



The Zion Letter

The Monthly Newsletter of For Zion's Sake Ministries, Inc.
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Hanukkah, the Millennial Temple, and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Did you know there is only one new holiday mentioned in the New Testament? Can you guess what it is? No, it's not Christmas or Easter, it's Hanukkah! John 10:22 says, "***At that time the Feast of the Dedication (Hanukkah) took place at Jerusalem; It was winter, and Yeshua/Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.***" That's right, the Feast of Dedication is really Hanukkah. Hanukkah means dedication in Hebrew. Perhaps somebody translated it as "Feast of Dedication" because they didn't want you to celebrate the New Testament Feast of Hanukkah? What is the Feast of Dedication, you might ask? Some will say, surely it's an Old Testament feast, but it's not; Hanukkah isn't "in the Torah". Hanukkah didn't begin until some two hundred years after the Old Testament time period ended. In fact, the only mention of it is in the New Testament. So why don't Christians celebrate this New Testament holiday that Jesus celebrated? We'll look at this question, and we'll discuss the Hanukkah connection to the Millennial Temple, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, His Bride, and more; read on!

What is Hanukkah?

The Greco-Syrian tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes, was a descendant of Seleucus, who was one of Alexander the Great's four generals. After Alexander's death, his empire was divided into four parts and given to his four generals. One portion included Syria, all the way to Persia, Lebanon, Babylonia and parts of Southern Turkey all the way down through what is modern Jordan and Israel to the border of Egypt! In 168 B.C., after a failed attempt by Antiochus to conquer Egypt, he headed home to Syria, but first stopped in Jerusalem where he took his frustrations out on the Jews. He desecrated the Temple of Israel by sacrificing a pig on the holy altar, and let the light of the seven branch menorah (lampstand) go out. Antiochus intentionally tried to humiliate the Jews. He banned the Torah (Bible), circumcision, observance of the Sabbath, and all forms of Jewish worship. He even sent his soldiers from town to town to build

pagan altars and enlisted local Jewish priests to sacrifice pigs (unclean animals under the Law of Moses) throughout Israel, forcing the people to eat the sacrificed pig, and forcing them to bow down to an image of Zeus.

A rebellion began in the town of Modi'in near Jerusalem. The Syrians had a massive army compared to tiny Israel, but a Jewish militia, led by Judah Maccabee and his brothers, succeeded in defeating the mighty Syrians. It took Judah Maccabee's band of brothers three years to the day to defeat the Syrians, from the day when the Syrians had first desecrated the Temple in the winter, on the 25th of the Biblical month of Kislev (the tenth month). After this miraculous defeat, the Jews began to clean the Temple, to repair it, and

to consecrate and rededicate the holy altar that Antiochus had defiled with a pig. Another miracle of Hanukkah is that the Jews only had enough consecrated olive oil to light the lampstand for one day, but the oil burned for eight days until fresh oil could be consecrated; this is the most well-known miracle of Hanukkah.



Why did Jesus celebrate Hanukkah?

The story of Hanukkah wasn't written in the Law of Moses. So why did Yeshua walk about eighty miles

from Galilee to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate it, especially during the cold (30 – 40 degree nights) of a Jerusalem winter? **First of all, without Hanukkah, there would never have been a Messiah.** Antiochus, the Greco-Syrian King was out to destroy the Jews and their homeland. Had he succeeded, there would never have been a Joseph and Mary, a little town of Bethlehem, a baby Jesus, a temple or a city of Jerusalem, where he was dedicated. There would have been no Anna the prophetess, or Simeon, no three wise kings to visit, or the shepherds in the fields. Fortunately, like every other tyrant dictator who has attempted to destroy the Jewish people and homeland, Antiochus failed. The victory of Hanukkah and of the Jews over tyranny led to the

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birth of the Messiah and the fulfillment of prophecy.

