

For His Sheep – About Hanukkah



*Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch" **John 10:22-3***

Like every other believer I'm sure, it's been hard lately to not grow weary but remain encouraged and enthusiastic about the soon coming of our Groom for His bride. I'm so grateful to all the watchmen who have shared research and generated written work, charts and videos for the body of believers. I am much encouraged to persevere by them. Recently I read an article on the Five Doves website written by Fay that is well worth reading ([link below](#)). She was shown by the Lord God a truly amazing reason for Jesus walking in Solomon's porch. Until I'd read Fay's article I had no idea of how much the Jewish Feast of Hanukkah can be referenced to us, the body of believers, nor how exciting the prospect of Hanukkah being a possible rapture date is. Here's what I was shown about Hanukkah and how relevant it is. I hope it is an encouragement.

From December 12 to 20, 2017 is the celebration of the Feast of Dedication, or Festival of Lights commonly known as Hanukkah. "...and it was winter" is told us, so there was the need for Jesus to be under cover out of the weather, so "*Jesus walked in Solomon's porch.*" Solomon's Colonnade connects Jesus' God-ordained mission with the temple of Solomon ordained by God. Solomon (his name means 'Peace') chose the Feast of Tabernacles to dedicate the Temple when it was newly built; hence the name of Feast of Dedication as well as the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus the Messiah was

glorified in Solomon's porch as seen by Acts 3:11 – 5:12. *Acts 5:12 The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade.*

We are each a living stone in the spiritual temple built by the Messiah; we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The prophesy of David's tabernacle was declared by the council of Jerusalem to have been fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and upon Jews and Gentiles without distinction: *"With this the words of the prophets agree, just as it has been written: 'After this I will return and rebuild the tabernacle of David which has fallen down'" (Acts 15: 14-16).*

His temple will be established forever on the eternal rock, that is Himself:

"You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ Jesus." 1 Peter 2:5 The Feast of Dedication finds new meaning in the dedication of the spiritual temple for those who belong to Jesus and who are called to remain pure and undefiled. *"And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure." 1 John 3:3*

Interestingly the temple was undergoing massive reconstruction under Herod at this time who wanted to establish a name for himself in perpetuity as well as to ingratiate himself with the Jews. That temple in fact became known as Herod's temple. So another link can be made between Solomon's temple, the time of the Maccabees, and the rapture when we shall be changed in a moment. Our temple will be perfectly "renovated". *"in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed." 1 Corin 15:52*

This site was also the threshing floor of David and this is where the threshing (separating the wheat from the chaff) begins. As Jesus walked the Jews gathered around him and said to him, *"How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."* (John 10:24) Jesus tells them that they do not believe because they are not part of his flock: *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.... I and the Father are one."* When The Day of Pentecost came He purged his floor, consuming the chaff in his Baptism of Fire. As Malachi had prophesied: *"...the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years." Mal. 3: 1-4*

Around 165 BC the Syrian, King Antiochus invaded the Jewish nation, demanding that the Jewish people abandon the God of Israel and His ways,

imposing Greek customs and forbidding practicing the Jewish religion. To make certain that no one could worship the God of Israel; Antiochus defiled the Temple in Jerusalem by erecting a statue of Zeus and offering a sow upon the holy altar.

God raised up a small group of Jewish rebels known as the Maccabees (Maccabee means "hammer"), who waged a successful rebellion against Antiochus, driving him out of Israel. The city and temple were recovered three years afterward by Judas Maccabaeus, and the temple was purified with great pomp and solemnity. [A link between the Feast of Dedication and the day when Christ was born can be made. On the one hand a Temple made with human hands, the other, the Living Temple of God which came down from Heaven to dwell in our midst. Christ compared Himself to that Temple when He said, "*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up*" John 2:19.]

Josephus calls it the feast of lights, because the city was illuminated, as expressive of joy. Josephus also says this feast was called "lights" because that prosperity and happiness appeared to them beyond hope, and unexpected. Unexpected? *Matt 24:44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.* The festival continued for eight days, with continued demonstrations of joy. The Feast of Hanukkah commemorates the victory God gave the Jewish people over Antiochus and his mighty army, with the high point being the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem.

