

# Universal Hanuka

## The Credo for the Modern Maccabee

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I must confess, I have no pity for fools! It never ceases to amaze me how merciful G-d in Heaven is when He looks down upon His world and sees what we have done to it. May Heaven have mercy on us all.

It amazes me how absolutely stupid and in denial most people are. It is a shame how otherwise good and moral people are twisted, usually through financial coercion, to sit silently when they need to stand up and be outspoken. It is equally a shame how many people today enjoy, indulge in and absolutely adore the modern “flesh pots of Egypt,” all the while considering themselves to be decent and religious people. How disconnected most people are from the fundamentals of real life, the core values outlined in the Bible and the courage and resolve to do the right things!

So many wonder why G-d sends hard times upon individuals and upon the world at large. Such hard times are a blessing! They awaken slumbering souls and force them to return to a forgotten normalcy and balance with natural law with nature's Creator. Hard times remind us most of all of the most fundamental Biblical value, the right to freedom and our obligation to safeguard it and fight for it, if and when necessary. When we overcome adversity, we do so through struggle. Such a struggle defines for a man his character, his integrity and his freedom.

A long time ago in a land very far away there lived a people not too unlike ourselves. They went about their daily lives and did whatever normal people do. Then as the world turns, there was a “new sheriff” in town, a new government which introduced new concepts and ideas about living. The new fundamental idea introduced by these foreigners was that life is meant to be lived for oneself. Pleasing oneself is the primary thing and this alone is paramount, fun and most self-fulfilling. The new idea was that one can have it all, all one had to do was to stop giving in to strange ideas about being different or unique, separate and independent. All one had to do was to just get along, to assimilate, to absorb and become like everybody else. When everyone was together being the same, then what a great world it would be.

Well, for those who want to forget themselves and lose themselves in the identities of others, that is their choice, and maybe even their right. In spite of the fact that such an alienation from one's own culture and identity is considered a psychological aberration, one can chose to be out-of-sync if one desires. Yet, thank G-d that He does not leave us alone to our own devices. If left to control our own destinies we would have ran out of luck long ago. G-d recognizes when we become imbalanced and directs the course of world events towards the restoration of balance. This is why the Creator is called in Hebrew, Elohim, which means the G-d of nature.

A long time ago in a land very far away this exact thing did happen. A portion of the Jewish people had returned to their ancient homeland after 70 years of exile in far away Babylon. After

struggling hard to rebuild their nation. Along came a new conqueror from the west, Alexander the Great. Unlike other conquerors before him, Alexander did not seek to alienate Israel or to destroy Jerusalem. On the contrary, Alexander was welcomed by the Jewish leadership and the two embraced in peace. One might think this a good thing. One may indeed be mistaken about many a number of things.

What looked good in the beginning soon soured as Alexander's successors went about consolidating their empires and power. Part of that consolidation plan was for the Jews of Israel to become equal and full citizens of the new empire. Much to the joy of many in Israel, the majority jumped on the bandwagon to join the new movement, then called Hellenism. Just as in ancient Egypt, Israel welcomed the embrace of foreigners and then were soon betrayed by them and became subjugated to them.

The spirit of Hellenism that possessed large numbers in Israel during the Second Temple times should not be looked at as an isolated occurrence. Many want to argue about the actual definition of Hellenism in order to distance it from comparisons to modern secularism. However, such attempts at distinction are merely superficial and mostly deceptive in nature. Hellenism is an archetype, a psychological disposition and it did not start with the Grecian influence on ancient Israel. What we call Hellenism and define strictly as an association with Grecian culture is actually a greater psychological state centered on the pursuits of physical self pleasures. In this light, Hellenism can be used to describe the pleasures certain Israelites enjoyed in the "flesh pots of Egypt" and it can equally be applied to modern day secular hedonism, which is the foundation of the godless/socialist elements in western civilization.

Whatever term we use to describe this psychological state, its essence remains the same. Whenever one selfishly focuses on one's own life, one's own interests and one's own pleasures over and above the basic fundamental needs of nature and the community, such a one is showing a disassociation and disconnection from the greater whole. We are commanded to "love your neighbor as yourself." This means that we are to care for others equally as we care for ourselves. Mind you, care for oneself is an implied requirement in this commandment. Yet, too many people use this as an excuse to love themselves at the expense of loving their neighbor. This is where selfishness can readily be seen.

