

The Feast of Hanukkah

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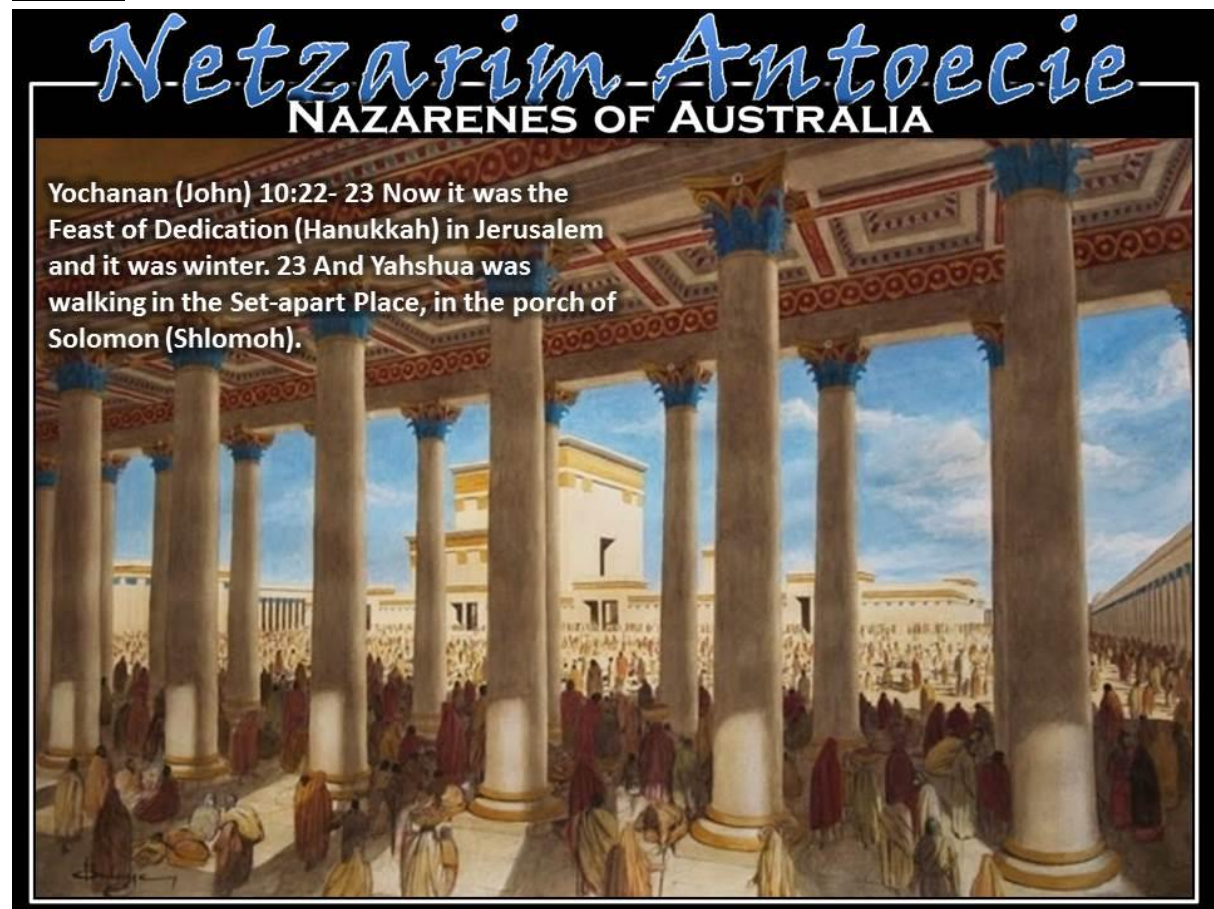


Introduction: One might seriously wonder why we would even consider the Feast of Hanukkah or correctly said in Hebrew as Chanukah to be an important feast to remember since it is not a prescribed feast according to the Torah. This is a valid question but as we will see if it were not for Hanukkah the faiths of Judaism, Christianity and even Islam would not even exist today. It is the endeavour of this teaching to show why this man made feast is worthy of our consideration since we also believe it brings the highest praise to Elohim by whom this celebration would never have been possible.

