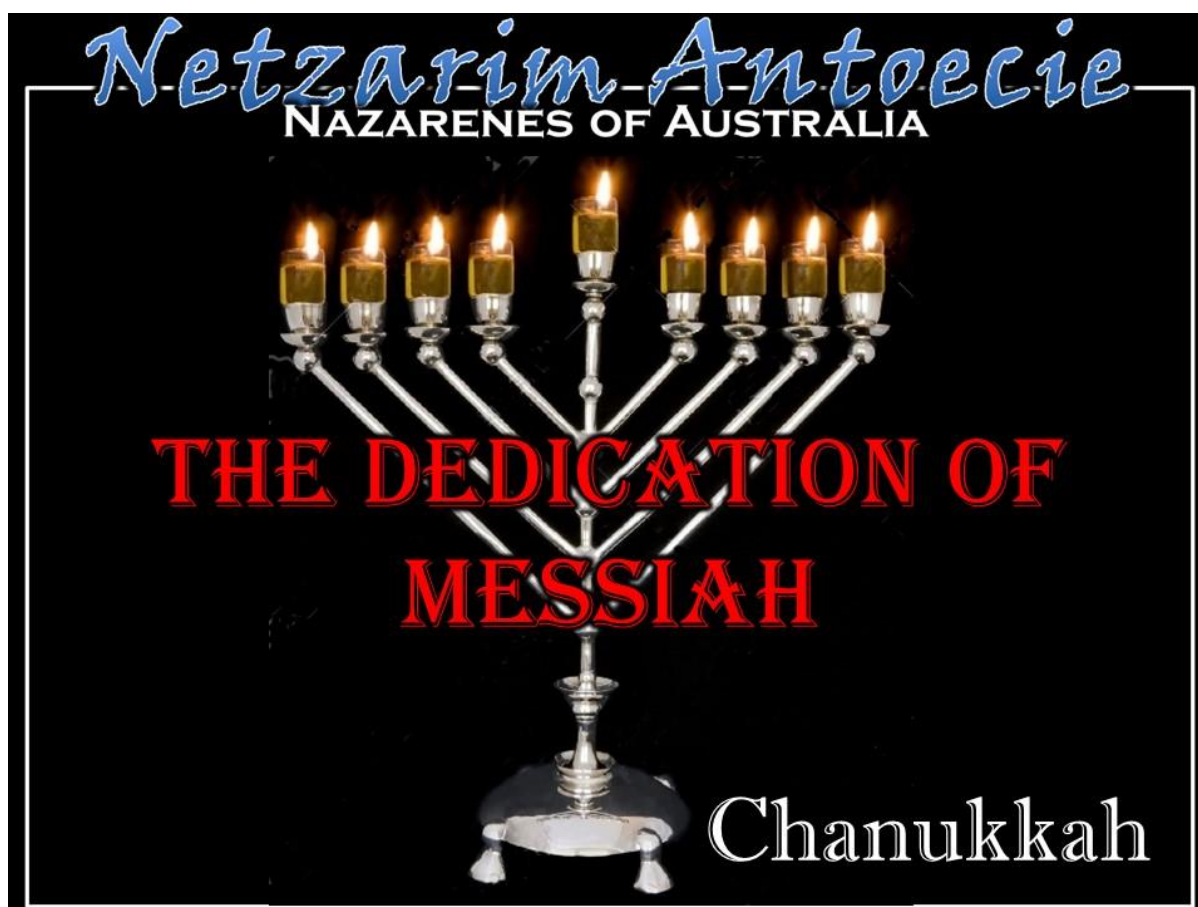


The Dedication of Messiah



Introduction:

The Feast of Chanukah (Hanukkah) is a great opportunity to revive a lost remembrance of a time of great sacrifice that restored the faith of Yisrael and therefore to many today who have not known of its significance.

It is vital for the believer in Messiah to see how Yeshua reflected on this embattled Hebrew Holiday and how he is revealed in it.

When we research Hanukkah on the web we will find Messianic groups that actively celebrate it and groups that are greatly opposed to it. Some cite it as an opportunity for active separation and endorsement of violent rebellion. Yet the Scriptures clearly say that we should not look at ourselves in any way as being separated from Elohim's chosen people as we read in:

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Yeshayahu [Isaiah] the Prophet



YeshiYahu (Isaiah) 56:3
“Let no foreigner who is bound to Yahweh say, ‘Yahweh will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let no eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’”

YeshiYahu (Isaiah) 56:3 “Let no foreigner who is bound to Yahweh say, ‘Yahweh will surely exclude me from his people.’ And let no eunuch complain, ‘I am only a dry tree.’”

