

# CHANUKAH FLEXIDOX JUDAISM

## Background

The Gemara tells us that Chanukah was established as a time of praise and thanksgiving. The *Bach* explains that even though a normal *yom tov* is celebrated with a festive meal, Chanukah has no such institution. Since the decree against the Jews was primarily because they were lax in the *avodah* in the Bais Hamikdash, the decree was to annul the *avodah*. As both the decree and the salvation were of a spiritual nature, Chazal instituted a spiritual form of celebration – praise and thanksgiving, which are “services of the heart.”

## Questions

Why is being lax in the *avodah* a reason to stop the entire service in the Bais HaMikdash?

The decrees of the Yivanim were not merely against the service in the Bais Hamikdash. Anyone found keeping any vestige of Judaism was killed. They were attempting to eradicate Judaism – completely and totally. Why should a few lackadaisical *Kohanim* be cause for the eradication of the entire religion?

### תלמוד בבלי מסכת שבת דף כא/ב

**מאי חנוכה** שכשנכנסו יוונים להיכל טמאו כל השמנים שבהיכל וכשגברה מלכות בית חשמונאי ונצחום בדקו ולא מצאו אלא פך אחד של שמן שהיה מונח בחותמו של כהן גדול ולא היה בו אלא להדליק יום אחד נעשה בו נס והדליקו ממנו שמונה ימים לשנה אחרת קבעום ועשאוים ימים טובים בהלל והודאה

### Talmud: Shabbos 21:

*What is Chanukah? (For what miracle was the holiday instituted? - Rashi)*

*We learned: Beginning the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev there are eight days of Chanukah, during which we are not allowed to fast or eulogize, for when the Yivanim entered the Sanctuary they defiled all of the oils there. When the Hasmonean dynasty recaptured the Sanctuary, they searched and only found one jug of oil with the seal of the Kohen Gadol. There was only enough oil to light for one day. A miracle happened, and they lit from that jug for eight days. The next year, they established these days as a yom tov with rejoicing and thanksgiving.*

### טור אורח חיים סימן תרע הב"ח

בחנוכה עיקר הגזירה היתה על שהתרשלו בעבודה, וע"כ היתה הגזירה לבטל מהם העבודה כדתניא בברייתא שגזר עליהם לבטל התמיד, וכשחזרו בתשובה למסור נפשם על העבודה הושיעם ה' ע"י הכהנים עובדי העבודה בביהמ"ק, על כן נעשה הנס ג"כ בנרות תחת וכשחזרו בתשובה למסור נפשם על העבודה הושיעם ה' ע"י הכהנים עובדי העבודה בביהמ"ק, על כן נעשה הנס ג"כ בנרות תחת אשר הערו נפשם למות על קיום העבודה, ולפיכך לא קבעום אלא להלל ולהודות שהיא העבודה שבלב.

*On Chanukah, the main decree was because they were lax in the avodah. Therefore, the decree was to annul the daily sacrifice. When they did teshuvah and gave their lives for the avodah, HASHEM saved them via the Kohanim, the ones who did the avodah in the Bais HaMikdash. Therefore, the miracle was done via the menorah, and for that reason, Chazal instituted these days for praise and thanksgiving, which is avodah of the heart.*