

Notes: Shabbat – December 31, 2016

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and greet
2. Introduction
3. Announcements
4. Liturgy – Ma to vu, Sh'ma, Avenu
5. Music
6. Message
7. Time of prayer
8. Aaronic Blessing
9. Kiddush
10. Oneg

Title: Significance of Hanukkah

Introduction:

Tonight will be the seventh day of Hanukkah. A day that is more than dreidles, latkes and presents. This time is a time that was spoken of by Daniel, recognized by Messiah and offers significance for believers today.

Today, I hope to provide a little more insight into this celebration.

First let me state that Hanukkah isn't the "Jewish christmas"

Even though the accounts of what would become Hanukkah are not found in most Bibles, with the account actually recorded in the Books of the Maccabees (for which there are four)

There is prophecy written by Daniel that speaks of the events to come, that would lead to this celebration...

Dan 11:2 What I am going to tell you now is true. "Three kings will arise in Persia, followed by a fourth, who will be far wealthier than all of them; and when he has grown strong by means of his wealth, he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.

Dan 11:3 "Then a powerful king will appear who will rule a vast kingdom and do whatever he pleases.

Dan 11:4 But once he appears, his kingdom will be broken up and divided to the four winds of heaven. It won't be inherited by his descendants, and it won't be ruled with the power he had, because his kingship will be uprooted and will pass to others than his own posterity.

Dan 11:5 "The king in the south will be strong, and one of his princes will gain power over him and have dominion; his domain will be a great dominion.

Dan 11:28 Then the king of the north will return to his own land with great wealth; with his heart set against the holy covenant, he will take action and then return home.

Dan 11:29 "At the time designated, he will come back to the south. But this time, things will turn out differently than before;

Dan 11:30 because ships from Kittim will come against him, so that his courage will fail him. Then, in retreat, he will take furious action against the holy covenant, again showing favor to those who abandon the holy covenant.

Dan 11:31 Armed forces will come at his order and profane the sanctuary and fortress. They will abolish the

daily burnt offering and set up the abomination that causes desolation.

Dan 11:32 Those who act wickedly against the covenant he will corrupt with his blandishments, but the people who know their God will stand firm and prevail.

Dan 11:33 Those among the people who have discernment will cause the rest of the people to understand what is happening; nevertheless, for a while they will fall victim to sword, fire, exile and pillage.

Dan 11:34 When they stumble, they will receive a little help, although many who join them will be insincere.

Dan 11:35 Even some of those with discernment will stumble, so that some of them will be refined, purified and cleansed for an end yet to come at the designated time.

Dan 11:36 "The king will do as he pleases. He will exalt himself and consider himself greater than any god, and he will utter monstrous blasphemies against the God of gods. He will prosper only until the period of wrath is over, for what has been determined must take place.

Brief recount of Hanukkah story: Prophecy – Fulfillment - Recognition

What is Hanukkah?:

In the Talmud, tractate Shabbat 21b, the Rabbis answer this very question.

What is 'Hanukkah? The rabbis taught: "On the twenty-fifth day of Kislev 'Hanukkah commences and lasts eight days, on which lamenting (in commemoration of the dead) and fasting are prohibited. When the Hellenists entered the sanctuary, they defiled all the oil that was found there. When the government of the House of Asmoneans prevailed and conquered them, oil was sought (to feed the holy lamp in the sanctuary) and only one vial was found with the seal of the high priest intact. The vial contained sufficient oil for one day only, but a miracle occurred, and it fed the holy lamp eight days in succession. These eight days were the following year established as days of good cheer, on which psalms of praise and acknowledgment (of God's wonders) were to be recited.

It is believed that focus shifted from the Maccabean triumph due to the later corruption that would ensue. So, the triumphant victory over the threat of extinction through assimilation was changed to become more about the miracle of the oil.

What greater miracle is there than to be delivered from those that persecute you, to be delivered in spite of being greatly outnumbered or simply because the God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov has placed His name upon you and calls you His.

It is more than that...

Why Eight Days?:

Many are lead to believe through the telling of the Hanukkah story that the festival is 8 days because of the miracle of the one vile of oil that was only to last for a day, lasted 8 days.

The only account of this miracle is found in the Talmud and is not recorded in the books of the Maccabees.

Some additional insight...

