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Reflections

****Note: As Hebrew Ysraelites we join in this Festival, however we have removed added Rabbinical traditions designed to compete with Christmas**.**

The festival of Hanukkah חנוכה

Hanukkah is the Festival of Lights, an eight-day celebration commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt. Hanukkah starts on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar. The festival is observed by the kindling of the lights to a nine-branched Menorah.

Mattathias called upon loyal people to oppose the Hellenizers, him and his three sons begun a military campaign against them, resulting in thousands of lives lost to Antiochus when the defenders refuse to fight on Shabat. In 165 BC the Temple was freed and restored, so that ritual of sacrifices may begin again. The festival of Hanukkah was instituted by Judas Maccabeus and his brothers to celebrate this event (1 Macc. 4:59).

Hanukkah is mentioned in the New Covenant (Testament) (*HARV*) *John 10:22-23 And it was at Yerushalaim the feast of rededication, it was winter. 23And Yahusha walked in the temple in Solomon's porch*

Hanukkah is also mentioned in 1 Maccabees and 2 Maccabees: "For eight days they celebrated the rededication of the altar. Then Yahudah, his brothers and the entire congregation of Yashsrael decreed that the days of the rededication should be observed every year for eight days. (1 Mac. 4:56–59)" According to 2 Maccabees, "the children of Yashsrael celebrated joyfully for eight days resembling the feast of *Tabernacles/Sakuth*.

1 Mac. 4:55–59 55 Then all the people fell upon their faces, worshipping and praising the Elohim of heaven, who had given them good success. 56 And so they kept the dedication of the altar eight days and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise. 57 They decked also the forefront of the temple with crowns of gold, and with shields; and the gates and the chambers they renewed, and hanged doors upon them. 58 Thus was there very great gladness among the people, for that the reproach of the heathen was put away. 59 Moreover Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Ysrael ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Casleu, with mirth and gladness. 60 At that time also they builded up the mount Zion with high walls and strong towers round about, lest the Gentiles should come and tread it down as they had done before.

Was the "light of the world," conceived on the festival of lights?

Many believe that our Messiah, the light of the world, was conceived on the festival of Lights, Hanukkah. The Scriptures do not specifically say the date of Yahusha's birth. A study of the time of the conception of John the inmerser reveals he was conceived about Sivan 30, the eleventh week (Luke 1:8-13, 24). Adding forty weeks for a normal pregnancy reveals that John the inmerser was born on or about Passover (Nisan 14). Six months after John's conception, Mary conceived Yahusha (Luke 1:26-33); therefore Yahusha would have been conceived six months after Sivan 30 in the month of Kislev—Hanukkah. Starting at Hanukkah, which begins on Kislev 25 and continues for eight days, and counting through the nine months of Mary's pregnancy, one arrives at the approximate time of the birth of Yahusha at the Feast of Tabernacles.

Some scholars believe that the prophet Daniel predicted the historical event that took place when Antiochus sacrificed pigs on the altar. This section of scripture is found in Dan. 11:30-31. The abomination of desolation was the sacrifice of the unclean and forbidden pig on the altar. There are also those who believe that this abomination that Antiochus caused was only a shadow of the bigger abomination yet to come. They feel that Dan. 11:32-45 teaches of a day still to come, where another abomination occurs with the third temple. This abomination is believed to be caused by the Lawless one. Going immediately to the next verse, Dan.12:1 is thought to be connected to the same view as Mat. 24:21. This is known as the Tribulation Period or the Time of Jacob's Trouble.

Yahusha made it a point to talk about the miracles that He did. John quoted Him saying "**If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him**" (John 10:37-38). Yahusha may have chosen Hanukkah to talk about them because Yahuah's miracle would have been fresh in the minds of the peoples since they were in the process of celebrating the re-dedication of the temple.

Yahusha also used this time as an opportunity to declare His Set Apart nature when He cried out; "**I and my Father are one**" (John 10:30). One reason He may have chosen Hanukkah for this bold declaration is because of the people involved in the original Hanukkah event. Antiochus had desecrated the temple with the order to sacrifice to the pig and claimed to be a "god" himself. Those celebrating Hanukkah at this time would still remember the miracle of the military victory.

This is a beautiful story, many pages could be written full of history found in the Books of Maccabees.

If you would like to know more about our Congregation contact me at: abmosheh@gmail.com

Shalum