We need to realise that Chanukah essentially celebrates the preservation of the Promises made by Yahweh in the Torah and the prophets. It does not impede with any other Biblical High Holiday and carries no attributes that teach contrary to the Torah or the teachings of the Messiah!

We need to look at and observe Chanukah in a way that brings esteem and honour to Yahweh, the Messiah and Yisrael. These three aspects are *echad* (are a compound unity).

Yeshua never teaches against **Chanukah**, but rather is found teaching leading up to and during the feast and utilising the relevant reflections of this season to accentuate his teachings.



Leading up the Feast he exclaims in: **Yochanan (John) 9:5, 12:46** “While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.... I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

Then, we read something of significance concerning this Feast in:



John 10:22 At that time the Feast of Dedication [Chanukkah] came to be in Yerushalayim, and it was winter. 23And Yeshua [Yahusha] was walking in the Set-apart Place, in the porch of Solomon [Shelomoh].

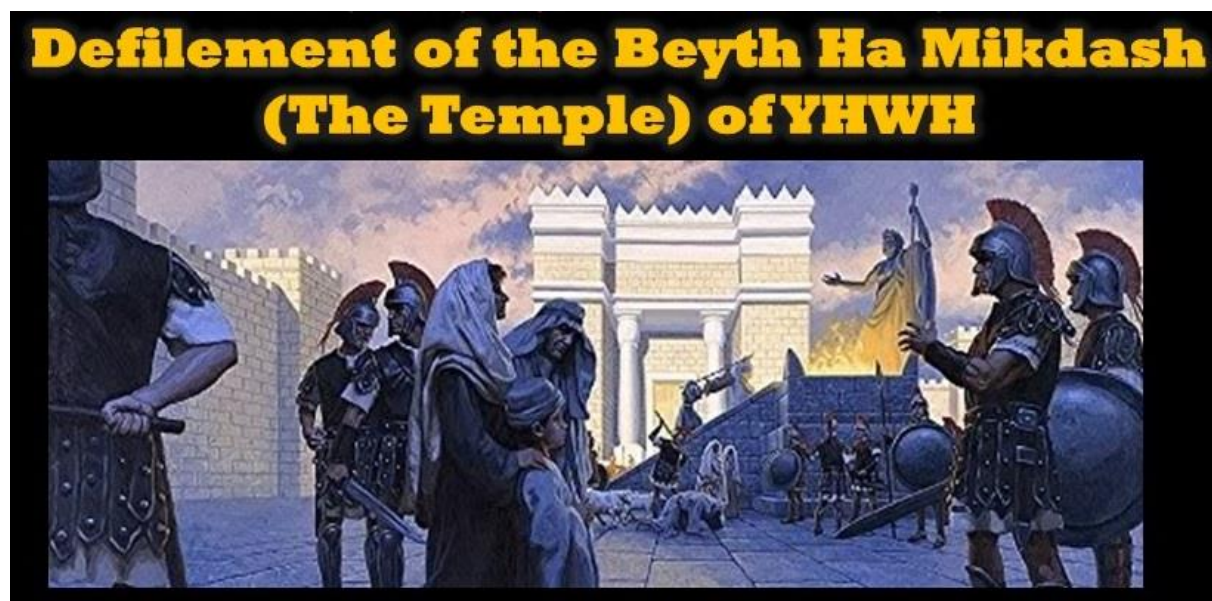
The author surely was desiring to let the reader know that Yeshua was now in the Temple at the time of this particular feast and that it was winter as we read meaning the time of Kislev [December].

Yeshua's teaching also mentions him being sanctified by Elohim, which is synonymous with being dedicated.

But before we go any further, let us look into some of the background of how this feast came about.

The Historical Background:

During the time of the 2nd temple, the Land of Yisrael was ruled by the Seleucid Rulers who were succeeded by the cruel Antiochus Epiphanes. Now that a wicked and evil ruler came to power Antiochus robbed the Jews of their property, set up pagan idols in the Temple of Elohim.



We read in the following how he desecrated the most Holy place in:

1 Maccabees 1:54 On the 15th day of the month Kislev (**Hebrew 9th Month**) in the year 145 (167 BC) “the abomination of desolation” was set up on the Altar of burnt offering and they built altars in the surrounding cities of Yahudah (**Judah**).

What is most significant, is that this defilement was purposefully planned to coincide with the winter solstice or the birth of the Pagan Sun Gods (Elohim) to further bring insult and make the Temple a place of Pagan worship.

