



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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Hanukkah:

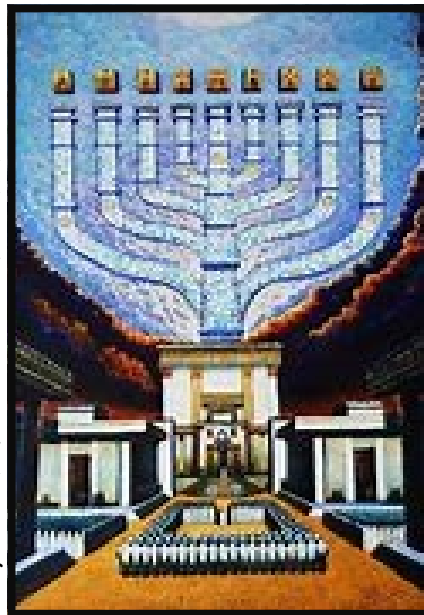
Victory over the Anti-Christ and Modern Day Tyrants

There is only one new holiday mentioned in the New Testament. No, it's not Christmas or Easter, it's Hanukkah; that's right Hanukkah is the only holiday Yeshua/Jesus celebrated in the New Testament that did not even exist during the time of the Tanakh (Old Testament): **"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch," John 10:22.** Friends, Hanukkah means dedication in Hebrew, so the feast of dedication is Hanukkah! Why didn't the writers of the various Christian Bible translations just say Hanukkah? Nobody calls it "the feast of dedication"; Perhaps somebody didn't want you to know. Well God sent me to let you know that Yeshua celebrated Hanukkah! Interestingly, it's celebrated mostly by Jews who don't read the New Testament, yet ignored by most Christians even though it is in what unbelieving Jews consider to be "the Christian Bible". Some things I will never understand in this life. All other Biblical holidays mentioned in the New Testament such as Shabbat, Passover, Sukkot/Booths, and Shavuot/Pentecost, are mentioned in the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets, and the writings.

Hanukkah is a message of God's great and miraculous deliverance of His people when they were overcome by a tyrant. The Hanukkah story foretells the coming Anti-Messiah and the certainty that he will be defeated and God's people set free!

The Hanukkah story begins in 175 B.C., Antiochus IV, otherwise known as Antiochus Theos Epiphanes (Antiochus the manifestation of God), who became ruler of the Seleucid kingdom of Syria and for whom the Turkish city of Antioch is named. Antiochus was a direct descendant of Seleucus, one of the four Macedonian

generals to receive one fourth of the empire of Alexander the Great upon his untimely death: **"A mighty king will arise, and he will rule with great authority and do as he pleases. But as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom will be broken up and parceled out toward the four points of the compass," Daniel 10:3-4.** Tiny Israel was part of Alexander's vast empire (the world's largest in its time) and was inherited by Antiochus IV when he became king of Syria.



For several years Antiochus was content to allow Israel to remain culturally and religiously Jewish. The priesthood maintained the religious government while the Syrians controlled the secular government. During this period the Jews were mostly content. Many Jews fell away from the God of their fathers and began to chase after the pagan ways of the Syrians called Hellenism (Greek culture/religion). Hellenism was worldly, modern and materialistic. It offered status, popular acceptance, economic gain, and a high tolerance for immorality. Hellenism probably looked similar to our secular society in the world today. Hellenism also came with its own religion, which involved the worship of Zeus, the Greek god of the sky and thunder. Although there were still Torah

(Bible) believing Jews in Israel at the time, the spiritual condition of the people was weak at best while hedonism, power, greed, and idolatry abounded. According to the Apocrypha the Jewish Hellenists **"Forsook (apostatized) the Holy Covenant and joined themselves to the heathen," 1 Maccabees 1:15.**

Things took a turn for the worse when Antiochus decided to force his religion on all Jewish people in Israel. Antiochus wanted to unite his kingdom of many peoples and languages by assimilating everyone into Hellenism. Josh-

Your local connection to Israel!

ua, the brother of Yochanan (the High Priest) was a Jewish Hellenist (what we might call deep state person). He coveted his brother's position as high priest, so Antiochus gave approval to a plot by Joshua to murder his brother Yochanan and be installed as the new High Priest of Israel. Joshua changed his name to Jason, a Greek name, had his brother killed, and began to desecrate the Holy temple and the priesthood. This led to a resistance by the remnant of true believers in the God of Israel from amongst the Jewish people.