Throughout Tenach, an eight day period has always been a period of dedication:

The object to be dedicated would be set apart (sanctified) for 7 days and on the 8th day it was holy to the Lord:

- First born animals that opened the womb were consecrated to Adonai – Exodus 22:30, Leviticus 22:27
- Hebrew males were circumcised on the 8th day – Leviticus 12:3
- The original altar of the tabernacle was sanctified 7 days and on the 8th was holy – Exodus 29:37

- Dedication of the rebuilt Temple after Babylonian captivity took place during Passover, with Unleavened Bread comprised 8 days – Ezra 6:16 – 22
- The future altar of the millennium Temple will be consecrated on the 8th day - Ezekiel 43:26 – 27
- King Hezekiah came to the throne and rededicated the Temple after his father's desecration of the Temple with sacrifices to the Assyrian gods – 2 Chronicles 29:16 – 17

Hanukkah was modeled after another 8 day feast – Sukkot, where Adonai instructed Israel to be joyous

Deu 16:13 "You are to keep the festival of Sukkot for seven days after you have gathered the produce of your threshing-floor and winepress.

Deu 16:14 Rejoice at your festival - you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, the L'vi'im, and the foreigners, orphans and widows living among you.

Deu 16:15 Seven days you are to keep the festival for Adonai your God in the place Adonai your God will choose, because Adonai your God will bless you in all your crops and in all your work, so you are to be full of joy!

Lev 23:39 " But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered the produce of the land, you are to observe the festival of Adonai seven days; the first day is to be a complete rest and the eighth day is to be a complete rest.

During Sukkot: Light Ceremony:

On the second night of Sukkot, the water pouring celebration (not the same as the ceremony mentioned above) was accompanied by an awe inspiring light ceremony in the Temple known as Simchat Bet Hasho'ayva, meaning "The Rejoicing of the House of Water".

People would gather in the outer court of the Temple, known as the Court of the Woman. In the center of the court, were four large menorahs, each with four branches. These menorahs were so large, that they required four ladders each, so they could be lit. During the Feast, they would be continually refilled with oil. The light emanating from the menorahs in the Temple could be seen from the streets of Jerusalem. This light ceremony also included torch dances performed by the elders of the Sanhedrin.

As the evening progressed, a group of Levites would gather in the Inner Court, known as the Court of the Israelites. Once they had all gathered, they would make their way to the Nicanor Gate and stand at the top of the steps, that would lead down to the Court of the Woman. There were a total of 15 steps. As the Temple instruments would play, the Levites would begin to sing what is known as the Psalms of Degrees. The Psalms of Degrees comprise Psalms 120 through 134. Upon completion of each Psalm, and commencement of the next, they would descend to the next step.

According to another passage found in the Talmud (Megillat Taanit 9) It took 8 days to rebuild the altar...

What better time to rejoice than being restored to Adonai.

Messiah and Hanukkah:

We read in Yochanan 10:22 – 28, the only place where it is actually mentioned in scripture.

It was real, and significant to Yeshua to be in Jerusalem for it. It would be a time, like many others, that He is confronted about who He is...

Joh 10:22 Then came Hanukkah in Yerushalayim. It was winter,

Joh 10:23 and Yeshua was walking around inside the Temple area, in Shlomo's Colonnade.

Joh 10:24 So the Judeans surrounded him and said to him, "How much longer are you going to keep us in

suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us publicly!"

Joh 10:25 Yeshua answered them, "I have already told you, and you don't trust me. The works I do in my Father's name testify on my behalf,

Joh 10:26 but the reason you don't trust is that you are not included among my sheep.

Joh 10:27 My sheep listen to my voice, I recognize them, they follow me,

Joh 10:28 and I give them eternal life. They will absolutely never be destroyed, and no one will snatch them from my hands.

What is happening at this time?

The back drop is Hanukkah, a time of celebration from foreign oppression for which the children of Israel had experienced time and time again.

The expectations of the leaders was that Messiah would come as King and deliver them from Roman oppression, never again to fall victim to gentile dominion again. Messiah would usher in a new messianic age, making it possible for Adonai's Sh'kinah glory to return to the Temple.

Yeshua affirms His Echud (oneness) with Adonai...

Back during Sukkot, Yeshua had conveyed to many that He was the light of the world – John 8:12, yet He was still questioned as to who He was...

Expectations of a deliverer from oppression are apropos during this season of Hanukkah, in that it is a memorial of liberation from a physical oppression. That of Rome. A similar liberation accomplished years earlier under the leadership of the Maccabees – a liberation that Messiah was expected to accomplish, once and for all.

They were familiar with Isaiah 61...

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of Adonai Elohim is upon me, because Adonai has anointed me to announce good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim freedom to the captives, to let out into light those bound in the dark;

Isa 61:2 to proclaim the year of the favor of Adonai and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn,

Isa 61:3 yes, provide for those in Tziyon who mourn, giving them garlands instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a cloak of praise instead of a heavy spirit, so that they will be called oaks of righteousness planted by Adonai, in which he takes pride.

Throughout the accounts of Messiah in the gospels, time and time again, He showed them many times over that He is the Messiah, promised in scripture. He performed many miracles that only the one sent from Adonai could do. Yet the majority of leadership rejected Him because He didn't meet their expectations of what / whom Messiah would be.