What then is Hanukah:

To understand this Feast we first need to know what the word Chanukah means as it is Hebrew. Its meaning is simple dedication and the only place that we can find this Feast mentioned is in the Brit Chadashah meaning the Renewed Covenant or what most people would identify as the New Testament. What we are about to discover is that Yahshua himself attended the Beyth Ha Mikdash (the Temple) during this Feast as we read:

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Yochanan (John) 10:22- 23 Now it was the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) in Yerushalayim, and it was winter. 23 And Yahshua was walking in the Set-apart Place, in the porch of Solomon (Shlomoh).

From this verse we understand the Master himself went to the Temple at this time during this celebration therefore we need to take the time to consider the importance of this Feast.

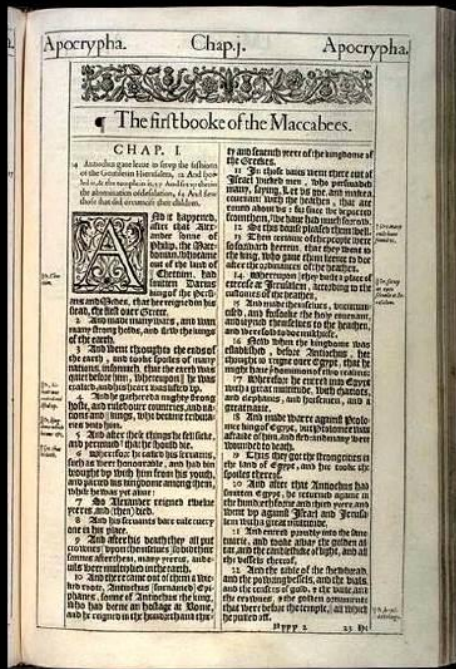
What Hanukkah Reveals:

The most amazing truth of Hanukkah is that it is the most precise Blue Print for what will happen in the end times & also the Strategy for believers to be overcomers. What we will come to see is that it is prophesied in Daniel.

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The Apocrypha Books



The Primary source of information regarding the story of Hanukkah or the Feast of Dedication comes from the Books of the Maccabees. These Books span the 400 years between Malachi and Matthew but were removed in 1881 by the Protestant Churches during the Reformation as they were deemed as only Historical and not inspired.

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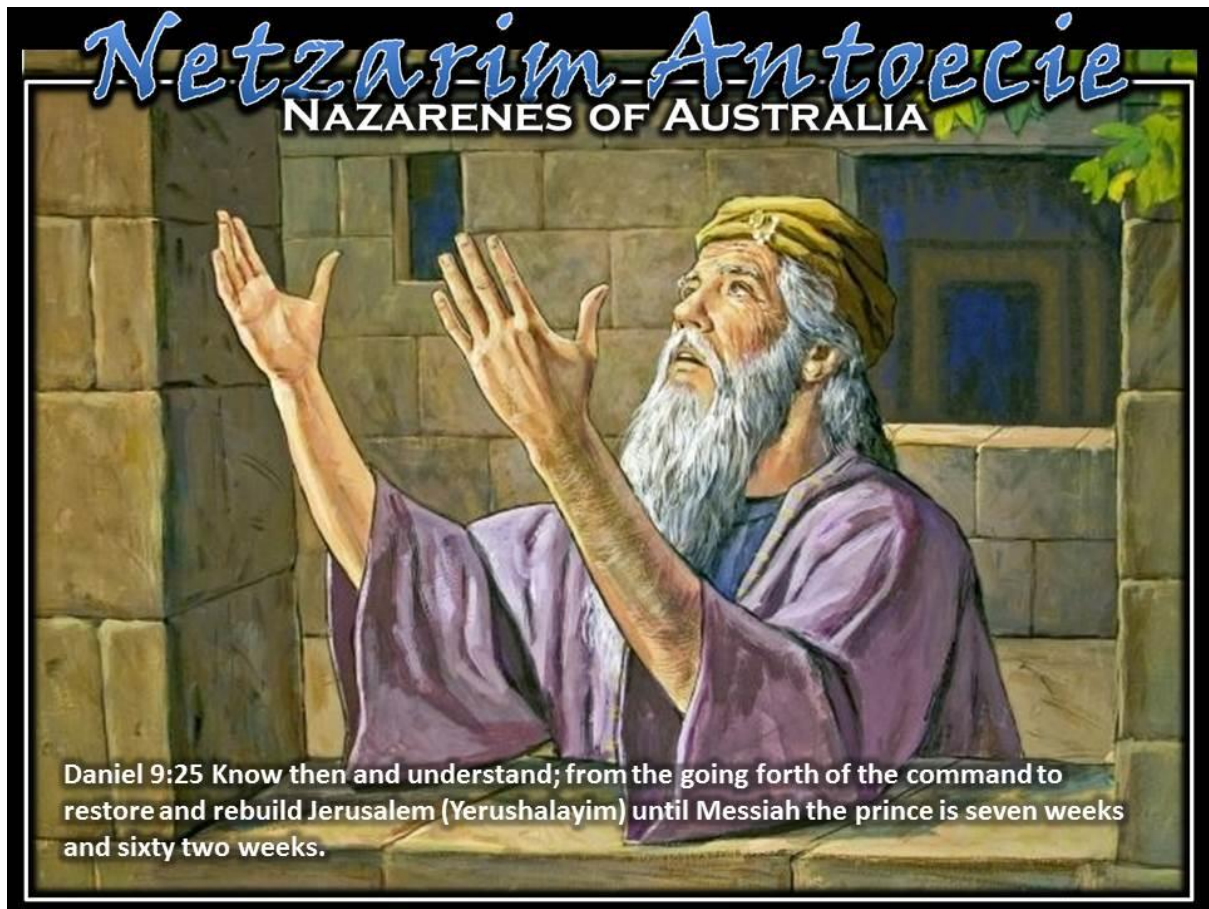
The Amazing Truth of Hanukkah:

There is however in most scriptures a large vacuum covering more than 400 years that is conveniently absence being a period that traces a time of unprecedented affliction for the land of Yisrael and especially the Torah of Moses and the faith of the Forefathers.

Within the Books of the Maccabees we find an amazing blue print for the end times since this was a time when the Greek Empire ruled most of the known world but upon the death of Alexander the Great his Kingdom was divided among his Generals. One such General was Antiochus Epiphanes who ruled over the most troublesome part of the empire that would not bend to the Greek ways. As we look at his strategies we will see some amazing truths unfold:

Much of the Book of Daniel revolves around prophecy like the following:

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Daniel 9:25 Know then and understand; from the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Yerushalayim) until Moshiach (Messiah) the prince is seven weeks and sixty two weeks.

Knowing that this prophecy determines the time of the first coming of Moshiach (Messiah) it is in no way strange that the ferocity of the assault upon the faith is intensified through a period preceding his first coming just as we can expect before his second coming. Prophecy always has multiple applications so it is to that which we are drawn since the verses relate to the coming of Antiochus Epiphanes the son of one of the generals following the breakup of Alexandria's kingdom and also to the coming of the Anti- Messiah in the end times according to Eschatological thinking.

The Coming of Gross Compromise:

Our Journey to highlight the need for an increase in Zeal for the things of YHWH comes when the Land of Israel came under the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes.

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Antiochus Epiphanes



1. After Alexander the Great four generals ruled his Kingdom.
2. Antiochus Epiphanes the son of Antiochus the King began to reign in the 137th year of the Kingdom of the Greeks.
3. Antiochus arrogantly entered the Sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light and all its utensils. He took also the table for the bread of the presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns and the golden decoration at the front of the Temple etc. (1 Mac 1:21-23)

The Book of the Maccabees speaks of Antiochus in the year 143 of the Kingdom of the Greeks (169BC) taking Jerusalem and arrogantly carrying off the Golden Altar, the Lamp stands, the Table for the bread of the presence, the sacred cups, the golden censers, the curtains & the crowns etc.

More than this he made a decree that all his subjects were to abandon their own Laws and Religion.

Today as we see the World employing many subtle ways to entice people away from the faith which also includes that of Christianity and Judaism so we know there is far more to come before the coming of that great day as we will see happened before the coming of Yahshua. Under Antiochus escalation of the confrontation began with the purpose of destroying everything that was of YHWH and even all memory of him and his Torah or his Divine Word which Antiochus wished to totally erase though he began with promises of friendship.

Today we should be aware that the same is awaiting us but we are to not loose heart and that is what this entire story is all about.

The Strategies that Antiochus employed:

1. Defilement of the Temple of YHWH:


Sadly upon the Decree of Antiochus Epiphanes many people of Yisrael conformed to all his desires and all looked extremely grim for the Torah and the faith if Israel.

