

# 97th – Bible Seeds Podcast

---

*Published 12-21-2023 (Christmas Eve)*

## **Intro Music – “My Father Is So Good To Me”**

Hi my name is Carl Vasta and I would like to welcome you to the Bible Seeds section here, at Understanding God’s word. This is where I get to comment on biblical readings and stories that brings the bible into what’s happening to us in our daily lives.

I’ll touch on such topics as family prayer, or why I believe there is a GOD. I’ll talk about what was predicted that makes these the terrible times of the last days, or how to have a daily meaningful relationship with God!

## **Today’s Topic: Hanukkah & Christmas Celebrations 2023**

The celebration of Hanukkah and Christmas is coming up this month! The Hanukkah celebration came from the actions taken by the son of the powerful Syrian King: Antiochus III who took Jerusalem in 198 B.C. and was welcomed by the Jews because he gave treasures to the temple.

Twenty nine years later between 169 and 168 B.C., his son Antiochus IV ( Epiphanes ), ruled Jerusalem in a cruel manner, desecrating the temple by sacrificing a pig on the altar, and prohibiting Jewish sacrifices, circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and killing any Jew possessing a copy of the Holy Scriptures.

These outrages lead to war with the Jews in which the Syrian armies were repeatedly defeated by the brilliant Judas Maccabees.

Jerusalem was delivered from this cruel king by Maccabees in the month of Chislev, our month of December in 165 B.C. This time of deliverance has been celebrated by the Jews as **Hanukkah, or the Feast of Lights.**

It is told that after the forces of Antiochus had been driven from the Temple, the sons of Israel went up to the Temple and rebuilt its gates and purified the Temple from the dead bodies and from the defilement.

And when they were ready to re-dedicate the Temple, they sought after pure olive oil to light the lamps, the Maccabees discovered that almost all of the ritual olive oil had been profaned.

They found only a single container that was still sealed by the High Priest, with only enough oil to keep the menorah in the Temple lit for a single day. The miracle was that when they used this, it burned for eight days. This was the time it took to have new oil pressed and made ready.

Now the Jews celebrate by lighting the nine candles of the Menorah, one called a "shamish" which in Hebrew means "attendant". It stays lit constantly and is used to light the others until all eight candles are burning.

Even though Hanukkah celebrations now include gifts, the readings and blessings used at Hanukkah are the same readings Jesus did in celebrating this feast.

**Christmas** is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, **"the Christ child."** Born of Mary, and placed in her by God's Holy Spirit. And the angel Gabriel said, **"For this reason the holy child will be called the "Son Of God"**. Joseph was the husband of Mary, in name only, until after Jesus was born.

All this had happened to fulfill what the LORD had said through the prophet Isaiah concerning the birth of the Messiah: **"A virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Immanuel"**, which is found in **Isaiah, Chapter 7: verse 14**, a name which means **"God is with us"**.

And though this happened more than 2000 years ago, the whole world still celebrates Christmas in one form or another.

Some people celebrate with an evergreen tree that represents everlasting life because it does not die, even during the harshest winter and represents the life we in Christ.

Some people say the triangular shape of the tree has been used to represent the Holy Trinity – the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The direction of the branches point upward, reflecting our praise to God!

The candles or light on the tree signify how Jesus called us out of darkness because he is the light unto the world.

The star placed atop the tree represents the star the wise men followed to Bethlehem.

The gifts the wise men brought to Jesus represent the gifts under the tree that are given in love to each other and a reminder that God gave us the greatest gift. Our salvation, through His Son Jesus!

And finally, we must remember that **our savior Jesus Christ was a Jew!** Every Christian was born from the Jewish religion and we hold true, the many things that were revealed to us by GOD in the Old Testament.

And now here is my song for both **Hanukkah and Christmas**. It's called **Invitation, the Hanukkah-Christmas Song**. It shows that both those of the Jewish faith and the Christian faith are waiting for the coming of the Messiah!

(Play the song)

### **ENDING "My Father Is So Good To Me"**

I would like you to know how much GOD loves you. He is ready and waiting to help you. You just need to believe that He exist and has created all things and has given His Son Jesus ( the good shepherd ) to bring you back to Him.

This is why I put together these podcasts, starting with **The Storyline Of The Bible**, *19 easy understandable podcasts* that take you from **Genesis**, *the first book of the bible* to **Revelation**, *the last book of the bible*. And beyond that , there are **Stories and Quotes from Jesus**, *which will help you to strengthen your faith in God*.

And now I have added these **Bible Seeds** [ **Understanding God's Word Podcasts** ] *my commentary on some of these readings*.

You can find all of this and print out the **PDFs** *for Storyline of the Bible, and Quotes and Stories From Jesus*.

You can download the **MP3s, Videos, and My Original Music, Sheet Music** and **Lyric Sheet** from *my website*: [www.carlvasta.com](http://www.carlvasta.com) Everything is **FREE** and there are no signups ( **No ads and no request for donations** ) **ENJOY!**

This is your host Carl Vasta and I thank you for tuning in to **Bible Seeds** at **Understanding God's Word** This is your host Carl Vasta and I would like to remind you that new podcasts are released on Sundays at 12:30pm Pacific Coast Time. God bless you and your loved ones and remember . . . .