

A menorah with nine lit candles is the central focus, set against a warm, golden background. To the left, a gift wrapped in gold paper with a large gold bow is visible. In the foreground, several dreidels are scattered on a surface, along with a small green dreidel. The overall scene is festive and celebratory.

# **The Season of Miracles**

Hanukkah: The Season of  
Lights and Miracles

# The Message of the Prophets:

- **2 Chron 36:15,16- The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them through his messengers again and again, because he had pity on his people and on his dwelling place.  
<sup>16</sup> But they mocked God's messengers, despised his words and scoffed at his prophets until the wrath of the LORD was aroused against his people and there was no remedy.**

# The Fullness Of Time

- **EXILE – with a promise of return**
- **Israel –721 BC by Assyria**
- **Judah – 588 BC by Babylonia**
- **518 BC Daniel sees promise fulfilled - Dan 9**
- **Temple and Walls rebuilt amidst trouble – Ezra**
- **Continual slide away from God**
- **Prophets call to return; Zachariah and Malachi**
- **Then 400 silent years – No Prophets, No Visions, No Miracles**

# **The Years Between Old and New**

- Daniel prophesied of coming Kings and Kingdoms**
- Daniel 8 foretold the end of the Persian Empire and the beginning of Alexander the Great.**
- Alexander born 356 BC, Commander in Fathers army at 18**
- Alex possibly assassinated Father, Phillip, and became King in 336 BC**
- He conquered the Persians between 334 – 331**
- By 323 BC his empire stretched from Egypt to India. 10,000 miles in 12 years**

# The Influence of Greek Culture

- **323 he wept and he died with no obvious heir**
- **4 Generals divided the Kingdom; Dan.8:8 – Written 220 years before**
- **Greeks were Missionaries of Greek thought**
- **Some Jews agreed, they were called Hellenistic Jews.**
- **Some disagreed**
- **When it became evident Jews would not go along, Antiochus IV Epiphanes issued decrees outlawing practice of Judaism. About 170 BC**
- **Dan 8:9-11**

# The Maccabeus

- **Temple seized in 168 BC – desecrated. Every village had soldiers come and make Jews sacrifice a pig to a pagan God. The sacrifice at Modi'in is the turn of the tide.**
- **Matitياهو (Matthew GK) head of family of priests kills Hellenistic Jew willing to make sacrifice. Killed the soldiers and fled to caves. Beginning of Maccabeus Revolution.**
- **1 year after revolution began Judah Maccabee and his soldiers recaptured the temple.**
- **An astounding victory! But where was God in all this?**
- **God had been silent at this point for over 230 years**

# **The Silence In The Darkness**

- Judah and his family were devoted followers of Yahweh, but who won the war? They worked hard, many had died.**
- In their cleaning, they found only one small bottle of oil for the Candle Stick, enough for 1 day. It would take 8 days to make the purified oil for the Menorah.**
- They could wait 8 days or they could light it because they were told to**
- Lev.24:1-4 – to be kept burning perpetually, continually.**
- But the small one day supply burned for 8 days.**

# The Season of Miracles

- Hanukkah is mentioned in John 10:22-25. Hanukkah is a season when Judaism celebrates Miracles.
- Wiki defines a miracle as a “divine intervention”
- Judaism defines a miracle as, “God choosing to do something different in a given moment”
- Col.1:16,17 – “For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities: all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things and in him all things hold together.”

# **The Season of Miracles**

- A wink from God to say, “I am here! In spite of the darkness, I have always been here!”**
- The other part of Jewish belief in miracles is that we are to give maximum effort.**
- There is always a part where Faith was to be exercised in some way.**
- Gideon, Hezekiah, Crossing of the Jordan, Feeding of the 5000, Mary submitting herself to God, Joseph taking Mary as his wife, provision by the Wise men, living godly lives waiting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.**

# The Dark Times

- Those were dark moments in the OT where God gives a little wink, to say, “I am still here, with you.”
- I am sure the Hellenists argued there are many paths to Yahweh. We live in spiritually dark times again.
- With all our media connections, people are more depressed and more “alone”. Though no one tells people to seek God, in the darkness we desire the presence of God.
- Gen.37:23-25 – Why is the cargo listed?
- Joseph, I can’t answer your prayer the way you would like, but I can make your trip a little easier. Enjoy the incense.

# **The Wink From God**

- **Are you in dark times? Can you smell the incense?**
- **In the dark days of the winter, candles were lit. It wasn't big and bright, but it was a message from God, "I am here!"**
- **Are you asking questions of God?**
- **Look for the unexpected moment of Joy. The flicker of an unexpected candle, or the unexpected scent of incense.**
- **God is saying, I will never leave you or forsake**