Antiochus then forcefully caused the Yahudim (the Jews) to abandon the keeping of the Sabbath (**the Shabbat**) and didn't allow them to circumcise their children on punishment of death and he burned every Torah scroll he could find, and his final insult and abomination was that he offered a **Swine** on the sacred Altar in the Beyth Ha Mikdash (the Temple). His sole purpose was the introduction of Greek religion through the entire Kingdom with no exceptions and he enforced his will with extreme cruelty and violence.

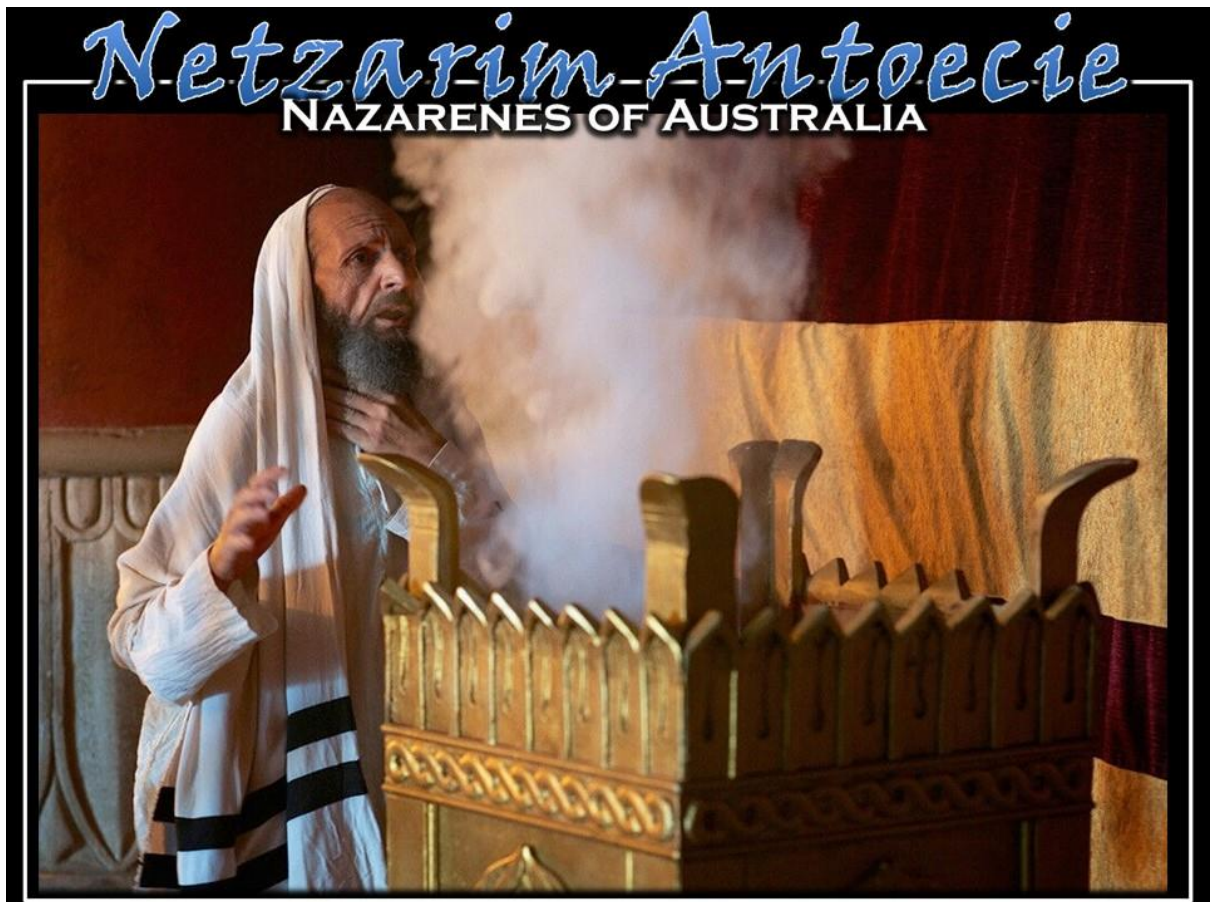


These horrible actions led to a revolt by a group of Yahudim (Jews) known as the Maccabees. The Maccabees risked their lives to keep the Torah alive and to cling to those sacred things that their **Elohim** (God) had given them. Yahweh saw that the intent of their hearts was pure, so He favoured them and gave them the victory over superior well equipped large Syrian mercenary forces that had conquered their land.

The Hanukkah lights therefore remind us of the great miracle that took place where a small band of Yahudim (Jews) defeated the mighty Greek armies with the help of their great and mighty Elohim (God).

