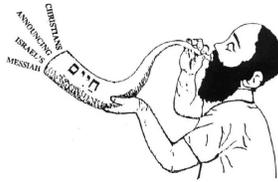


# CHAIM TIMES

The Newsletter of CHAIM, "CHRistians Announcing Israel's Messiah"

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## Five Little-Known Facts About Hanukkah

### 1) Hanukkah's very existence shows that prophesy in the Hebrew Bible is historically verifiable.

The actual Feast of Hanukkah is not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, but the events that Hanukkah commemorate certainly are! They were borne out in history 237 years after they were prophesied by Daniel, in such detail and elaboration that anyone with an open mind would have to conclude that the Bible is prophetically accurate, including prophecies about the Maccabean Revolt and the defeat of the Seleucid emperor Antiochus Epiphanes, the "Haman" of Hanukkah, who defiled the Temple and lost his war with the Jews. (Daniel chapters 8 & 11) But Daniel also went into detail about the identity, the advent, the life and the death of the Messiah, who was "cut off" as prophesied around AD 30. (See Daniel 9:24-27) However, the Jewish community has historically denied that this Messiah could have been Jesus of Nazareth. To them Hanukkah was historically verified to happen when it did, but not that their Messiah was "cut off" (Dan. 9:26) in about 30 AD. Go figure!

### 2) The only place in Scripture where Hanukkah is mentioned is in the NEW Testament, not in the "Old!"

The Jewish community relies upon certain books of the Apocrypha such as I Maccabees and II Maccabees for a history of the events that surround Hanukkah. The Synagogue never accepted these books as part of Scripture, but rather as generally reliable history. The churches of the Protestant Reformation held to the same view. But only in the Gospel of John, chapter 10, verses 20-22 is the "Feast of the Dedication" mentioned, and it's mentioned in connection with Jesus. The Hebrew word for "dedication" is "Hanukkah."

### 3) Christmas is December 25th. Hanukkah is Kislev 25th. Coincidence?

Hanukkah is always celebrated on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish month of Kislev (November-December). The Jewish calendar is a lunar calendar, unlike the Christian calendars, both Julian and Gregorian. By strange coincidence, Christmas has been celebrated in the western churches on December 25th since the days of Emperor Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor in the Fourth Century AD. A few years later, Pope Julius I officially declared that the birth of Jesus would be celebrated then. What does that have to do with Hanukkah's Kislev 25? One theory—one

of several—is that the church was trying to pre-empt Hanukkah's observation among new pagan converts who might otherwise become Jewish! In the 4th Century AD, Judaism, like Christianity, was a proselytizing religion. Church and Synagogue were in severe competition for credibility among the pagans. As the church grew more influential, it legislated anti-Jewish laws to reduce Jewish influence in the Empire. This date could be one such example. It is unlikely that Jesus was actually born on December 25th, but the early church wanted His birth celebrated then, and it's easy to see why they might have wanted to "pre-empt" Hanukkah.

### 4) The Jews in Judea wanted to know if Jesus would be a military-style Messiah like Judah Maccabee.

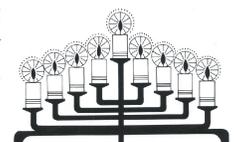
Re-read John 10:22-42, which begins: "Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple in Solomon's porch. Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him: 'How long do you keep us in doubt? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly...'" Hanukkah is the time when they would remember the previous national "savior," Judah Maccabee, who led a revolt against

insurmountable odds and threw off the yoke of an oppressing pagan Greek power. Jewish tradition invests the concept of Messiah with political and ethical changes in the earth, such as those Judah Maccabee had effected. It does not expect Messiah to provide a substitutionary sacrifice to pay the penalty for his peoples' sins. For that matter, the apostles themselves didn't even seem to expect that, at least not before the resurrection!

### 5) John 10:22-24 is a great witnessing tool in sharing about the Messiah with your Jewish friends.

You can use John 10:22-24 as a witnessing tool with your Jewish friend or relative. Ask: "Do you know the only place that Hanukkah is mentioned in the Bible?" It's almost a sure thing they don't. Most Christians don't even know it. This can open up a whole discussion about messianic prophesy in general and the reliable verifiability of the Hebrew Scriptures themselves which many Jews believe only contain holy legends that are not to be taken seriously. One key in witnessing involves getting Jewish people to view their own Scriptures with a more serious attitude. These verses can be such a key.

—Rev. Richard Anderson



**Hanukkah 2019 begins the evening of Dec. 22 & goes through the evening of Dec. 30. Why not send your Jewish friends a card?**

## CHAIM MINISTRY UPDATES

Rev. Fred Klett, Director

### Door-to-Door in Northeast Philly

The Russian-Jewish neighborhood of Northeast Philadelphia, around Bustleton and Red Lion Roads, is home to many of the estimated 100,000 Russian-speakers from the 15 former Soviet Republics. About half are secular Jews, but there are also Muslims from Central Asia. What do they have in common? Language! Yes, language, but also their need for the Gospel of Jesus. In the past several months, CHAIM teammates Rick Anderson and Vitaly Kalinovsky have been visiting homes and neighborhood walkways, making new friends, and sharing the gospel. Most of these people have never even heard a clear explanation of the mission and purpose of the Messiah's death and resurrection. What they *have* heard, very often, is a distorted collection of myths about born-again Christians and Jewish believers in Jesus. We now have a short list of people to revisit for follow-up conversations.

Recently, Rick Anderson attended a missions conference at a CHAIM-supporting church that asked him to share about CHAIM's work. While there, Pastor Jay, one of the pastors at "Church Without Walls" asked if he could join Rick in door-to-door outreach. Church Without Walls, founded by Dr. Anees Zaka, is a key player in reaching Muslims in Philly. As always, CHAIM's focus remains on the Jews, but in the process, we also seem to reach the Muslims!

### Visitors to Rock of Israel PCA Hear the Gospel

Our outreach this past fall in the parking lot of the church we rent from has produced a regular at our services and at a local Bible study. His name is Boris and he is a Kalmyk (a Russian-speaking Buddhist ethnicity). We were not looking to evangelize Kalmyks, but God had a different plan! Pray for Boris! We pray God also surprises you with opportunities to share the Good News. Please pray that God provides us with many other surprising "divine appointments!" We have also had several other new visitors, Anatole, Ivanka, Anthony and others have heard the good news preached. Fred Klett's longtime friend, Ron, came out to a Passover Seder this year, read Isaiah 53 with us, and also brought a Jewish lady friend to a home barbeque. Pray for him.

### The Matryoshka Festival & Cultural Connections

We had many chances to share the Good News at the annual Matryoshka Festival for Russian-speaking immigrants. We met new friends and old and had some extensive conversations. Vitaly Kalinovsky had a very lively debate with a Russian Jewish atheist! Fred Klett has been in touch with a Ukrainian Jewish impresario, attended his birthday party, and is looking to work with him on concerts. This interesting and influential man wants to get together over lunch to discuss philosophy with Fred! Pray for Mikhail. Please pray we will grow the congregation and be an effective witness in our community.

**We are reaching out on many fronts: Church presentations, Holiday Programs, Summer street campaigning, door-to-door in the immigrant community, the internet, and developing friendships with the prospect of sharing our faith. Your prayers and support have played an indispensable role.**

## MERRY MESSIAHMAS AND A BLESSED NEW YEAR FROM YOUR CHAIM TEAM!



Rev. Fred Klett and Jean Klett



Rev. Richard Anderson and Linda Anderson



Rev. Vitaly Kalinovsky, Anna, Peter and Marina

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