The "miracle of the oil", tells of the Maccabees who, upon recapturing Jerusalem, had as their priority the rededication of the Temple. They needed consecrated oil to rekindle the sacred Menorah but there was only enough for one day. The great miracle was that the oil continued to burn for eight days, enough time to make and sanctify new oil, which is why Hanukkah is over eight nights.

The Menorah that the people use for Hanukkah is different from the Menorah in the Temple. The Temple Menorah has seven branches with lights, whereas the Hanukkah Menorah has nine branches with lights, standing for the eight days of the feast, and one more – a servant candle which is used to light the others.

The nine branch Menorah is traditionally lit by a special candle called the servant. Jesus came as a servant to all. *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.*" (Matt 20:28) The servant candle serves the other candles by bringing light to them. In the New Testament, Jesus is frequently referred to as "*the Light*," and Jesus Himself once said, "*I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.*" (John 8:12) God keeps His light burning in the hearts of His people, even when they face what seem

to be impossible odds or situations. With God, all things are possible and His light will never fail, or go out.

Hanukkah is eight days also because the Maccabees conducted a belated Feast of Tabernacles to celebrate the recapture of Jerusalem and the rededication of the Temple. Remember, Solomon dedicated the newly built Temple on the Feast of Tabernacles, so it was appropriate to commemorate the rededication of the Temple.

God promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that He would preserve and sustain their descendants forever. Satan has attempted to wipe out the Jews throughout history using Antiochus as just one of the agents in his scheme. The prophet Daniel predicted Antiochus (Daniel 8-11) and even depicted him as a type of the anti-Christ, the beast of Revelation 13. It was in the context of that history that the Jews of Jesus' day said to Jesus, **"If you are the Christ, tell us plainly" (John 10:24).**

The days are coming very soon when the Jews of today will wrestle with the same question. Perhaps they thought that Jesus as Messiah could preserve the Jewish people from the oppressive pagan power of the Romans, as God had preserved them from Antiochus. But the salvation He offered was not from Roman oppression but from the oppression of Satan, sin and even death itself. An antichrist that is even worse than Antiochus is soon to enter the world's stage, but that plan will be thwarted by God too.

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand" John 10:27-28). Jesus' power to preserve is not a temporary, physical power. It is eternal and spiritual—and it is based on faith in Him as the Holy One of God.

The rededication of the Temple was a reminder of God's power to keep His promises and preserve His people Israel. But One greater than the Temple stood on Solomon's porch that day. He said *"I and My Father are one"* John 10:30. Remember, this is Hanukkah. Historically they had rejected the false claims of Antiochus, now Jesus, standing in the Temple is asserting His own claim to deity. The reaction of the Jews was, *"then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him"* John 10:31.

When the Jews rejected Antiochus, God kept His promises, miraculously preserving them. But when the Jewish leaders wrongly rejected Jesus' claims that day, they missed Jesus' right to preserve those who come to Him.

God said, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"* (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6). Jesus fulfilled these precious promises from God. In Him, God has proven His faithfulness to Israel and to the entire world.

Jesus' sheep can celebrate Hanukkah as well as the miracle of Christ's birth. 'Because God keeps His promises, He will save and sustain Israel, He will save

and keep all those who call upon His name through faith in Immanuel, our Messiah Jesus. Because God keeps His promises, He has made each blood-bought believer to be His own Temple, where Immanuel, God with us, has taken up residence. And so because God keeps His promises, we can dedicate ourselves anew to live for Him by the power of the Holy Spirit who burns within us.' *Luke 24:32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?*

"Now upon the same day that the strangers profaned the Temple, on the very same day it was cleansed again, even the five and twentieth day of the same month, which is Kislev. And they kept eight days with gladness, as in the feast of the tabernacles, remembering that not long afore they had held the feast of the tabernacles, when as they wandered in the mountains and dens like beasts. Therefore they bare branches, and fair boughs, and palms also, and sang psalms unto Him that had given them good success in cleansing His place. They ordained also by a common statute and decree, 'That every year those days should be kept of the whole nations of the Jews'." (II Maccabees 10:5-8)

<http://www.fivedoves.com/letters/nov2017/fay1126-6.htm>

<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/newsletter/newsletter-dec-1998/christ-in-the-feast-of-hanukkah/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Zh-yR0pbmU>