The Yeshua Connection:

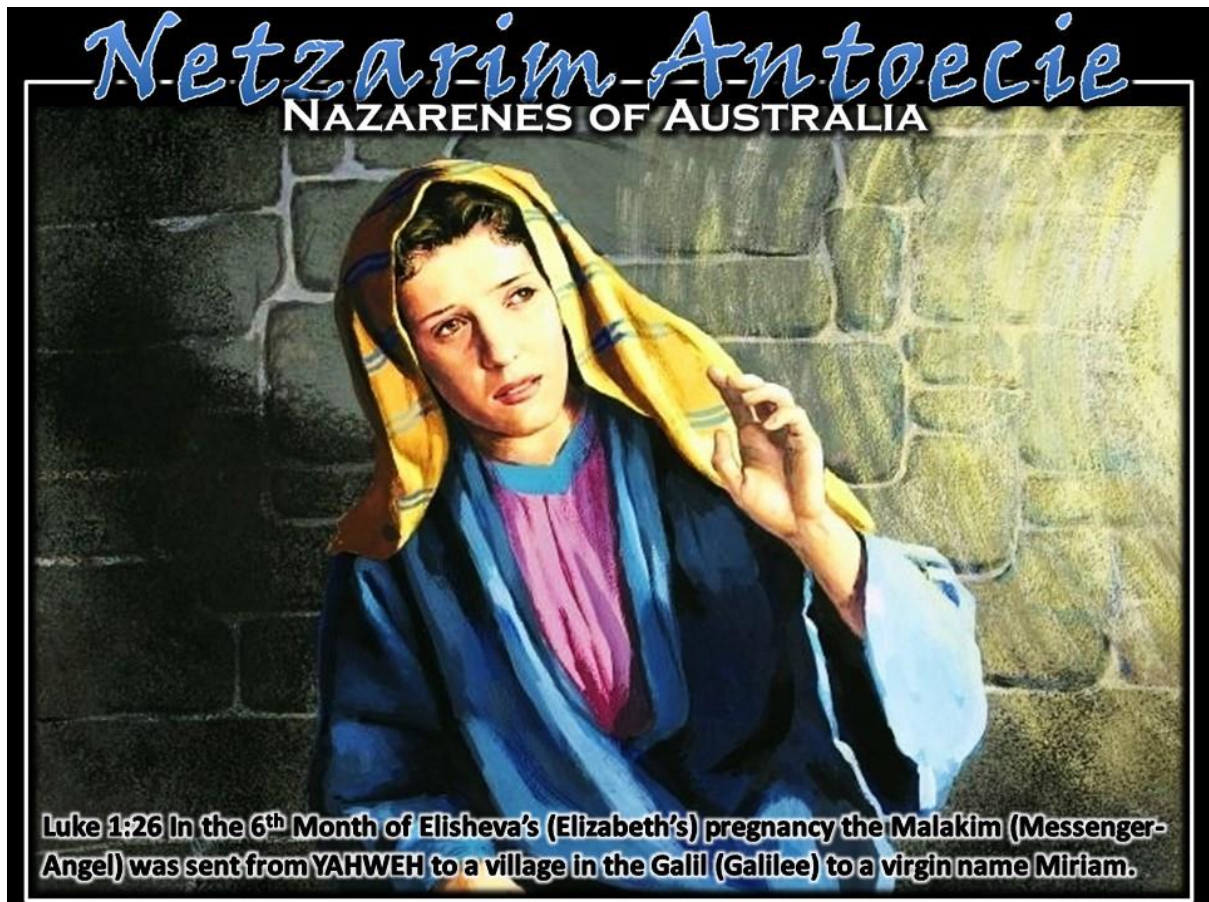
1. The first connection that we can find concerning Yeshua is in the promise of his birth through the birth of Yahuchanan [John] the Immerser.



It can be precisely shown that Zekhariah (**Zechariah**) was ministering in the **Beyth Ha Mikdash** (The Temple) at Shavuot (Pentecost) since he was selected by lot according to his division to offer the Ketoreth (incense) in the dwelling place of Yahweh.

Note: From The Temple Treasures Institute, Jerusalem: The honour of burning incense on the Golden Altar and pronouncing the A'aronic blessing over the people was bestowed just once in the lifetime of a Kohen (**a Priest**).

From the following verse we can deduce that the birth of both Yochanan (John) & Yeshua were on the High Sabbaths of the two primary Feasts of Pesach (**Passover**) & Sukkot (**Tabernacles**). Therefore, from Scripture we can see a timeline for the visitation of Gavriel (**Gabriel**) to Miriam:



Luke 1:26 In the 6th Month of Elisheva's (Elizabeth's) pregnancy the Malakim (Messenger- Angel) was sent from YAHWEH to a village in the Galil (Galilee) to a virgin name Miriyam.

