “*the Feast of Consecration*” or “*Rededication*.” This celebration was established by the Jews several centuries after the last Old Testament prophet, Malachi.

Unlike the seven feasts ordained by God through Moses (such as Passover, Pentecost, and the Day of Atonement), this particular feast was not part of the Mosaic law. Instead, it was instituted by a small group of faithful Jews as a memorial of a remarkable moment in Jewish history—when the Temple in Jerusalem was purified and rededicated after being defiled.

Historical Background: The Struggle for the Temple

The origins of this feast go back to the time of the cruel Seleucid king, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who ruled over parts of the Greek empire around 175–164 BC. This king marched into Jerusalem, desecrated the holy Temple, outlawed Jewish worship, and attempted to force the Jews to embrace pagan customs. He even sacrificed unclean animals—like pigs—on the altar of the Lord, fulfilling the prophecy of the “abomination of desolation” in Daniel 8:9–14.

A faithful Jewish priestly family, led by Judas Maccabeus, rose up in defiance. They retreated into the wilderness, raised a resistance, and launched a successful revolt known as the Maccabean Revolt. After defeating Antiochus's forces, they entered the Temple, cleansed it, rebuilt the altar, and rededicated it to the worship of the one true God.

From that time onward, this day became a yearly commemoration of God's faithfulness and the restoration of pure worship.

This history is recorded in the books of 1 and 2 Maccabees, which are included in the Apocrypha.

Similar to the Feast of Purim

This feast shares a similar nature with the Feast of Purim, which was instituted by Mordecai and Queen Esther after the Jewish people were delivered from the evil plot of Haman. Like Hanukkah, Purim was not one of the original feasts given through Moses, but it became an annual celebration of God's deliverance.

Esther 9:27-28 (NIV):

“The Jews took it upon themselves to establish the custom that they and their descendants and all who join them should without fail observe these two days every year... These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and every city.”

Both Hanukkah and Purim remind us that God is actively involved in human history, preserving His people even in times of great peril.

Jesus and the Feast of Dedication

Interestingly, Jesus Himself honored this feast:

John 10:22-23 (NIV):

“Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade.”

Though it was not commanded in the Torah, Jesus' presence at the Temple during Hanukkah shows that He acknowledged its spiritual significance.

What Can We Learn From the Feast of Dedication?

1. God honors pure motives and sincere worship.
Just as God honored David's desire to build Him a house—even though it was Solomon who completed it—He also honored the dedication of those who longed to restore the Temple. Their celebration was not in vain; it was a declaration of gratitude, and it received divine approval.
2. Spiritual renewal is always worth commemorating.
Just as the Temple was physically cleansed and rededicated, our hearts—God's temple today—must be continually purified and consecrated to Him (1 Corinthians 6:19).
3. Our personal victories in God deserve testimony and remembrance.
Both Hanukkah and Purim were responses to divine intervention. As believers, we too should set aside moments to thank God for His acts of deliverance in our lives.
4. Traditions born out of thankfulness can be powerful.
Even though Hanukkah wasn't divinely mandated through Moses, it became a meaningful tradition. This shows us that when we honor God sincerely—even outside the prescribed rituals—He receives our devotion.

Are You Saved?

Friend, are you saved? Have you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ?

The final trumpet is near. Soon, the saints will be taken from the earth. The time of grace will end, and eternity will begin. Where will you spend it?

You don't know what the next five minutes may hold. If you died today—or if Christ returned now—would you be ready?

*"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."
—Hebrews 3:15*

Hell is real. The Bible says it never gets full. Don't gamble with your eternity.

Receive Jesus today. Turn from your sins. Be washed, forgiven, and filled with new life.

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