

Happy Hanukkah! Merry Christmas!

✗ Christmas is not a biblical holiday, but let's use it to the glory of God. Hanukkah is a biblical holiday, and let's use it also to the glory of God.

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus even though he was almost certainly not born on Christmas day (see below if interested in that story).

If today, during this season, much of the world is remembering the night of Jesus' birth, singing, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" then I will choose to join them, praying that tens of thousands around the world will suddenly realize who this "Emmanuel," this "God with us" man is, and will accept Him not only as the promised Messiah of Israel, but also their personal Redeemer and the Savior of all mankind!

Granted, it's quite confusing mixing Rudolph, Frosty and Santa in there, but let's peel back the games, and get to the one who is Truth.

Jesus was in Jerusalem during Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22). Hanukkah celebrates one of those times (there have been many) when the Jewish people were being threatened with extinction. The prophet Daniel had predicted a Greek king whose empire would be broken

into four (Dan.

11:4), bringing a “contemptible ruler” (Dan. 11:21) who would “desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then

they will set up the abomination that causes desolation” (Dan. 11:31),

“but the people who know their God will firmly resist him” (Dan.

11:32).

That Greek king was Alexander the Great, whose kingdom was divided among four generals. Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) ruled over Israel, and

demanding that Jews give up the uniqueness of their faith and join the world in worshiping the gods.

A statue of Zeus was placed in the Temple in Jerusalem, and a pig was offered on the altar. Torah observance was outlawed. Sons could no

longer be circumcised according to the covenant. It was a time of “join the enemy” or be killed.

But a priestly family in Modi’in just outside Jerusalem refused to bow to the gods. Mattathias and his four sons led the revolt that

overthrew Antiochus’ forces, took back Jerusalem and began to cleanse the

Temple. Son Judah became the leader and was known as the “Macabee”—the “hammer.”

The story goes that they could find only enough oil for one day, but it would take eight days properly to purify oil. The Menorah was

lighted, but the oil miraculously lasted the full eight days. Thus the eight

days of celebration, and thus also the saying, “Without

Hanukkah, there
would have been no 'Christmas.'"

Let us use this biblical holiday to glorify the God of
deliverance and to resolve never to compromise our faith in
the one true God
and His Son, Yeshua the Messiah.

Don Finto is the founder of The Caleb Company (),
a prophetic fathering ministry named after Israel's fearless
warrior whom the
Bible describes as a man with a "different spirit," who was
still
conquering territory into old age and whose descendants
inherited the land. Don
was pastor of Belmont Church in Nashville, Tenn., for more
than 25 years where,
during the height of the Jesus movement, his own personal
encounter with the
Holy Spirit enabled him to be a leader for many who were
turning to Jesus
during that time, including some of the early contemporary
Christian music
artists and Jewish young people.