The first strategy that Antiochus employed was to attack the Kadosh (Holy) place, revered by the people of Yisrael the second Temple built under Zerubbabel and His ultimate insult finally came as we read in the following:

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1. Defilement of the Temple of YHWH




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).

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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. It is believed that a statue of Zeus was erected and dedicated which is referred to as the “abomination of desolation” by Daniel. What is truly highly significant is that the daily sacrifices carried out in the Temple were also stopped for 3.5 years so what this story reveals is that what happened to the faithful then will happen again in the future.

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DANIEL'S PROPHECY

Dan 11:31 And they shall defile the Sanctuary Fortress: then they shall take away the Daily sacrifices and place there the abomination of desolation.

MattithYahu (Matthew) So when you see standing in the Holy Place the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel – let the reader understand.

Dan 11:31 And they shall defile the Sanctuary Fortress: then they shall take away the Daily sacrifices and place there the abomination of desolation.

What is truly significant it that this is referred to in the following as relating to the Anti- Messiah that is to come. Therefore an event that happened in the past is a blue print for the future.

MattithYahu (Matthew) So when you see standing in the Holy Place the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel – let the reader understand.

What we see as a blue print for the days to come is that Antiochus Epiphanes wanted all to follow the Greek ways of faith in totality with no exception.

2. The Total Annihilation of the Covenants of YHWH:

This has to be one of the greatest attacks on the Original Faith in that His next Strategy that Antiochus employed was to deprive the entire land of every aspect of the knowledge of YHWH and all participation in the Covenants:

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2. Total Annihilation of the Covenants of YHWH



1 Maccabees 1:56-60

All Scrolls of the Torah (The Law) which were found were torn to pieces & burnt with fire. Anyone discovered in possession of a book of the Covenant, or conforming to the Torah (the Law), was put to death by the King's sentence.

59 On the 25th day of the month they offered sacrifice on the pagan altar which was on top of the Altar of burnt offering. In accordance to the decree they put to death women who had their children circumcised, their babies, their families and those who had circumcised them they hanged by the neck. Yet many in Yisrael (Israel) found strength to resist taking a determined stand against eating any unclean food. They welcomed death rather than defile themselves and profane the Kadosh(Holy) Covenant and so they died

