

Christmas

by
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“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were so afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:8-11, The Bible

Christmas is often called a season of hope, redemption and salvation.

Last November, America went to the polls and elected a new president in the **hope** of **salvation** for a nation on the brink of ruin, and **redemption** from economic and political error and evil.

As a nation founded on Judeo-Christian principles, it is time for Americans to reestablish those principles and their associated morals and ethics.

Regardless of how you voted in November, all of us need to put aside our political and religious differences and work together as we enter the coming year.

Whether you are Christian, Moslem, or Jewish, the text of each religion addresses people coming together and working for peace and harmony. Following is one of many verses from each religion directing us to seek peace and harmony.

2 Corinthians 13:11 “Strive for full restoration, encourage on another, be of one mind, live in peace.”

Surah Ta-Ha Ayat 47 “So go to him and say, Indeed, we are messengers of your Lord, so send with us the Children of Israel and do not torment them. We have come to you with a sign from your Lord. And peace will be upon he who follows the guidance.”

Psalms 34:14 “Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.”

This year, 2024, is unique in that all three religions have significant holidays that are celebrated in the month of December. Muslims celebrated *Jamada-ul-akhirah* this past

December 3. This holiday celebrates both the birth and death of Islamic figures, and the beginning of the “dry season.”

For Christians and Jews, this year is equally unique in that Christmas and Hanukkah fall on the same day. Both celebrations are about hope and the emergence of “light” from “darkness.” For the past 124 years, Hanukkah has coincided with either Christmas eve or Christmas day only 8 times (1902, 1910, 1921, 1940, 1959, 1978, 2005, and 2016). The next convergence will happen in 2052.

When you consider the November election and its mandate of the American people to bring our nation out of darkness and the brink of ruin, and to reestablish our country on a solid rock foundation instead of one made of sand, the convergence of these two major Christian and Jewish holidays is not something that just happened.

As we celebrate our respective holidays, each of us needs to take some time out from the festivities and reflect on the freedoms we enjoy, how blessed each of us are, even in the aftermath of Helene and other disasters, and how best we can serve our God and country.

Although December culminates with Christmas and Hanukkah as its major holidays, the month has over 100 other celebrations. In fact, every day in December brings its own unique reasons to celebrate. For example there is the “wear Brown Shoes Day,” the “Santa List Day,” and “St. Nicholas Day.”