Making Hanukkah simple for Christians and all believers:

I once watched a series called “The Crown” about the English monarchy in the 20th century (mostly the reign of Elizabeth II), I never tire of seeing the grandeur of royal weddings and all the intrigue surrounding these global events. They are so significant that the whole world watches when they happen. This gives us a sense of Yeshua’s future wedding to His bride. Where do traditional Christian or Jewish weddings take place? If you answered, “in a church or a synagogue”, you are correct. Some churches are small and some are huge, the Vatican is perhaps the largest of all churches! In the same way traditional and Messianic Jews tend to get married in synagogues. Some synagogues are small and some hold thousands of people! The Temple at Jerusalem was the greatest synagogue of all in its day.

The Bible speaks of a millennial reign of the Messiah on earth (See Revelation 20: 2 & 7). During that period there will be the temple spoken of in Ezekiel 40-46. Ezekiel 43 describes this future temple which has not yet been built. It is a prophetic temple for the Millennium, yet after the Millennium, there will be a new heaven and a new earth with no temple (Rev 21:22). Why will there be a need for the Millennial/ Ezekiel Temple? Perhaps the main purpose of the Ezekiel Temple is to host a rather large Jewish wedding, and I think that’s why God will also reestablish the Levitical priesthood and the sacrificial system. There will even be some Gentiles who serve as Levites (See Isaiah 66:21). Many people ask why would God bring back the sacrificial system? The answer is that marriage is holy, especially Yeshua’s wedding; it must take place on Holy Ground, with Levitical worship and a Holy Meal prepared by priests. Who else is going to cook the wedding feast, for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, Outback? (See Revelation 19:17-18). The Marriage Supper of the Lamb occurs in Revelation 19 immediately after the return of Jesus, the King of the Jews (MT 27:37). That’s right, Yeshua returns, according to Revelation, after all the fireworks, seal judgments, bowl judgments, and trumpet judgments. Many believe that Yeshua takes His bride up to the heavens for a floating wedding in the clouds; however, there is no Scripture to support that idea. It is true, according to the Messiah himself (*John 6:40*) “That everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the Last day”. *1Thessalonians 4:15* says, “For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, WILL NOT PRECEDE THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP (DIED) For the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the sound of the Trump of God. And the dead in Messiah will rise first, then we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”



It is quite clear from the Scripture above that the resurrection of the dead on *The Last Day* precedes the *Harpazo (the catching away or “The Rapture”)*; however notice there is no mention of a wedding in the air. In fact, If you read Zechariah 12, 14 and Revelation 19-20 you see the Lord returns from heaven to earth along with His holy ones, but there is no mention of a wedding in the sky on the last day. If I’m right, the main purpose in building the Millennial Temple is for the Messiah to



have a beautiful altar and magnificent house of worship and banquet hall for His bride and the wedding feast! Glory!

The Antichrist Comparison:

In 2Thessalonians 2:1-5, we are told about the coming anti-messiah who sets

himself up in the pre-millennial temple. Orthodox Jews are presently soliciting enormous amounts of Christian money to help build this temple! The anti-messiah will stop the sacrifice after three and a half years and usher in the abomination of desolation. It is then that having fooled the world and the Jews, this anti-messiah will be recognized for who he really is. He shall require the Jews and others to bow down and worship him as God. Sound familiar?

Remember Antiochus Epiphanes who set himself up in the Temple as God back in 168 B.C. and caused what the book of Maccabees refers to as “The abomination of desolation”? He banned Judaism, sacrificed a pig on the holy altar, forced Jews to eat swine’s flesh, and bow down to idols of Zeus; that is until God raised up the Maccabees to deliver Israel and free the Temple in just three years! The Hanukkah story is a fore-shadow of the coming antichrist, but this time it won’t be Antiochus, and the deliverer won’t be Judah Maccabee, but it will be the Lord Yeshua the Messiah Himself who will destroy the beast and the false prophet (see Revelation 19:19-20). So are you seeing why Jesus celebrated Hanukkah (God’s Biblical winter holiday shown in John 10:22)? Yeshua is the fulfillment of Hanukkah, He is the one who fulfills the prophecy of the Hanukkah story that took place 165 years before He was even born!