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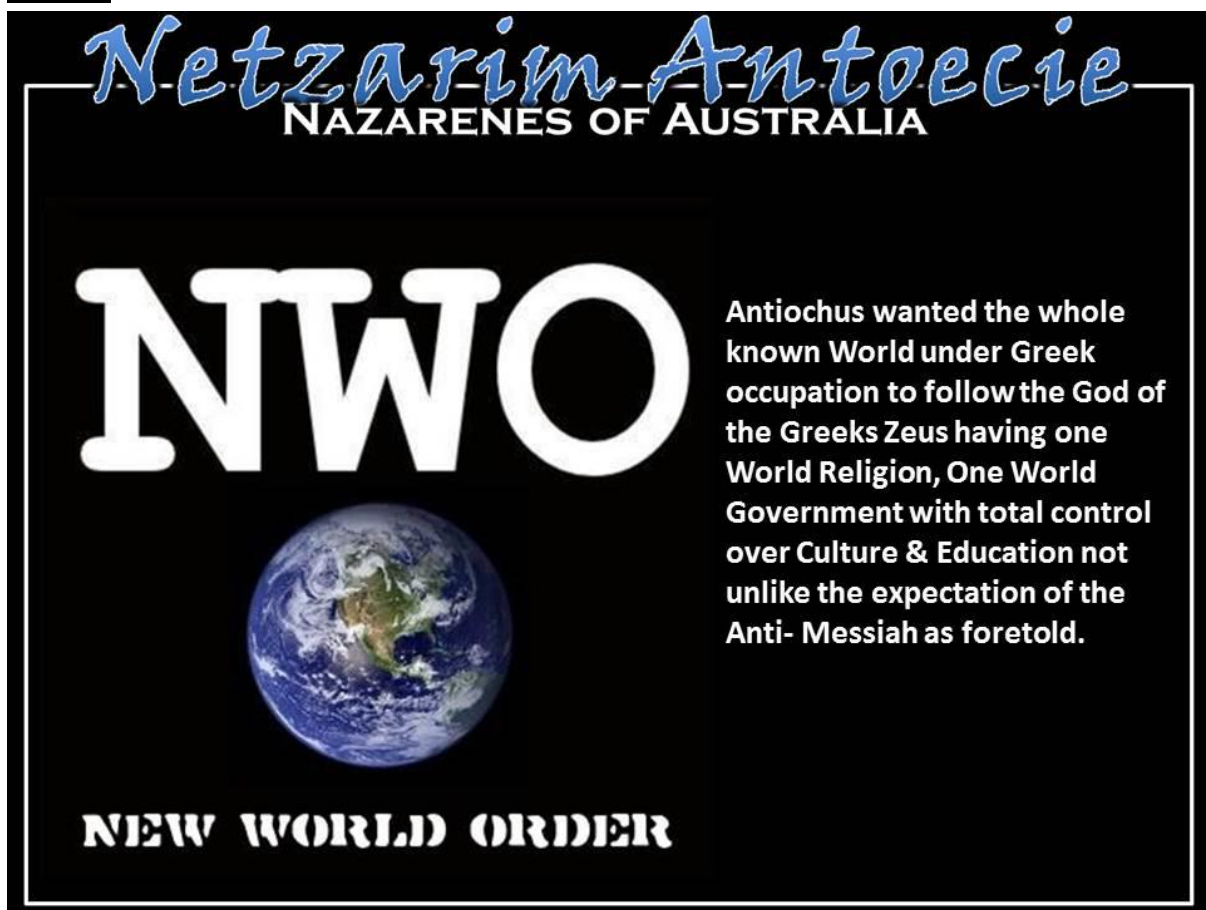
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As horrific as all this may seem it is important for us to see how relentless Antiochus Epiphanes was, he even made swine broth and poured it over all the Torah scrolls that he found in order to totally defile them & then he destroyed them by burning all the evidence of the faith of Israel and supplanted it with the Greek faith. We also see again the reference of an offering which was a swine offering, about 25th of December or the birth of the sun a High Pagan feast, the winter solstice.

Though many resisted and paid severely he did gain success because many in the Kingdom did compromise. The Spirit of the Anti- Christ is the spirit of compromise which will change the morals of society as we have seen even today with Marriage, Manhood, Womanhood, Parenthood etc. An example of this compromise was that in 1962 in America pray & Bibles were banned from Public Schools but evil never remains idle so now we see evil entering the education system with even Islam being taught in the guise of tolerance.

At the time of Antiochus we see those people formerly considered unrighteous being elevated to positions of power such as leaders of culture, law & education and the Honourable rejected not unlike today as our society plummets further into decadence. What is noticeable is that what came in the guise of tolerance soon becomes intolerant calling good evil and evil good. The pattern of this empire then was to change culture followed by laws against righteousness just like discrimination laws which finally led to persecution for doing what is right & honourable.

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NEW WORLD ORDER

Antiochus wanted the whole known World under Greek occupation to follow the God of the Greeks Zeus having one World Religion, One World Government with total control over Culture & Education not unlike the expectation of the Anti- Messiah as foretold.