Conclusion:

He gave instruction through Isaiah for Israel to be a light to the nations:

Isa 49:5 So now Adonai says — he formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Ya`akov back to him, to

have Isra'el gathered to him, so that I will be honored in the sight of Adonai, my God having become my strength —

Isa 49:6 he has said, "It is not enough that you are merely my servant to raise up the tribes of Ya`akov and restore the offspring of Isra'el. I will also make you a light to the nations, so my salvation can spread to the ends of the earth."

The very nations that for centuries have persecuted Israel, are the very nations that Israel is to be a shining example.

Each major kingdom at one time persecuted and enslaved Israel:

- Egypt
- Babylon
- Assyria / Greece
- Rome

Reminds me of Yonah, instructed by Adonai to go to the Assyrians in Ninevah and be a light to their dark ways.

How can we relate today?

There is another nation that has vowed the extermination of Israel from the face of the earth.

One who views Israel as the enemy. One who wants nothing to do with Israel and the Jewish people.

That nation = Iran

Given the recent resolution by the UN Security council to sanction Israel by a vote of 14 – 0, with some of the sponsoring nations having no history with Israel, (Senegal, New Zealand), and our outgoing administration remaining silent, intentionally during the voting of this resolution, the time is coming when all nations will rise against Israel. Yes, there will likely be a restoration of America's relationship with Israel, but we are merely an election away from that changing again.

Which is why the following is even more urgent today.

That instruction in Isaiah flows through Messiah to us today...

Light of the world:

Joh 8:12 Yeshua spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light which gives life."

A servant:

Mar 10:45 For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve — and to give his life as a ransom for many."

To give light to everyone:

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 He was with God in the beginning.

Joh 1:3 All things came to be through him, and without him nothing made had being.

Joh 1:4 In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind.

Joh 1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not suppressed it.

Teaching us that we are to exemplify the light of Messiah:

Mat 5:14 "You are light for the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

Mat 5:15 Likewise, when people light a lamp, they don't cover it with a bowl but put it on a lampstand, so that it shines for everyone in the house.

Mat 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they may see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven.

Shamash (the one candle set apart from the other candles) – servant candle who's only purpose is to serve light to the other candles.

Yeshua is like the Shamash on the Hanukkah.

We should consider this time to be a time where we rededicate ourselves to be that light that Messiah spoke about. He is our example. Let us do our best to be like Messiah.

1 Maccabees Chapter 1

41-43 Antiochus now issued a decree that all nations in his empire should abandon their own customs and become one people. All the Gentiles and even many of the Israelites submitted to this decree. They adopted the official pagan religion, offered sacrifices to idols, and no longer observed the Sabbath.

44 The king also sent messengers with a decree to Jerusalem and all the towns of Judea, ordering the people to follow customs that were foreign to the country.

45 He ordered them not to offer burnt offerings, grain offerings, or wine offerings in the Temple, and commanded them to treat Sabbaths and festivals as ordinary work days.

46 They were even ordered to defile the Temple and the holy things in it.[e]

47 They were commanded to build pagan altars, temples, and shrines, and to sacrifice pigs and other unclean animals there.

48 They were forbidden to circumcise their sons and were required to make themselves ritually unclean in every way they could,

49 so that they would forget the Law which the Lord had given through Moses and would disobey all its commands.

50 The penalty for disobeying the king's decree was death.

When you are under the rulership of another nation, liberties once belonging to a sovereign nation, likely don't exist.

All authority now belongs to the ruler.

54 On the fifteenth day of the month of Kisleev in the year 145,[f] King Antiochus set up The Awful Horror on the altar of the Temple, and pagan altars were built in the towns throughout Judea.

55 Pagan sacrifices were offered in front of houses and in the streets.

56 Any books of the Law which were found were torn up and burned,

57 and anyone who was caught with a copy of the sacred books or who obeyed the Law was put to death by order of the king.

58 Month after month these wicked people used their power against the Israelites caught in the towns.

1 Maccabees Chapter 4

[1] Now Gorgias took five thousand infantry and a thousand picked cavalry, and this division moved out by night

[2] to fall upon the camp of the Jews and attack them suddenly. Men from the citadel were his guides.

[3] But Judas heard of it, and he and his mighty men moved out to attack the king's force in Emmaus

[4] while the division was still absent from the camp.

[5] When Gorgias entered the camp of Judas by night, he found no one there, so he looked for them in the hills, because he said, "These men are fleeing from us."

[6] At daybreak Judas appeared in the plain with three thousand men, but they did not have armor and swords such as they desired.

[7] And they saw the camp of the Gentiles, strong and fortified, with cavalry round about it; and these men were trained in war.

