



The Chanukah 5782

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According to the Gospel of John chapter 10, Yeshua went up to Jerusalem specifically for the observance of the Festival of Dedication, i.e. Chanukah. This fact confirms to those who accept the New Covenant as Scripture that the eight days of Chanukah has spiritual significance. In other words, followers of Yeshua should not only understand the message of Chanukah, but also observe it as our L-rd did. A simple searching on the internet will inform one that Chanukah celebrates a victory of the people of G-d over the wicked Greek Empire, which was led by Antiochus Epiphanies. In previous articles, it has been pointed out that Antiochus is a typology of the antichrist. It has also been taught that the same spirit of Lawlessness which characterized Antiochus will also be manifested by the antichrist. The primary message of the Festival of Chanukah is deliverance.

One learns from the Jewish people who recognized the spiritual authority of Yehuda Maccabee, that with G-d all things are possible. Even though the Jewish people were outnumbered and at a disadvantage in every way, their faith in G-d overcame every obstacle and, in the end, G-d provided deliverance which was one of Israel's greatest victories. The question which must be asked is for what was Israel fighting? The answer is the freedom to worship HaShem (the L-RD) according to the word of G-d.

I hope you can see today that things are rapidly changing throughout the world. The same anti-Torah spirit is currently manifesting itself and it is a *battle for control*. The enemy is simply demanding that people submit to him. The Bible is most clear that at the beginning of the final seven years of this world (prior to the establishing of the Millennial Kingdom), the antichrist will assume leadership over a one world government. Therefore, it should not surprise one that in preparation for this, the vast majority of nations are becoming increasingly hostile to the standards which the Bible commands. It truly will come down to one question which every person will have to answer: "*Whose authority are you going to recognize?*"

Many individuals today would identify themselves as secular. They do not believe in the One True G-d and do not engage in worship. However, as the antichrist takes control over this one world government, he will soon demand that ALL people worship him. Those who refuse to do so will be persecuted and ultimately put to death. In a growing amount of locations today such persecution is already taking place. Obviously, the antichrist is not yet ruling nor has his empire been established, but the spirit of the antichrist is already present in this world and is functioning in an increasing manner. People are being challenged even today concerning their choice to worship the G-d of Israel and His Only Begotten Son.

It is clearly seen during this time of the "Pandemic" that many governmental leaders are hostile to the worship of the G-d of Israel in a partial manner. The spirit of the antichrist is a blasphemous spirit and it hates any expression of true worship. True believers will differ legitimately on what constitutes for them the "redline", when they must defy government mandates, laws, etc.; however, make no mistake, the time will come when all true followers of Messiah Yeshua will agree that they must resist this blasphemous empire. In the same manner that believers will legitimately disagree on the "redline", they will also will likely have

some degree of disagreement on what form their resistance will take. One thing is very clear, the antichrist will be making an all-out war against believers.

I began this article by mentioning that Yeshua went up to the Temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Chanukah. It is most interesting what occurred when He was at what is commonly referred to as *Solomon's Portico*. Although there is much significance in this passage from John's Gospel, I only want to focus on one aspect within this account. Solomon's Portico is very near to the *Holy of Holies*. It was only after Yeshua entered this location (known in Hebrew as *מִלְבַּח שְׁלֹמֹה* and properly understood as Solomon's Hall), that the leaders approached Him. Although the verse reads,

ἐκύκλωσαν οὖν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ ἔλεγον αὐτῷ, Ἐως πότε τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν αἴρεις; εἰ σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, εἰπὲ ἡμῖν παρρησίᾳ.

“Then the Judeans surrounded Him and were saying to Him, ‘Until when our souls do you keep in suspense? If you are the Messiah, say to us plainly.’” John 10:24

Many translations fail to understand that in this verse the use the term *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* is not referring Jewish individuals in general, but the spiritual and governmental leadership of the Jewish people who served under Rome. These leaders were not seeking a verbal response from Yeshua, rather their intent was for Him to enter into the Holy of Holies. They knew that if one who was not approved by G-d entered this place, this one would die. The leaders never gave any consideration that Yeshua was the L-rd's Anointed. From where does one know this? It is stated in the next verse that Yeshua had previously told them that He is the Messiah and they did not believe Him. They simply wanted Him to die.

This is another example of a government not submitting to G-d's authority. Such disobedience was foretold by Israel's prophets in regard to His first coming, but in the End Times there will be a very significant change. The persecution that the Jewish people will experience towards the end of this age, although displeasing to G-d; nevertheless, He will use it to humble Israel and cause them to seek the Messiah. When all the world is submitting to the antichrist and going up to Jerusalem to make war with the Jewish people, Israel will demonstrate a repentant spirit and cry out for their Redeemer. Not only will Messiah Yeshua appear for His Second Coming and deliver Israel, but He will also purify and dedicate the Temple for worship during the Millennial Kingdom.

One learns this from the prophet Ezekiel chapter 43 and Daniel chapter 12. The reader is told that the Glory of HaShem will enter into the Temple once more and that “I will dwell in their midst forever!” (see Ezekiel 43:1-9). Obviously, G-d will only dwell in a Holy and Pure place. The foundation for understanding what will occur is revealed in Daniel's words,

וּמַעַת הַיּוֹסֵר הַתְּמִיד וְלָתֵת שְׁקוּץ שָׁמַם יָמִים אֲלֶיךָ מֵאֲתָיִם וְתִשְׁעִים: אֲשֶׁר־יִהְיֶה הַמַּחֲבָה וְיִגִּיעַ לְיָמִים אֲלֶיךָ
שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמֵשָׁה:

“And from the time the daily sacrifice was removed and the giving of the Abomination of Desolation, 1,290 days. Blessed is the one who waits and arrived to 1,335 days.”
Daniel 12:11-12

At the beginning of the final seven years of this age, the Temple will function; however, after three and a half years, the antichrist will enter the Holy of Holies and proclaim that He is G-d and the Messiah. This act will certainly profane and desecrate the Temple as the term the **Abomination of Desolation** reveals. Israel will reject the antichrist as Messiah and G-d and as a consequence of this, the time of Jacob’s Trouble will begin. Although HaShem is not the source of this persecution, it is clearly the response of the antichrist to his rejection by the Jewish people, and G-d can use this time of Israel’s hardship and suffering to prepare them for the Second Coming of Yeshua.

The prophet Zechariah speaks of a time after the appearing of the Messiah to deliver Israel from all the nations of the world. This is a time of purification and there are hints that this time will begin on Yom Kippur, i.e. the Day of Atonement (See Zechariah 13:1-2). One must remember that on Yom Kippur the High Priest also cleanses (makes atonement) the Temple and its vessels (see Leviticus 16:14-20).

According to Daniel chapter 12, there is an additional period of time mentioned. The number that one should expect is 1,260 days. But, this additional period consists of 75 days, arriving at a total of 1,335 days. The reader is told, blessed is the one who makes it to this time. Why would this be? There is exactly 75 days between Yom Kippur and the beginning of the Festival of Chanukah. Chanukah celebrates both victory through HaShem’s deliverance and a dedicating of the Temple for a return to Biblically based worship. Such worship will indeed characterize the Millennial Kingdom. In fact, one should conclude that the Second Coming of Yeshua will take place, the remnant of Israel will repent and receive Him and the Gospel and then after the period of 75 days, the Millennial Kingdom will begin on Chanukah.

The Festival of Chanukah has great significance and should be studied and observed by those who are followers of Messiah Yeshua.