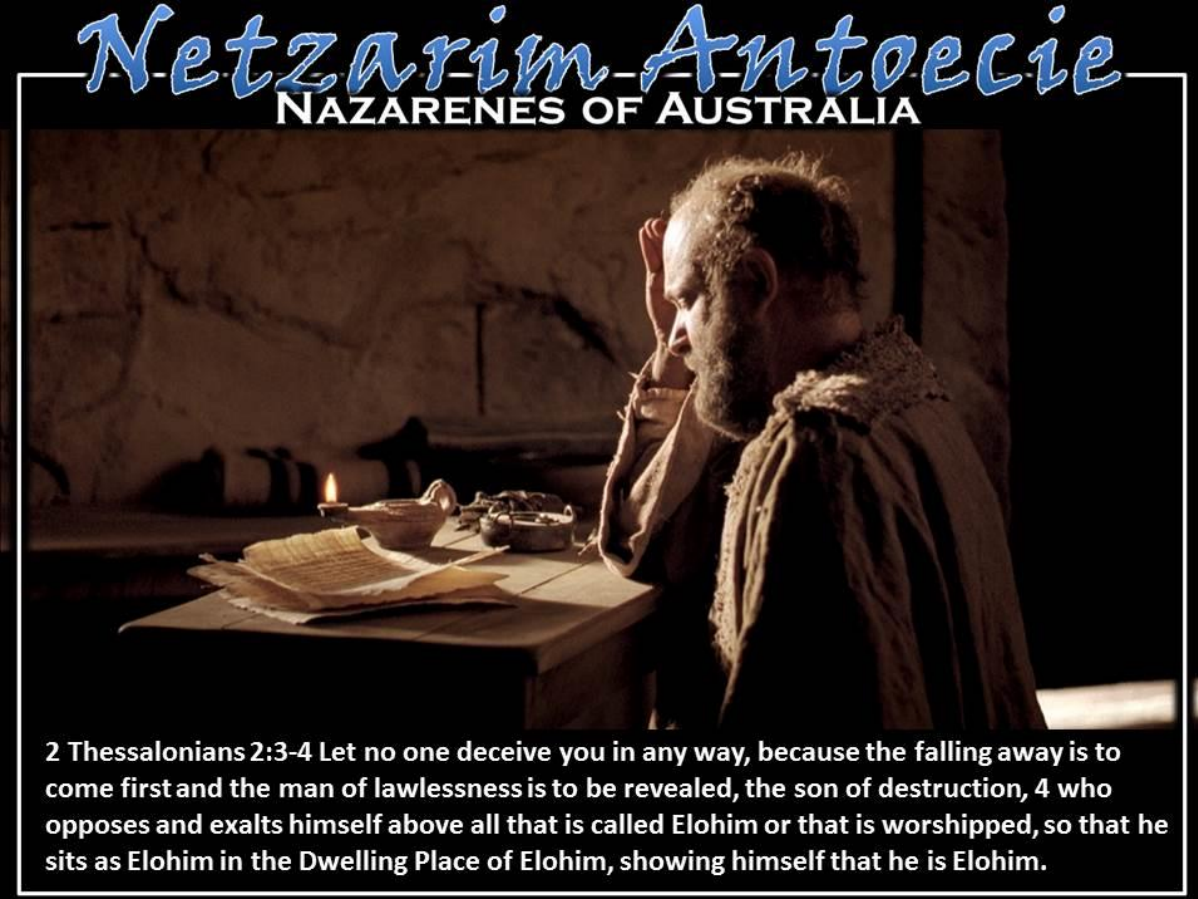
The Aim of Antiochus was that the world becomes as one just like today when we see the sign of the One World Order on the horizon.

Yisrael was always the one place that would not fit in and since we are the Spiritual Yisrael connected to the Natural Yisrael through Yahshua we also will not fit in. It is very interesting

that despite the history of Christianity Israel knows that its greatest allies are in fact believers in Jesus or Yahshua (Yeshua).

What also points us to see how this story reveals the Anti- Messiah is that the name of this King was Antiochus Epiphanes which has the meaning of "God Manifest!" Is this not the spirit of our time where man considers himself able to change all moral codes in disobedience to YHWH & another symbol of the final man of Sin?

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2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no one deceive you in any way, because the falling away is to come first and the man of lawlessness is to be revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called Elohim or that is worshipped, so that he sits as Elohim in the Dwelling Place of Elohim, showing himself that he is Elohim.

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The Turning of the Tide

Just as the end time is a time of trouble the story of the Maccabees gives us the strategy of defeating that great enemy. New hope arises when finally the King's representatives came to the little town of Modin:

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THE TURNING OF THE TIDE



1 Maccabees 2:17-18 The Kings officers spoke to Mattathias: you are a leader here, they said, a man of mark and influence in this town, with your sons and brothers at your back. All the Nations have done so, as well as the leading men of Yahudah (Judea) and the people left in Yerushalayim (Jerusalem). Then you and your sons will be enrolled among the King's friends; you will all receive high honours, rich rewards of Silver & Gold and many further benefits.

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This is always the way that the World will entice the People of Elohim to be drawn to compromise. What we find in this story is the desire of the enemy for the Jews to break the Holy Covenants of the Almighty by:

1. The eating & sacrificing of unclean animals breaking the Adamic/ Noahide Covenant.
2. The banning on penalty of death the act of circumcising children breaking the Abrahamic Covenant.
3. The banning of the keeping of the Shabbat, the Torah & the Moedim (Appointed times – the Feasts) of YHWH which again violated the Mosaic Covenant.