Since we come to see that YAHWEH has given us divinely appointed times known in Hebrew as the “**Moadim**” we know they were perfectly fulfilled to the day, for **Pesach** (Passover) & **Shavuot** (Pentecost). We might however be greatly Surprised to see that the fulfilment for the conception of the Son of the Most High through the Ruach Ha Kodesh (**the Holy Spirit**) also equates to **Chanukkah** meaning “**Dedication**” by which the Son of the Most High came in the likeness of Man through the womb of Miriyam to fulfil the Mission of the Father.

2. The second & most powerful connection that Yahshua has with the Feast of Chanukkah is in its alternative title being the “**Festival of Lights**”. Scripture always refers to light as a symbol of YAHWEH. In fact, Yahuchanan (John) uses the term light no fewer than 19 times in his Good News with another example being found in his letter in:



Yochanan Aleph (1 John) 1:5 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that Elohim is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

This then brings us to an interesting thought. We read in **Yahuchanan (John) 7** that Yeshua is at Sukkot (**the Festival of Booths**). However, we read at the beginning of Chapter 7 also:

Yochanan 7:1 And after this Yeshua walked in Galil (**Galilee**), for he did not wish to walk in Yahudah (**Judea**) because the Yahudim (**the Jews**) were seeking to kill him.

Clearly at this particular time Yeshua had returned to Jerusalem, something he normally avoided doing at this point in time, just as he had come for **Sukkot**, now he had come for **Chanukkah** (the Feast of Dedication) despite the fact that many wished to kill him, and this then implies that Yeshua thought that it was imperative for him to be found at this feast.

In the Chronological Gospels by Michael Rood at the conclusion of chapter 7 he includes this comment:

Yahuchanan (John) 7:53 And [after the feast of Sukkot (**Tabernacles**) concluded] ever man went to his own house.

Note: From the context we can conclude that the next two months between Sukkot & Chanukkah is when Yahshua sent out his **Talmidim** (disciples) equating this section to being after the mount of transfiguration experience before Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) as noted in:



Luke 10:1 And after this the Master appointed seventy others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every city and place where he himself was about to go.

The conclusion of this reasoning is that the following chapters beginning from Chapter 8 are thought by commentators to be the time of **Chanukkah** though Yahshua's location is not revealed until the following, almost as an afterthought of significance to show us the time as we have read in Yahuchanan [John] 10:22 that it was the feast of Dedication [Chanukkah] and that it was Winter:

What adds credence to this thought is the words Yeshua uses when speaking to the P'rushim **(the Pharisees)** and the people. In fact, he preached three sermons in which he declared Himself the **"light of the world,"** the most known verse being:



Yochanan (John) 8:12 Therefore Yeshua [Yahusha] spoke to them again saying "I am the light of the World. He who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness but possess the light of life."

By Yeshua referring to himself as the light of the World apart from reflecting on the theme of Chanukkah being the Festival of lights he was in truth declaring himself as the context to which the Feast was being celebrated, which was the hope of the return of the **light of YAHWEH** that had departed from the Temple and so the rededication and cleansing of the Temple of YAHWEH was seen as the hope of Yisrael for the return of the **Shekinah** (the presence) & a National return to faithful observance of all that the Torah taught as it was considered the light of Elohim.

What opponents to Hanukkah today site however is the fact that though the revolution was to restore the Temple and the Torah, the Maccabean rule became corrupt. Quoting from a well known Jewish Historian is now appropriate:

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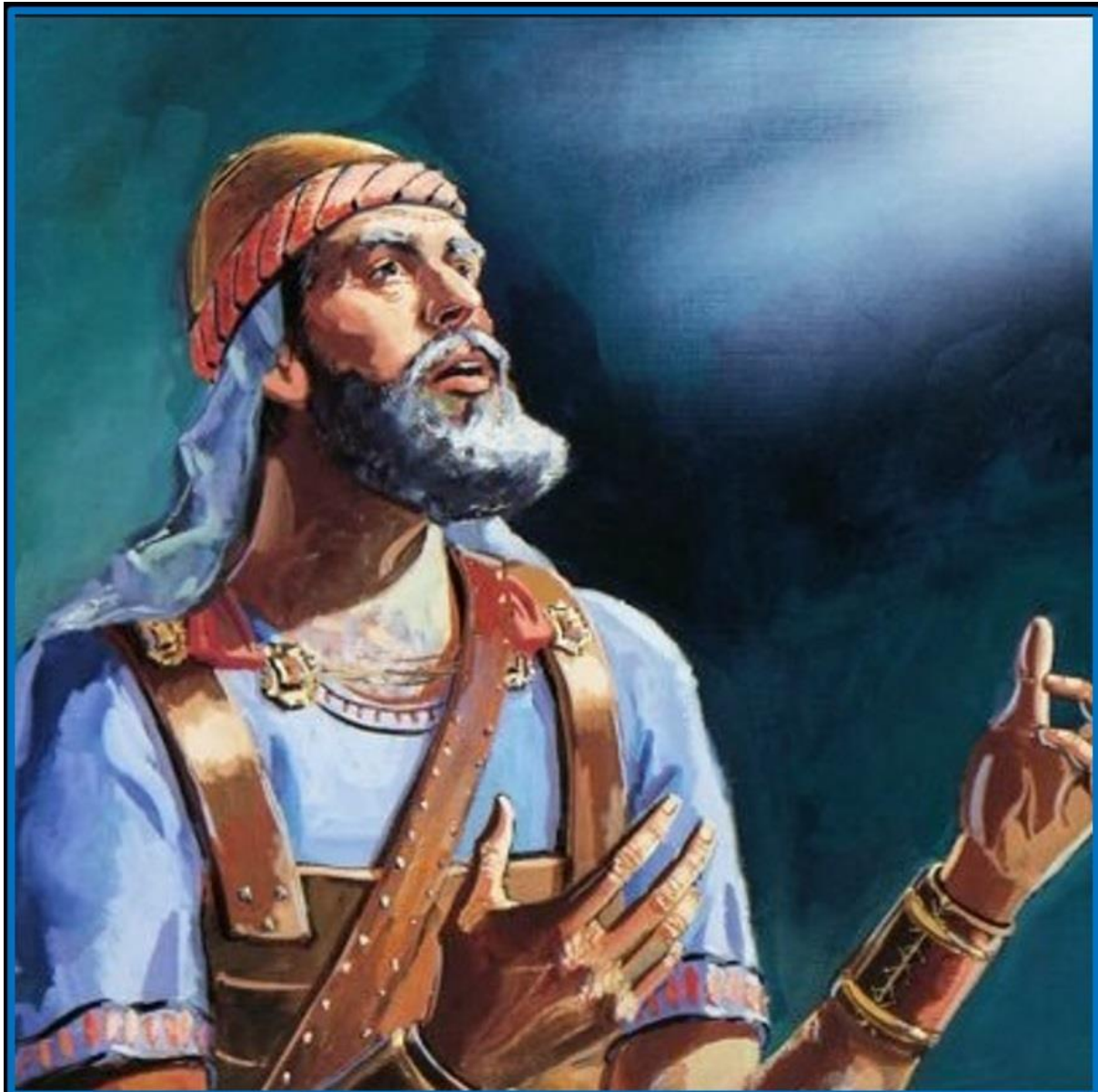


Titus Flavius Josephus.

Antiquites 13:14:2 [380]

In time, the Maccabee family (the Hasmoneans) became drunk with power & became corrupt & cruel. One of their leaders Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BCE) put down a revolt of Pharisees and Hasidim who challenged his corrupt regime. Over a 6-year period he slaughtered 50,000 Yahudim (Jews). At one point he ordered the Yahudi (Jewish) soldiers to crucify 800 Pharisees and ordered the throats of their children and their wives cut in front of them.

This indeed seems to be the picture of mankind & of Yisrael but that is no reason to fail to honour this historical fact since without Chanukkah the birth of Yeshua would have come in a time of Pagan Greek religion. We must however consider that the birth of Yisrael in the promised Land came with war, as we read in the book of **Yahushua** (Joshua) but also through Yisrael's corruption so did their downfall both to the **Assyrians & Babylonians**. Yisrael always had to fight to see its promises fulfilled. Yahushua (Joshua) was encouraged by YAHWEH to be strong & courageous, and that no man could stand before him. The eventual failure of the **Maccabees** therefore came as a result of their failure to fulfil the words given to **Yahushua** (Joshua) in:



Yahushua (Joshua) 1:8 Do not let the Book of the Torah depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you guard to do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous and act wisely.

Therefore, it is precisely to this Feast that Yeshua [**Yahusha**] comes since Military victories are short lived and subject to abusive rule but to bring true light was the purpose of Yeshua's coming because his light endures eternally.

