

Book of Maccabees I – Chapter 4 / 36-60

36. Then said Judas and his brethren,
Behold, our enemies are discomfited: **let us go up to cleanse and dedicate the sanctuary....**

Then Judas appointed certain men to fight against those that were in the fortress, until he had cleansed the sanctuary.

42. So he chose priests of blameless conversation, such as had pleasure in the law:

Who cleansed the sanctuary, and bare out the defiled stones into an unclean place.

47. Then **they took whole stones according to the law, and built a new altar** according to the former;

And **made up the sanctuary, and the things that were within the temple, and hallowed the courts.**

They made also new holy vessels, and into the temple they brought the **menorah**, and the altar of burnt offerings, and of incense, and the table.

And upon the altar they burned incense, and the lamps that were upon the candlestick they lighted, that they might give light in the temple.

Furthermore they set the loaves upon the table, and spread out the veils, and finished all the works which they had begun to make.

52. Now on the 25th day of the ninth month, which is called the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up in the morning,

And offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offerings, which they had made.

On the same time and day the heathen had profaned it, even in that was it dedicated with songs, and citherns, and harps, and cymbals.

....

58. And so **they kept the dedication of the altar eight days** and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise.

Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season **from year to year by the space of eight days, from the 25th day of the month Kislev**, with mirth and gladness.

JOSEPHUS – Antiquities Book XII Chapter 7

Paragraph 7.

Now Judas celebrated the festival of the restoration of the sacrifices of the temple for eight days, and omitted no sort of pleasures thereon; but he feasted them upon very rich and splendid sacrifices; and he honored God, and delighted them by hymns and psalms. Nay, they were so very glad at the revival of their customs, when, after a long time of intermission, they unexpectedly had regained the freedom of their worship, that they made it a law for their posterity, that they should keep a festival, on account of the restoration of their temple worship, for eight days. ***And from that time to this we celebrate this festival, and call it Lights. I suppose the reason was, because this liberty beyond our hopes appeared to us; and that thence was the name given to that festival.***

Talmudic Sources

Tractate Avodah Zarah 8b

Story of Adam & the first winter solstice.

Tractate Shabbat 21b

Candle lighting on Chanukah

Original custom – one candle per household

Mehadrin – One candle per person

Mehadrin min ha'mehadrin –

Bet Shamai – 8 candles to one candle

Bet Hillel – One candle to eight candles

&

Story of miracle of the “pach ha'shemem”