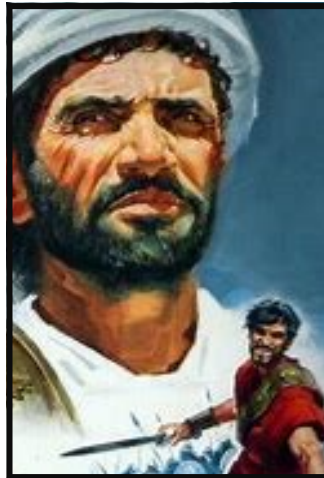
After an unsuccessful military campaign to conquer Egypt, Antiochus stopped in Jerusalem on his way home to Syria. By this time the current high priest over Israel was not even of priestly lineage. Antiochus, humiliated by his own failure to conquer Egypt, and running out of patience with Israel's resistance to Hellenism, took his wrath out upon the Jewish people by ordering them to sacrifice pigs on the holy altar of the temple and then sprinkle pig's blood in the Holy of Holies: **"they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar," 1 Maccabees 1:54, Daniel 11:31.** Antiochus chose Kislev 25th on the biblical calendar (December 25th this year on the Roman calendar) as the date to desecrate the temple because it was believed to be the birthday of Zeus (in that year) and it coincided with the winter solstice – the shortest day of the year. Incidentally, the Roman name for Zeus is Jupiter. The pagans had a festival known as Saturnalia to celebrate the birth of Zeus/Jupiter; they called it Saturnalia. Saturnalia is where Christmas comes from (check it out). The early Church incorporated the birth of Jesus into Saturnalia to please the pagans and bring them into the faith.

As I was saying, the Apocrypha recounts the abomination of desolation as being the sacrifice of pigs on the Holy altar of God's temple. Furthermore, Antiochus' soldiers began to kill the Jewish people who would not abandon their faith in the God of Israel. Many were forced to eat pork which was considered to be unclean according to the Torah (Law of Moses). Antiochus abolished the practice of observing the Sabbath, circumcision, and celebrating Jewish holidays (there was no church yet in 168 B.C.). He also shuttered synagogues and made gathering for worship illegal (sound familiar?). He banned all Torah scrolls (the Bible) and Antiochus even built an idol of Zeus, (said to remarkably resemble Antiochus) and forced the Jews to bow down and to worship the idol as god. Thousands of Jews were martyred for refusing to obey the Syrian tyrant.

The Apocrypha also gives an account of seven brothers and their mother, who were all put to death for refusing to eat swine's flesh. They were scourged, whipped, maimed, boiled alive, and skinned, yet they all gave glory to God! With death imminent, one of the brothers said, **"It is good**

being put to death by men, to look for hope from God to be raised up again by Him: as for thee, thou shalt have no resurrection to life," 2 Maccabees 7:14. Long before the coming of Messiah, Jewish believers understood the concept of the resurrection (Daniel 12:2, Job 19:25-26, Ezekiel 37).

When Syrian forces visited the town of Modin (northwest of Jerusalem) they built an altar to Zeus and found a Jewish man who was willing to offer a pig upon the holy altar in that town. An aged priest named Mattathias saw this event taking place and could not contain his anger. Mattathias killed the Jewish man and the king's official who had ordered the sacrifice. After his insurrection against the Syrians, Mattathias **"cried throughout the city with a loud voice, saying, whosoever is zealous of the Torah, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me," 1 Maccabees 2:27. Thus began the revolt of the Maccabees! They formed a band of freedom fighters in the Judean wilderness.** When Mattathias died, his son Judah (the hammer) "Maccabee" became leader of the revolt. Judah and his four brothers became known as "the Maccabees". In just three years of fighting, the Maccabees succeeded in defeating the largest military force in the world! They retook the



Holy Temple in Jerusalem on Kislev 25, 165 B.C.; this was exactly three years to the day from the initial desecration of the temple by Antiochus. The real miracle of Hanukkah, is that such a small band of Jews could defeat the mighty Syrian army. The Maccabees retook the temple that had been badly desecrated and began the process of repairing and cleaning it. Yeshua/ Jesus would later refer to this Temple as **"My Father's House", John 2:16. If it were not for the story of Hanukkah and the Maccabees, there would be no temple, no Jewish people, no little town of Bethlehem, no Mary and Joseph, and no Jesus the Messiah!**

Antiochus a Type of Anti-Christ:

Antiochus was not "THE Anti-Christ" but he was a "type" or "foreshadow" of the Biblical Anti-Messiah or Anti-Christ. The prophet Daniel wrote of the Anti-Messiah, **"the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction," Dan 9:26-27. The events of Hanukkah were prophesied in these words of Daniel.** Yochanan, the good High Priest who Antiochus murdered before the uprising represents Yeshua the Messiah. According to Hebrews

(Continued on page 3)

2:17, & 3:1, Yeshua is our High Priest. Throughout the Tanakh (Old Testament) whoever legitimately held the office of king or High Priest was a type of Messiah. In the same way, all leaders such as Presidents should be legitimate. When Antiochus had the legitimate high priest in Israel killed and replaced him with a pretender, the whole temple system became corrupt along with the whole government of Antiochus. This is lawlessness in its purest form.

