

Time to Celebrate

by **Rev. Sir Knight Donald Craig Kerr**

This is a special time of year as we celebrate in December two significant events. For some it is Hanukkah and for others it is Christmas. Both have their origins in the ancient land of Israel. Both stories come from the Bible, and both tell a story of the miraculous. Both recite the way God works through the ordinary to create something unique and memorable.

Hanukkah is the festival of lights. It is a reminder of how, after the cleansing of the Temple, enough oil was miraculously found to keep the lamps of the Menorah burning for eight days. It is a time for celebration when gifts are given. More than that, it is a reminder of the deliverance from slavery and the new hope of freedom and of how God made His presence known through the courage of a savior, Judas Maccabeus.

Christmas, likewise, tells of a Savior whose name is Jesus. The setting is in Bethlehem, and the scene is very ordinary - a cave, straw, a manger, sheep, and an innkeeper. Out of these most commonplace circumstances is born something most extraordinary - Emmanuel, God with us. God's presence makes the ordinary become miraculous.

We need these times of remembrance. We need to know our heritage. We need to know that God comes. A light shines. A new hope dawns. The days pass as other days pass, and the future is ever before us, which means according to the promise of long ago - God in His mercy and love will always be there to meet and cheer us.

So, a joyous holiday to one and all!

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