



Hanukkah: A Noahide's Perspective

by Mr. S. B. P. Davis ben Noach

As Hanukkah approaches, I am once more drawn to meditate upon this Jewish festival – its meaning, the lessons it holds, and how it relates to righteous Gentiles / Noahides.



To the Past: A Candle Carried

I meditate upon how Hanukkah was brought into being through open miracles by the One G-D, but that is not all.

There is more to the commemoration, which was instituted to give thanks and praise to G-d for His wonders and salvations, in enabling the Hasmonean family to be victorious over Hellenic forces. Only one of the small jars of ritually pure oil escaped the notice of the Greek soldiers who had invaded the Holy Temple. When it was found by the victorious Maccabees, it was only enough for them to fulfill their *mitzvah* (commandment) to light the Temple's Menorah for one day. With an open miracle, G-D caused the oil to be sufficient for eight days [1], which was the time it took to prepare more of the special oil for the Menorah.

This victory not only meant that the Jewish people would continue; moreover, their spiritual salvation was secured.[2] And beyond that, the spiritual salvation of the Gentile nations was also secured, for the Torah was preserved – including its Seven Noahide Commandments which are the "decrees of Your will" for all Gentiles, and the commandment to the Jews from G-d at Mount Sinai to teach them to the nations of the world [3].

For this reason, all people should be thankful for that miraculous physical and spiritual victory, for it ensured that from that time, on the Jewish people could continue to carry on the bright flame of the Seven Commandants for all the nations. This responsibility was called out through Isaiah (42:6): "I am the L-rd; I called you with righteousness; I will strengthen your hand; I will protect you; I will set you for a covenant to the people, for a light to nations."

This brings my thinking to each generation that carried on that knowledge, despite their persecutions, even unto death by the opposing idolatrous religions over two thousand years. This is not a matter of ancient history, because it includes the survival and the flourishing of Torah Judaism in the wake of the genocidal Holocaust in Europe.

In each generation, the study and the practice of the Torah's commandments was kept alive, keeping the faith till the day would come when the Jewish people could once again openly teach Gentiles their part in the "decrees of Your will". This is what we can now find in the book [The Divine Code](#), by Rabbi Moshe Weiner.



Living in the Now: The Light in the Present

I light the Hanukkah candles (in my menorah, they are lanterns) in the window of my home that faces out onto the street. Keeping in mind that Gentiles may not light them as a commandment or recite the Jewish blessings, I light them instead to spread awareness of the truth and greatness of the One G-D.

On a personal note, I see them as a reflection of my own personal battle to be spiritually victorious over the present-day Hellenistic and idolatrous society that I was brought up in. My family had no idea of G-D's Torah and the "decrees of Your will" for our lives – and the truth of the Seven Commandments for all Gentiles.

On the surface, the Noahide Commandments are not in the category of those supranational Jewish commandments that defy logic and reason, which the Greeks sought to eradicate. Nevertheless, they too should ideally be piously observed as an acceptance of the Divine yoke.[4] My Hanukkah lanterns are my peaceful way to illuminate all who see them with a reminder that "you shall know this day and take to your heart, that the L-rd, He is the G-d – in heaven above and on the earth below – there is none other" (Deuteronomy 4:39).

I give thanks to G-D for supporting the Maccabees, for ensuring that thousands of years later I would be able to hold a *Tanach* (Hebrew Bible) in my hands, and His Torah in my heart. I also take to heart a deeper and more personal lesson. The light of Hanukkah should shine throughout the year within our lives, within the temple of our hearts.

As a person who is neurodiverse, with physical challenges, I can find myself in extremes of mental and physical energy. This means that I can find it hard to concentrate while reciting a prayer that is written before my eyes, or to study Torah. It takes me hours to type emails that take no more than a few minutes to read. I liken this to a spiritual search for a small amount of oil to burn, to provide enough light within my world. I believe that our physical acts are reflective of our spiritual lives.

In my low cycles, I call to mind the miracle of Hanukkah that G-D gave to the world through the victorious Maccabees. My Jewish Rabbis and mentors are my present-day gift from G-D. I take to heart that G-D renews those miracles within my heart, through His ever abounding mercy, so that each day I find that what I need is given to me. I may have only a little oil within me, but G-D ensures there is enough to shine through the challenges I must face. And I am not alone in this, for it is all a matter of relativity, as each of us have our own experiences and challenges in life.



For the Future: Becoming a Light for the World

The image of the eight burning candles is reflective. It is not only a light from the past that is still shining into our present. Our present also becomes a light of hope shining out into the future.

I'm confident that the day will come when at this time of year, the lights of Hanukkah will be what's normally seen shining from within Gentles' homes, instead of the electric-light shows associated with idolatrous religions during this season in many nations. This is not a far-fetched idea, because every Noahide has a direct impact upon the world as a G'D-fearing Gentle.

For those of us who light the Hanukkah lights along with the Jewish people, it gives us a foretaste of that which is written (Zechariah 2:15), "Many nations will attach themselves to G-d on that day, and they will become a nation for Me," and (Isaiah 2:3 and Michah 4:2), "Many peoples will go and say, 'Come, let us go up to the Mountain of G-d, to the Temple of the G-d of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths ...' "

These are prophecies concerning the Messianic Era. We are a link in G-d's plan to bring about that time. The physical and spiritual struggle of the Maccabees drew down G-D's mercy in creating the miracle that is recalled in the eight days of Hanukkah. Wherever we live in the world today, our faithful observance of our Seven Commandments and our acts of goodness and kindness – especially by giving charity, including during Hanukkah – will hasten the fulfillment of the prophecies from the Hebrew Bible about the blessed Messianic Era. [5]

Footnotes

[1] See the web page [What is Hanukkah, in a Deeper Perspective?](#)

[2] Ibid.

[3] See the web page [Lesson from Hanukkah to Publicize the 7 Laws.](#)

[4] See [Maimonides \(Rambam\), Laws of Kings 8:11.](#)

[5] See the on-line book [Mashiach: The Principle of Mashiach and the Messianic Era](#), by [Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet](#).

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