

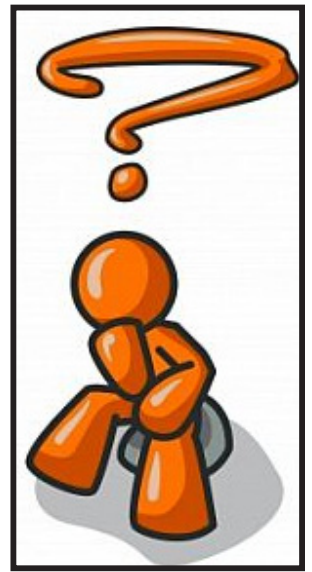
# What About ... Hanukkah

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Hanukkah is the Jewish holiday celebrating “The Miracle of the Oil.” It is described in the Talmud: “On the 25th of Kislev are the days of Chanukkah, which are eight...these were appointed a Festival with Hallel [prayers of praise] and thanksgiving. Our rabbis taught the rule of Chanukkah: ... on the first day one [candle] is lit and thereafter they are progressively increased...[because] we increase in sanctity but do not reduce” (Gemara, tractate Shabbat 21b).

The tradition of Hanukkah began after the reign of Alexander the Great. In 175 B.C., a man named Antiochus IV controlled the region of Palestine. He was cruel to the Jews, forbidding the practice of Judaism and ultimately desecrating their Temple. The family of the Maccabees led a revolt against Antiochus and ultimately delivered the Jews from their Greek oppressor. And, more importantly, liberated the Temple.



“According to tradition as recorded in the Talmud, at the time of the rededication, there was very little oil left that had not been defiled by the Greeks. Oil was needed for the menorah (candelabrum) in the Temple, which was supposed to burn throughout the night every night. There was only enough oil to burn for one day, yet miraculously, it burned for eight days, the time needed to prepare a fresh supply of oil for the menorah. An eight day festival was declared to commemorate this miracle” ([jewfaq.org](http://jewfaq.org)).

In addition to the lighting of the menorah, Jews commemorate “The Miracle of the Oil” by playing “Spin the Dreidel.” The Hebrew letters on the dreidel stand for “A great miracle happened there.” Another tradition associated with Hanukkah is eating special foods, particularly doughnuts called *Sufganiot*, which are cooked in oil.



Most Christians wrongly connect modern-day Judaism with Old Testament Judaism. Modern-day Judaism, or Rabbinic Judaism, is NOT Old Testament Judaism. But neither of them should be observed by Christians. The Old Testament Law ended with Christ (Romans 10:4). Modern-day Judaism is a religion which neglects the commandment of God, *holding to and teaching the tradition of men* (Mark 7:7-8). It is the religion that called for the crucifixion of Christ—the Jews answered him, *We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God* (John 19:7). It is a religion which does not understand nor obey the Scriptures (Mark 12:24).

It is the religion of which, concerning its leaders, Jesus said, *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME* (Matthew 23:27; Mark 7:6). “Rabbinic Judaism is a cult off of Old Testament Judaism. It’s like using Mormonism or Sacred Tradition to understand the Bible” (“Do Not Be Called Rabbi,” [relationalconcepts.org](http://relationalconcepts.org)).

Christians would not recognize *Eid-ul-Adha*, the great “Feast of Sacrifice” festival of Islam. We would not have banquets, as the Hindu people do, in honor of supreme mother goddess *Durga*. We don’t celebrate *Vesek*, commemorating Buddha’s birthday. So why would Christians want to celebrate or participate in Jewish holidays? If we would not think of consulting with Mormons or a Jehovah Witness, we should be equally reluctant to consult with Rabbis.

God warned Israel about false religions, calling the participation with them *harlotry* (Leviticus 20:5) because they are an *abomination* (Jeremiah 32:35) and are *detestable* to God (1 Kings 11:7). Paul repeatedly exhorts Christ’s followers to not be led astray from the *faith* (1 Timothy 6:21), from the *truth* (2 Timothy 2:18), or from *the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ* (2 Corinthians 11:3).

Christians should not participate in any practices which celebrate or recognize Hanukkah because doing so would be to participate, celebrate, and recognize a false religion.