[8] But Judas said to the men who were with him, "Do not fear their numbers or be afraid when they charge.

[9] Remember how our fathers were saved at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh with his forces pursued them.

[10] And now let us cry to Heaven, to see whether he will favor us and remember his covenant with our fathers and crush this army before us today.

[11] Then all the Gentiles will know that there is one who redeems and saves Israel."

[12] When the foreigners looked up and saw them coming against them,

[13] they went forth from their camp to battle. Then the men with Judas blew their trumpets

[14] and engaged in battle. The Gentiles were crushed and fled into the plain,

[15] and all those in the rear fell by the sword. They pursued them to Gazara, and to the plains of Idumea, and to Azotus and Jamnia; and three thousand of them fell.

[16] Then Judas and his force turned back from pursuing them,

[17] and he said to the people, "Do not be greedy for plunder, for there is a battle before us;

[18] Gorgias and his force are near us in the hills. But stand now against our enemies and fight them, and afterward seize the plunder boldly."

[19] Just as Judas was finishing this speech, a detachment appeared, coming out of the hills.

[20] They saw that their army had been put to flight, and that the Jews were burning the camp, for the smoke that was seen showed what had happened.

[21] When they perceived this they were greatly frightened, and when they also saw the army of Judas drawn up in the plain for battle,

[22] they all fled into the land of the Philistines.

[23] Then Judas returned to plunder the camp, and they seized much gold and silver, and cloth dyed blue and sea purple, and great riches.

[24] On their return they sang hymns and praises to Heaven, for he is good, for his mercy endures for ever.

[25] Thus Israel had a great deliverance that day.

[26] Those of the foreigners who escaped went and reported to Lysias all that had happened.

[27] When he heard it, he was perplexed and discouraged, for things had not happened to Israel as he had

intended, nor had they turned out as the king had commanded him.

[28] But the next year he mustered sixty thousand picked infantrymen and five thousand cavalry to subdue them.

[29] They came into Idumea and encamped at Beth-zur, and Judas met them with ten thousand men.

[30] When he saw that the army was strong, he prayed, saying, "Blessed art thou, O Savior of Israel, who didst crush the attack of the mighty warrior by the hand of thy servant David, and didst give the camp of the Philistines into the hands of Jonathan, the son of Saul, and of the man who carried his armor.

[31] So do thou hem in this army by the hand of thy people Israel, and let them be ashamed of their troops and their cavalry.

[32] Fill them with cowardice; melt the boldness of their strength; let them tremble in their destruction.

[33] Strike them down with the sword of those who love thee, and let all who know thy name praise thee with hymns."

[34] Then both sides attacked, and there fell of the army of Lysias five thousand men; they fell in action.

[35] And when Lysias saw the rout of his troops and observed the boldness which inspired those of Judas, and how ready they were either to live or to die nobly, he departed to Antioch and enlisted mercenaries, to invade Judea again with an even larger army.

[36] Then said Judas and his brothers, "Behold, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it."

[37] So all the army assembled and they went up to Mount Zion.

[38] And they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins.

[39] Then they rent their clothes, and mourned with great lamentation, and sprinkled themselves with ashes.

[40] They fell face down on the ground, and sounded the signal on the trumpets, and cried out to Heaven.

[41] Then Judas detailed men to fight against those in the citadel until he had cleansed the sanctuary.

[42] He chose blameless priests devoted to the law,

[43] and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place.

[44] They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned.

[45] And they thought it best to tear it down, lest it bring reproach upon them, for the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar,

[46] and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them.

[47] Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one.

[48] They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts.

[49] They made new holy vessels, and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple.

[50] Then they burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the lampstand, and these gave light in the temple.

[51] They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

[52] Early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is the month of Chislev, in the one hundred and forty-eighth year,

[53] they rose and offered sacrifice, as the law directs, on the new altar of burnt offering which they had built.

[54] At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it, it was dedicated with songs and harps and lutes and cymbals.

[55] All the people fell on their faces and worshiped and blessed Heaven, who had prospered them.

[56] So they celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days, and offered burnt offerings with gladness; they offered a sacrifice of deliverance and praise.

[57] They decorated the front of the temple with golden crowns and small shields; they restored the gates and the

chambers for the priests, and furnished them with doors.

[58] There was very great gladness among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles was removed.

[59] Then Judas and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel determined that every year at that season the days of dedication of the altar should be observed with gladness and joy for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of Chislev.

[60] At that time they fortified Mount Zion with high walls and strong towers round about, to keep the Gentiles from coming and trampling them down as they had done before.

[61] And he stationed a garrison there to hold it. He also fortified Beth-zur, so that the people might have a stronghold that faced Idumea.