The Altar and the Wedding:

Where does a traditional bride stand when she gets married? At the altar of course! If the *“Great Supper of God”* or *“The Marriage Supper of the Lamb”* (Rev 19:17, Rev 19:9) is to take place in the Millennial Temple, then perhaps that is why the largest construction project on earth occurs when Yeshua returns (read Zechariah 14:4). I propose that Yeshua Himself will return with His holy ones, defeat all those from the nations who fought against Jerusalem and Israel, and will super-

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naturally rebuild the Temple for the Millennium on that day. Why will He do this? Because He is going to make sure there is a Millennial Temple, complete with priests, Levites, sacrifices, and a consecrated, undefiled altar where He can enter into vows with His Bride! Just as the Maccabees cleansed and repaired the Temple 165 years before the birth of the Messiah, Yeshua will come back not just to repair, but to build the thousand year temple of Ezekiel 40-46.

Perhaps the most important reason Yeshua celebrates Hanukkah:

Yeshua is 100% man and He is 100% God. God hates idolatry perhaps more than anything else in the Bible. In the Ten Commandments, God commands that His people have no other gods before him and forbids making and bowing to images, declaring Himself a jealous God who will punish this sin. Moses warns the people against idolatry in Dt 5:7-9. In Dt 8:19, God warns that if His people forget Him and follow other gods to serve and worship them, they will surely perish.

The Prophets also spoke out against idolatry (Isaiah 42:8, 44:9-11, Jeremiah 11:12). The Prophet Ezekiel likened committing idolatry to prostitution (See Ezekiel 16, Hosea 2 -3.). In 2 kings 17:12-18, Israel was removed from the Land for committing idolatry despite numerous warnings. Even in the New Testament we see God's disdain for idol worship: In Romans 1:22-25 people exchange the glory of the immortal God for images and serve created things rather than the Creator. This idolatry is part of the reason God gives them over to their sinful ways. In 1 Corinthians 10:14, Paul, after recounting Israel's idolatry and its judgments, urges believers: "Flee from Idolatry!" John closes His letter by exhorting believers to keep themselves from idols, showing ongoing danger even for Christians, 1 John 5:21. Last but not least we see mankind worshipping the image of the Beast in Revelation 13, leading them only to judgment and damnation...

Hanukkah demonstrates God's victory, Jesus' victory over idolatry. In the end it won't be Judah Maccabee who tears down the idols, but he is a forerunner of Yeshua the Messiah who returns with His Holy Ones to destroy idols and the idolatrous men of the earth one final time (See Zechariah 12,14, Revelation 19-20.) No other holiday demonstrates God's victory over idolatry like Hanukkah. That I believe is why it such a special holiday to our Lord and Savior.

Conclusion:

I believe that I have made a good case using Scripture and the story of Hanukkah to support what I am teaching. We can study these well-known Bible passages over and over, but until God gives a revelation and puts the pieces of the puzzle together, then well-intentioned preachers and Bible teachers tend to pontificate and speculate, sending us all up in the clouds with no real or plausible explanation for why there will be a Millennial temple, or why there will be a return of the sacrificial system. You **cannot** understand end-times prophecy without having a Jewish understanding of Hanukkah. That's why God sent me to you: raised in Juda-

ism, instructed by rabbis, and now filled with the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit), I'm a born-again Rabbi for Jesus, sent to help you make sense of the things that formerly made **no** sense. I am thankful for those of you who are blessed by the teachings of the Zion Letter. If you are, feel free to copy or request copies from us and share with friends. Encourage them to sign up for the Zion Letter! I also encourage you to like us on Facebook and visit our services, like our upcoming community Hanukkah service on Sunday December 14th at 6:30 PM. Bring your friends or your Bible study group! Thank you for your prayers and for those of you who support this ministry. Standing with Israel begins at the local level. Whether you celebrate Hanukkah or Christmas, we wish you a blessed holiday season with family with friends and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

In His great love,
Rabbi Joseph and Dawn Bell



For Zion's Sake Ministries Presents
Sunday December 14th
6:30 pm



The Tri-Cities Messianic Center

580 Norfolk Ave Bristol VA 24201
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*John 10:22 What would Jesus do?
Jesus would come to the synagogue and celebrate Hanukkah!
We invite you to come sing the songs of Zion and celebrate the rededication of the Temple of God. Rabbi Joe will teach about the story of Hanukkah. Come join us and bring your group for this special community celebration of the miraculous rededication of God's Holy Temple amidst a dark and wicked society.*

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