To further understand the eight days of Hanukkah we turn to the book of the Maccabees since we know that the Temple was defiled, and the **Feast of Sukkot** (tabernacles) could not be kept and since Tabernacles lasts 8 days this Feast would therefore be a belated Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) according to this verse:

2nd Maccabees 1: 9 And now see that you keep the Feast of Booths in the month of Chislev,

Though we know that the Temple was rededicated on the **25th of Kislev** because that was when it was defiled another explanation for the choosing of this date maybe reflected in the book of:



Haggai chapter 2:18 Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month [Kislev], from the day that the foundation of the Hēkal [the Temple] of Yahweh was laid,

Our connection here to the Feast is that the cornerstone to the second temple was laid at this time. This is the same temple that the idolatrous Antiochus would desecrate some 350 years later.

The miracle story of the one cruse of oil lasting for eight days to keep the menorah lit is not however found in either Book of the Maccabees in the Apocrypha. It is however found in Jewish Talmudic literature:

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The baraita (an addition to the Mishnah) Megillat Ta'anit, Shabbat 21b.
We read according to the Encyclopedia Judaica, this baraita "states that on entering the Temple, the Hasmoneans discovered that the Greeks had defiled all the oil, except for one cruse, which contained enough oil to keep the Temple Menorah burning for only one day. A miracle, however, happened and they kindled from it for eight days; in its commemoration a festival lasting eight days was instituted for future generations" ["Hanukkah," EncJud 7:1283-84].

This may be just a tradition made to remember Chanukkah is a way that would not cause violence to erupt because in Yeshua's time we know that Yisrael was under Roman occupation.

What the teachers of the Nation of Yisrael began to understand, is that though the Military Victory of the Maccabees only lasted less than 100 years, the Spiritual Victory that they incited would last even to the present day which is best represented by the tradition of the single cruse of oil. With Yeshua coming to the Feast of Chanukkah, he was saying, for today, that he is that one Cruse of Oil that never runs out and as the **"Shamash"** the servant candle, he gives light to all who will believe in him because he is **"the light of the World"** that endures forever.

The Final Outrage:

Since the Maccabean zealots long ago contended with Antiochus Epiphanes, whose name literally meant "El (God) Manifest" (Epiphanes) we might think that the declaration of Yeshua was at the worst possible time, or, could it be the most appropriate time. When he explicitly announced that he and the Father were **"one"** (in name, authority and purpose as we read in **Yochanan (John) 10:30**), the leaders had had enough. Yahshua was in fact saying that he was El Manifest, so they accused him of blasphemy and flew into righteous rage picking up stones.



What is truly amazing about this event where the **Yahudim** (Jews) picked up stones to cast at him is that this is the Temple precincts and normally you would not expect stones to be there. These however were special stones. These were the remains of the defiled Altar from the Maccabean days because though the Altar was defiled the stones were still considered **"Kadosh"** (Holy) so they could not be thrown out to be discarded so they were placed to the side. That meant they picked up these very stones to throw at **El Manifest** who had revealed

himself at **Chanukkah** (the Feast of Dedication) as the true light of the World & the true manifestation of Elohim in the Earth.

Simply put: Yeshua sounded to them like another blasphemous Antiochus.

Was not the whole purpose for Yeshua coming to the **Beyth Ha Mikdash** (the Temple) where his people from all Nations were gathering to celebrate its restoration and the preserving of the Torah the light of truth, to reveal that he was the true light and that he was also the true Temple as he said in this reading:



Yochanan (John) 2:18-19 So the Yahudim (Jews) answered and said to Him, “What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?” **19** Yeshua answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

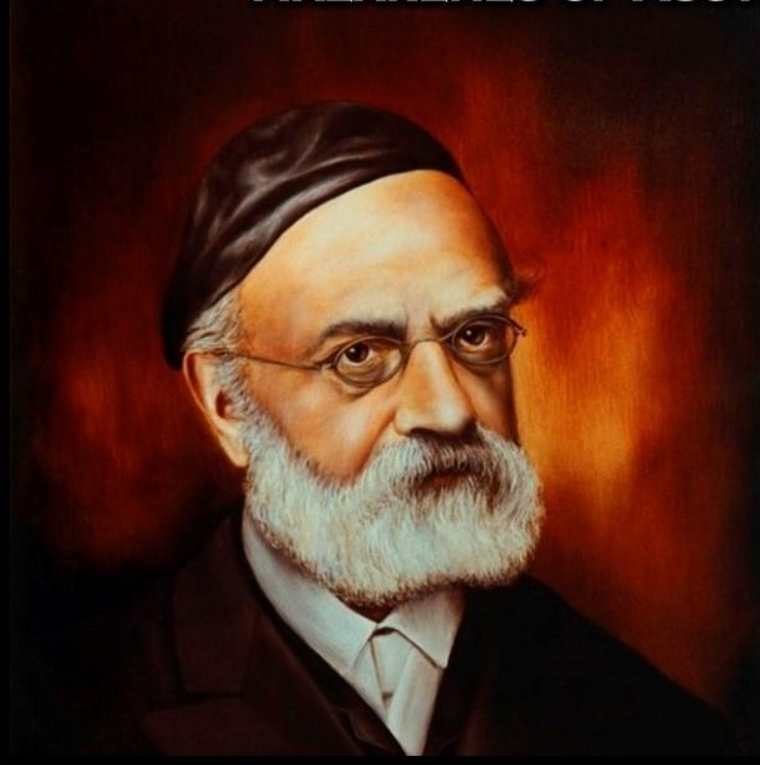
Could in fact Yeshua be fulfilling another prophecy of Haggai where YAHWEH through the prophet predicts that **“the Esteem/ Glory”** of this latter temple shall be greater than the former” **(Hag 2:9):**