Sadly, the majority of Jewish people were content to be ruled by a Greco-Syrian tyrant (a type of Anti-Christ) until he went too far and began to force his pagan idol worshiping religion on them. This reminds me of the current rebellion against woke culture and DEI (Diversity/Equity/Inclusion). People are waking up to tyranny today as our own governors, mayors and prosecutors practice lawlessness. By accepting the pagan Antiochus as the legitimate ruler of Israel, the Jewish nation entered into a covenant with Him – sealed in pig’s blood. It wasn’t until about the middle of the first seven years of Antiochus’ reign that he put a stop to the daily sacrifice. Daniel also said of Antiochus, **“He will intend to make alterations in times and in law,” Dan 7:25.** Antiochus changed the calendar of the Jews, abolished their Holy Days and banned the Torah (Bible) of Moses along with the books of the Prophets, Psalms, and writings. Synagogues were shut and people had to speak in code to avoid penalty of death. Syrian oppression was a time of tribulation for the saints in those days. Antiochus blasphemed the Most High God!

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 says, **“Let no one in any way deceive you, for it (The Day of the Lord) will not come unless the apostasy (rebellion) comes first, and the man of lawlessness who opposes and exalts himself above every so called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God...”** Those Jews who forsook the Holy Covenant to follow the religion of Hellenism committed apostasy. Many did this before Antiochus took the mask off and revealed himself as the enemy of God to His people. When Antiochus turned against Israel, he wasted no time in taking his seat in the Temple of God, displaying himself as God. Daniel 9-11 prophesied the coming of Antiochus, but Daniel’s prophecy is also a future prophecy of the coming Anti-Christ.

The Forerunner:

“What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun,” Ecc 1:9. It should be noted that God uses forerunners in His word. Joshua was a forerunner of Moses, and both Joshua and Moses were forerunners of the Messiah. Elijah was a forerunner of Elisha, and both Elijah and Elisha were forerunners of John the Baptist who himself was a forerunner of the Messiah Yeshua. In the same way, An-

tiochus was a forerunner of the Anti-Messiah. The forerunner’s deeds, good or bad, will be repeated, whether by Anti-Christ setting himself up in the temple as God (like Antiochus) or miracles such as healing the sick, raising the dead and multiplying food for many such as Elijah and Elisha did.

Amazingly the Hanukkah/Anti Christ prophecy in Daniel 9 sequentially follows the Daniel 8 prophecy which I have written and preached on extensively. I believe that only Donald Trump can fulfill the prophecy of destroying Iranian nuclear weapons according to Daniel 8, to fulfill God’s word that the one who fulfills this is a Gentile (Greek) from the West. No matter what it looks like, I cannot picture Joe Biden attacking Iran; he’s the same man who made a loose treaty with Iran, during the Obama administration by giving Iran over 150 billion dollars in exchange for their promise not to build nuclear weapons! However, I **can** picture President Trump attacking and defeating Iran. God must destroy Iranian nuclear capability in order to protect His word and to protect Israel (His dwelling place forever, Zechariah 8, Psalm 132:13). Nowhere in the Bible is there an indication that Israel is destroyed by anything like a nuclear attack. Conversely, the Bible does describe in detail an end-times invasion of Israel (Ezekiel 38-39, Revelation 16). In addition, the only western power with the capability to destroy the Iranian threat without using nuclear weapons is the United States, and the only leader I see willing and able to accomplish it is Donald J. Trump; that prophecy is yet to be fulfilled! If I am right about the prophecy concerning Iran in Daniel 8 in which I predicted that Trump would be used as an instrument of judgement against Iran, then the little horn of Daniel 8:9-12, who is the Anti-Messiah, must come out of a divided United States (which I said would be broken into four separate weaker countries) in accordance with Daniel 8:8, 22. Read it and check me on this. I was correct about Trump being elected nine months before it happened the first time. I said he would rule for at least seven years before being somehow cut down and that he would destroy ISIS, befriend Israel, have many enemies, help the Jewish people, and many Christians leave the U.S. in a time of distress. Most of this has come to pass.

Conclusion:

As I said before, history has a way of repeating itself. America and Israel today are worldly, materialistic and increasingly secular just as Israel was in Antiochus’ time. When the people forget about God and His laws, dictators and tyrants will inevitably arise. However, just as Israel miraculously defeated Antiochus Epiphanes whose first name actually means against Christ., so will the LORD himself defeat the Anti Christ. (see Revelation 19:20). The prophet Isaiah wrote, **“Can the prey be taken from the mighty man, or the captives of a tyrant**

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be rescued? Surely thus says the Lord, even the captives of the mighty man will be taken away, and the prey of the tyrant will be rescued; For I will contend with the one who contends with you, and I will save your sons,"
Isaiah 49:24-25. Hallelujah!

The Hanukkah story is a foreshadow of the coming of Messiah to defeat Anti-Messiah after his three and a half years reign of tyranny on the earth. Great miracles have happened such as when Moses led the children of Israel across the Red Sea, and such miracles can still happen today; so stay close to the Lord and be encouraged! Without Hanukkah there would be no Messiah Jesus, and without Messiah Jesus there would be no hope of defeating the tyrants of this world.

In His great love,
Rabbi Joe and Dawn

Thank you for your generous support of Messianic Judaism and For Zion's Sake Ministries.
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