When there exists a psychological disposition that seeks assimilation into a foreign culture at the expense of being true to one's own, this is also harmful to both mind and soul. Such a disorientation to one's own origins often materializes in multiple forms of psychological, emotional and other mental illnesses. Again, this is nothing new. This psychological imbalance has been around ever since there has been an Israelite people. Needless to say, such a psychological imbalance is not only a problem for the descendants of Israel, it is an equal problem for all human beings, from all cultures who are feigning a legacy not their own. One can never find oneself and be at peace with oneself unless one is true to one's greater self, both personal self and collective self.

When one is untrue to one's self psychologically, one has become subject to a foreign identity with all its rules, values and morays that are out-of-sync with one's true inner nature. This is the definition of psychological slavery. Psychological slavery is the first step towards political, economic and social slavery. When one is imprisoned in one's own mind, then the chains of iron from outside can easily slip around one's neck. If one is oblivious to one's internal slavery, then usually one will be oblivious to one's external slavery as well. This is why slavery always begins by enslaving the minds of otherwise free people. For a people whose minds are controlled will soon have their bodies and lives similarly placed under control. This is the archetype of evil.

Slavery begins in the mind. No one is subjugated into slavery until they first accept its status. Many proud people have been conquered and have chosen death rather than to submit to slavery. Those who instead chose slavery did so at a terrible price to their personal psychological well being. In the eyes of their tyrannical lords they were no longer considered to be human beings, worthy of respect and endowed with rights. Instead, they were viewed as merely property. What is worse is that the conquered individuals began to view themselves as such as well. No longer did they consider themselves to be individuals worthy of freedom. Instead they came to accept the mentality of servitude, with all its loss of freedom and its comprehensive controls.

Slavery today is no different than it has been in the past. One who is already a mental slave will soon lose whatever illusions of freedom one still maintains. When the illusions are gone, the reality of servitude sets in. In ancient Egypt, the Israelites actually came to embrace their servitude and many did not desire redemption or a redeemer. Tradition relates that these lost souls, these traitorous Israelites passed away in the plague of darkness prior to the Exodus.

As it was in ancient times, so too does prophecy say it will be before the coming of the Mashiah. Those not worthy to be redeemed will surely be killed off. The continued existence of slaves prevents the revelation of freedom and liberty. Their behaviors sabotage the efforts made by the lovers of liberty. Prophecy reveals that before the end, G-d will again send a plague similar to the Egyptian plague of darkness during which the generation of modern slaves will perish just as did their Biblical counterparts. The light of freedom can only shine once the darkness of slavery has been dispelled.

In the days of the Maccabees, like in Egypt, the Israelite people were again oppressed by an aggressive enemy. This time the enemy sought outright to enslave their souls, by removing the people from their native culture and religion. A civil war broke out in ancient Israel between the traditionalist, conservative Jews of the time and their progressive, liberal Hellenist fellow countrymen. The oppression against the traditionalists did not begin with foreign troops, it began with one's fellow countrymen. The greatest of enemies is always to be found within one's own people, even within one's own family.

The Maccabees revolt was both a military campaign and a psychological one. Only when the people had had enough oppression were they finally riled up and made ready to fight. Only when they were "pissed off" enough after continuous abuse that they suffered for many years did somebody do something. Remember, the Maccabee civil war was not a popular uprising with masses of people rioting in the streets. No way! The number of actual fighters on the Maccabee side were rather small. Although they might have had the emotional support of the majority of the people, that is about all the support the majority provided. The Maccabees, from beginning to end, were a small band of freedom fighters. They accomplished what they did almost miraculously. Yet, as history records, because the majority of the people did not get involved, the victory of the Maccabees soon eroded and Roman dominance soon came to replace the Greeks.

Even in the days of the Maccabees, as bad as things were for the majority of the people, still, most did not want to "rock the boat." Most still considered things, as bad as they were, to be tolerable. Most still did not want to take their faith into their own hands and fight for what was right. The end results are recorded history. Decades later Rome destroyed Israel, murdered millions and forced the Jewish nation into an exile that, for the most part, continues to this very day.