The True Temple of YAHWEH is therefore not a building as grand as it might have been, but it is the body of Messiah since YAHWEH never desired to dwell in a building of stone but in the hearts of his people. As we consider the celebration of Hanukkah **(the Festival of Dedication/Lights)** let us see it as a proclamation of the true light and the true Temple of YAHWEH that has come into the World:

A Quote from the Kleinman Edition of **“The Mishkan Its Structure and its Sacred Vessels”** is in order:

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Rav Samson Raphael Hirsh states that the **Mishkan** (the Tabernacle) had two purposes:

1. It was a **Kadosh** (Holy) place meaning that the vessels would be sacred.
2. That it would be the place where the presence (the **Shekinah**) would dwell.

Now that the true light has come those who walk in that light are his true **“Mishkan- Dwelling”** as revealed in the words of **Kepha** (Peter):

Kepha Aleph (1 Peter) 2:5 You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a **Kadosh** (Set-Apart) priesthood, to offer up spiritual slaughter offerings acceptable to **Elohim** through **Yahshua** Messiah.

Let us therefore see Chanukkah as an opportunity to reflect the light that dwells in us:

Yochanan Aleph (1 John) 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of **Yahshua** Messiah His Son cleanses us from all sin.



Added Notes

The Hanukkah Menorah:

Within the Menorah we find a great revelation of the body of Messiah with the Central Candle which is called the Shamash the servant Candle giving light to all others with a progression each night by adding another Candle.

Meaning of the Candles

Shamash (Servant) Candle

Messiah Yahshua stated in **Mark 10:44-45**: Whoever wishes to be first among you shall be the servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

First Candle

Bereshiyth (Genesis) 1:3-4 describes the creation of the first light: Elohim said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And Elohim saw that the light was good; and Elohim separated the light from the darkness.

Second Candle

Shemot (Exodus) 13:21-22 reveals that Elohim is the source of Israel's light: "And YAHWEH was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of

fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”

Third Candle

King David reminds us in:

Tehillah (Psalm) 27:1 YAHWEH (The Lord) is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

Fourth Candle

Psalm 119:105 and Psalm 119:130 describes the light that comes from the Word of YAHWEH:

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. The unfolding of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”

Fifth Candle

Messiah Yahshua is the greatest light of all:

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not comprehend it (John 1:4-5)”.

As Messiah Yahshua was in the Temple in Jerusalem watching the illuminating lights, He declared: "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12).

Aged Shim'on (Simeon) was promised by the Lord that he would not die until he saw Yisrael's Messiah. When he saw Yahshua as an infant in the Temple, he knew that this One was the light of Yisrael and the Nations.

Shim'on (Simeon) declared: "My eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the gentiles, and the glory of Your people Yisrael" (Luke 2:30-32).

Sixth Candle

After we come to know Messiah, we are to be a source of light for the world. King Messiah tells us in **MatithYahu (Matthew) 5:14-16**:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure (basket), but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Seventh Candle

The prophet YeshiYahu (Isaiah) speaks of the future glory of a restored Israel:

YeshiYahu (Isaiah) 60:1-3: Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of YAHWEH has risen upon you... And nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Eighth Candle

Revelation 21:22-27 gives us a description of our glorious eternal dwelling place in the New (Yerushalayim (Jerusalem)):

“And I saw no temple in it, for YAHWEH Elohim, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the esteem of Elohim has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their esteem into it. And in the daytime (for there shall be no night there) its gates shall never be closed; and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it; and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

When we add a candle each day for each of the eight days of Chanukkah, it represents the expanding nature of CHESED (mercy) as opposed to the contracting nature of GEVURAH (severity).

Happy Chanukkah