The response however that they received from Mattathias was truly inspired by a love for YHWH and his Torah (His Holy Word):

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The Zealous Response of Mattathias

1 Maccabees 2:19-28 To this Mattathias replied in a ringing voice: though all the nations within the King's dominion obey him and forsake their ancestral worship, though they have chosen to submit to his commands, yet I and my sons and brothers will follow the covenant of our fathers. Heaven forbid we should ever abandon the Torah (Law) and its statutes. We will not obey the command of the King, nor will we deviate one step from our forms of Worship.

As soon as he had finished a Yahudi (Jew) stepped forward in full view of all to offer sacrifice on the Pagan altar at Modin, in obedience to the Royal Command. The sight stirred Mattathias to indignation; he shook with passion, and in a fury of righteous anger rushed forward and slaughtered the traitor on the very altar. At the same time he killed the officer sent by the King to enforce sacrifice and pulled the altar down. Thus Mattathias showed his fervent zeal for the Torah (Law) just as Phineas had done by killing Zimri son of Salu (during the rebellion in Mosheh's day). "Follow me" he shouted through the town, every one of you who is zealous for the Torah (Law) and strives to maintain the Covenant. He & his sons took to the hills, leaving all their belongings behind in the town.

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This began the great struggle as further detailed in the Books of the Maccabees that describe supernatural defeats of grossly superior Greek armies that can only be attributed to YHWH.

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**THE KEYS WE CAN LEARN FROM THE
MACCABEAN PRIESTS:**

- 1. Stand Strong:** do not compromise.
- 2. Turn Your Eyes to YHWH:** Trust wholeheartedly in YHWH your Elohim.
- 3. Be World Changers:** Become more radical and not bend the Word of YHWH.
- 4. Choose to Fight:** They became warriors though they were Priests.
- 5. Equip Yourself:** Put on the Armour of God (Elohim) (**Ephesians 6:10-17**)
- 6. Give all the Glory to YHWH:** It is not about survival but it is about the glory of YHWH the only Elohim (God).

The Keys we can Learn from the Maccabean Priests:

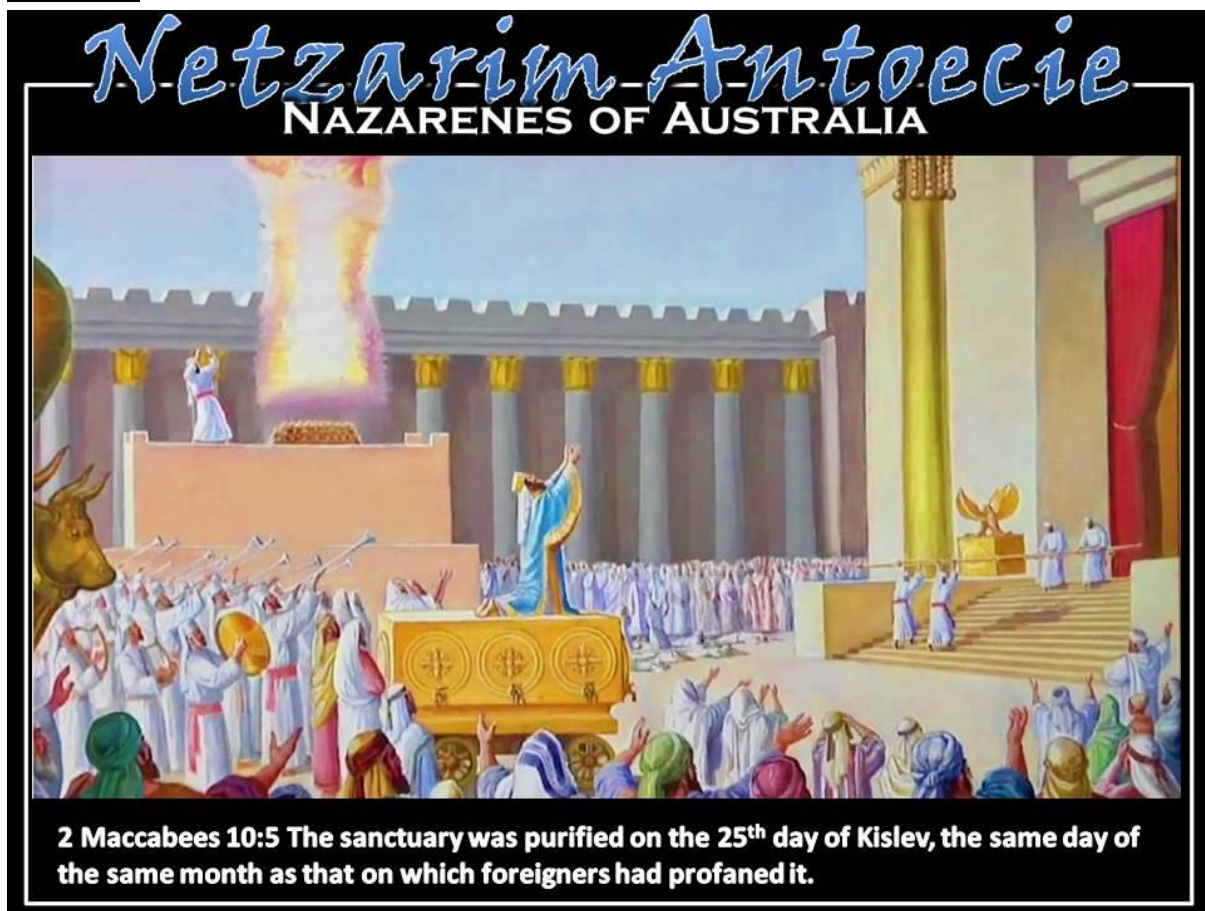
- 1. Stand Strong:** do not to compromise & draw a line in the sand that you will not step over.
- 2. Turn Your Eyes to YHWH:** Trust wholeheartedly in YHWH your Elohim for though you are few, with the Lord your victory is assured.
- 3. Be World Changers:** You must influence the World around you by becoming more radical and not bending the Word of YHWH.
- 4. Choose to Fight:** They became warriors though they were Priests and simple people. In their zealousness there came a time to decide to fight and if they fought with faith they believed they would win.
- 5. Equip Yourself:** Used the weapons of the enemy and put on the Armour of Elohim (Ephesians 6:10-17)
1 Maccabees 3:12 Then they seized the spoils and Judas took the sword of Apollonius and used it in battle the rest of his life.
- 6. Give all the Glory to YHWH:** It is not about survival but it is about the glory of YHWH the only Elohim.

Hitgalut (Revelations) 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony and they loved not their lives to the death.

Daniel 11:32 “And by flatteries he shall profane those who do wrong against the covenant, but the people who know their Elohim shall be strong and carry out great exploits .

The Good News is that though their numbers were inferior they finally were victorious and saw Jerusalem & the Temple restored & Yisrael (Israel) freed. The day we remember as Chanukah (Hanukkah) or the rededication of the Temple commemorates this as the following text reveals:

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2 Maccabees 10:5 The sanctuary was purified on the 25th day of Kislev, the same day of the same month as that on which foreigners had profaned it.

This celebration also reminds us how much blood was shed to restore the Faith of Yahweh and his Kadosh (Holy) Covenants preparing Yisrael for the coming of the Messiah.

The question that should come to our minds through all this, is how passionate are we for the ways of Elohim and what would we do or give up to see him Esteemed and to maintain all that he has decreed. Without these heroes of the faith how would the Faith survive and

we know that YHWH in every time is always seeking those of a pure heart as he spoke to YeshiYahu (Isaiah) in:

YeshiYahu (Isaiah) 6:8 And I heard the voice of YHWH saying “whom shall I send and who will go for Us.”

The Final Picture:

The beauty of Hanukkah is revealed as the light in the darkness because through the Maccabees the Temple is restored, the Altar cleansed and the light of Elohim the Menorah restored just as the second coming of Messiah restores everything back to YHWH the great & awesome Elohim of Yisrael and once again Yahshua who is the light of Elohim burns again and the darkness cannot overcome him therefore the true symbol of the faith as revealed in the book of Revelations is in fact the Menorah translated as the seven candle sticks.

Hitgalut (Rev) 1:12 And I turned to see the voice which spoke with me. And having turned, I saw seven golden Menorahs.

It surely is the story of Hanukkah that reveals the truth of the end times but most important it reveals that YHWH our Elohim wins. Amein!

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