Raw anger never accomplishes much. Rioting in the streets accomplishes even less. Unguided and uncoordinated military operations are usually disastrous. Therefore, mere public outcries mean nothing and do less. Rioting in anger only causes destruction and ultimately hurts only one's own

interests. Unprofessional and untrained military or violent action usually lead to the capture of the unprepared perpetrators, which is usually followed by violent reprisals on behalf of the party attacked. Therefore, none of these actions are wise or recommended.

So, what can be done? Follow the successful route of the Maccabees. They fought a guerrilla war. They had large scale public sympathy and they took advantage of that. Although their fighting numbers did not swell, they did not need them to. They accomplished what they did with what they had. They were careful, practical, wise and most of all, they lived by and acted by their faith. In the end, they were not afraid to act. They had no love for their generation's version of the "flesh pots of Egypt." This was their greatest asset. They were willing to sacrifice!

Hanuka celebrates a victory in war. It celebrates independence. Hanuka celebrates freedom over tyranny. Although this battle occurred long ago in Israel and its commemoration is celebrated as a Jewish holiday, Hanuka should not be viewed as being exclusively Jewish at all. The meaning of Hanuka is universal. Its message is clear! Summed up in the words of American Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, "G-d helps those who help themselves."

Hanuka is a holiday of light, not one of candles. The light of Hanuka has to shine from the hearts of free and independent men! Only in the land of the free and the home of the brave is the message of Hanuka alive today. We can only have a land of the free because such a land is the home of the brave. Israel became the land of the free because it was the home of the brave Maccabees.

Modern-day Israel faces many of the same problems as did the people who lived there in Maccabean times. Modern-day Israel fights an undeclared civil war pitting today's traditionalists against today's Hellenist. Only today the demarcation lines are not so clear. Apparently the citizenry of modern-day Israel still needs to be provoked some more, as were the Maccabees of old. Only then will a modern Maccabee arise and take the civil war to its next step, cleansing the country as it was done in ancient times.

Even today in the United States, there is growing resentment and resistance to government oppression. Many throughout the States fear that before the end of the century, rank and file traditionalist, Bible believing, G-d fearing Americans will also give rise to modern-day American Maccabees of their own, who will fight the European/Socialist Hellenist influences that are destroying all that is good in the United States and take back their country, restoring a traditional American, Bible-based form of life as the American Founding Fathers envisioned.

Today, whether one lives in Israel, these United States or elsewhere, the likelihood of a successful militaristic Maccabee uprising is rather slim. People today are way too comfortable in their modern-day "flesh pots of Egypt." While many people want "something" to be done, they usually want that "something" to be done by others and not themselves. Most just want to watch "something" happen on television, in the comforts of their own homes. Most are just too apathetic to get involved. This is slave mentality in action.

The general public seems never to take into consideration that no matter how they try to please G-d and serve Him in their present state of psychological slavery, G-d will never be pleased with His creations, until they live up to the first of the Ten Commandments. Being free is the first of the Ten Commandments. Freedom is the central Biblical message. The Bible's message and obligation of freedom is why the anti-Biblical powers in this world target the Bible and those who believe in it for extermination. Like Solomon said, "there is nothing new under the sun."

When Abraham stood up to the evil dictator Nimrod, he cried out to G-d saying, "give me liberty or give me death." Nimrod chose for Abraham death, G-d chose for Abraham life!

When Moses stood up to the evil dictator Pharaoh, he cried out saying, "give my people liberty" (let my people go). Pharaoh chose death for Israel's firstborn. G-d instead chose life and freedom for Israel and death to tyrannical Egypt.

The Maccabees cried out "give me liberty or give me death." The Greeks chose for them death, G-d chose for them life! Because they were brave, they transformed their country into the land of the free. G-d blessed the works of their hands. Mind you, if they did not rise up, neither would have G-d.

If we do not take the initiative to demand, proclaim and fight for our freedom and our rights, then as prophecy states, G-d Himself, will maneuver world events to force us into such a position of desperation that we will be left with no other choice but to rise up and fight. And then, G-d will help those who help themselves and modern day Maccabees will be born.

May the lights of redemption shine! Just remember, those lights are lit by our own hands!

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