



## Hanukkah: Rededication & Shining Our Light

It was now winter, and Yeshua was in Jerusalem at the time of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication. <sup>23</sup>He was in the Temple, walking through the section known as Solomon's Colonnade. <sup>24</sup>The people surrounded Him and asked, "How long are You going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

<sup>25</sup>Yeshua replied: "I have already told you, and you don't believe Me. The proof is the work I do in My Father's Name. <sup>26</sup>But you don't believe Me because you are not My sheep. <sup>27</sup>My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. <sup>28</sup>I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from Me, <sup>29</sup>for My Father has given them to Me, and He is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand. The Father and I are One!"

<sup>30</sup>Once again the people picked up stones to kill Him. John 10:22-30

### I. INTRODUCTION

**A. Yeshua in Jerusalem for Hanukkah:** Why was Yeshua in Jerusalem in the middle of winter?

Jerusalem in December is always rainy and sometimes even snowy. Either Yeshua had stayed in the Jerusalem area since Sukkot or He walked 4 to 5 days from the Galilee on rough wet muddy slippery paths to get there. Travelers would sleep beside the roads too – in the rain! Either way, He was intentionally in the Temple at the time of Hanukkah.

1. An Important Holiday: Yeshua had to have a good reason to be there. Hanukkah was the big nationalistic holiday for the Jews in Judah!

**B. Who Ruled Judah/Israel?**

1000 BC – 586 BC - The Jews had ruled Judah

586BC – 538BC – The Babylonians ruled

(722 BC the Assyrians took over the Northern Kingdom and disbursed the tribes.)

538BC – 332 BC - Persia ruled

332BC to 164 BC – Greeks and Syrians ruled

164BC to 63BC – Jewish Rule (the Maccabees)

63BC to 313AD – the Romans ruled from Rome

313 to 614 - the Romans ruled from Byzantium

614 to 637 – The Persians ruled

637 to 1099 – The Arabs Muslims ruled from Medina

1099 to 1291 – The Crusades – European Christians ruled

1291 to 1570 – The Mamelukes Muslims ruled from Damascus

1570 to 1917 – The Ottoman Empire Muslims ruled from Constantinople, (now Istanbul).

1917 to 1948 – The British Mandate, ruled from London

1948 to Now – Jewish Rule

**C. Summary:** In the last 2,534 years, (from 586BC to 1948), the Jews had only ruled their own land for 101 years and that was during the Maccabean period. Can you see why this celebration was so important? When Yeshua was there Hanukkah was celebrating the first time that Israel had been free and under the control of Jews for 422 years since Babylon conquered them. It only lasted about 101 years.

1. Post-Mosaic Festival: Hanukkah is not one of the God mandated feast days of Leviticus 23. Rather it is a celebration of what God did through men to free their nation. It was a time when A GREAT MIRACLE HAPPENED THERE!

### II. A NATIONAL CELEBRATION & EXPECTANCY

**A. Jewish Sentiment?** Think about how they must have felt. What would it be like if the US army had been defeated and we were occupied by the Russians with Russian police and tanks everywhere? Even one day of beating them back by freedom fighters would be celebrated!

**B. Solomon's Colonnade:** Yeshua was walking in Solomon's Colonnade. It was named after the last great King of unified Israel. This was the center of both government and religion for the country since that time. It was both the most nationalistic spot and the most religious filled spot in Israel. It was where the zealots for freedom and the most religious would have gathered. Especially during Hanukkah, this is where the action was. It was like Time Square on New Year's Eve only lasting 8 days.

1. *A Special Place:* On this Spot where Yeshua was, 200 years before Antiochus IV proclaimed himself god. Next to this spot was where he had erected a statute of Zeus with his face on it in the Holy Place and sacrificed a pig on the altar to desecrate it. BUT, 3 years later, on this spot after 3 years of bloody guerilla fighting the Maccabees small army had kicked out the well armed huge Syrian army the Maccabees and rededicated ("re-Hanukkahed") this Temple to Yahweh! On this spot is where Hanukkah was born!
2. *God on the Spot:* Now, on this spot God Himself (Yeshua) had returned to His Temple! The Messiah was there! But the crowd didn't recognize Him. (Scary thought – If I had been there would I have recognized Him?)
3. *Yeshua's Fulfillment:* Yeshua had fulfilled Hanukkah because the Father had dedicated (Hanukkah in Hebrew) Him and sent Him to offer salvation to the world. Yeshua announced His dedication (Hanukkah) at the festival of Dedication (Hanukkah). He said: **"The Father and I are ONE!"**

**C. Messianic Expectancy:** During this time the Pharisees were teaching (from the "Psalm of Solomon" 17, a extra Biblical source) that Judah was captured by the Romans because the people had walked away from Torah. They were praying that Yahweh would raise up a King, the son of David, to rule over Israel. They taught that this king would "destroy the unrighteous rulers", "purge Jerusalem from the Gentiles," "drive out the sinners," "smash the arrogance of sinners" and "destroy the unlawful nations".

**D. Yeshua's Response:** That's why people were approaching Yeshua asking: "Are you the Messiah?" (John 10:24). If He had answered, "YES" the Romans would have immediately arrested Him. The crowd there would have been ready to riot against Rome due to the high nationalistic fervor. Rather, Yeshua chose the faith-based answer to the question: **"I and My Father are one."** (John 10:30). Yeshua made it absolutely clear that He was the Messiah without saying it. The listeners knew it too, for they immediately picked up stones to kill Him. The crowd didn't want a false god like Antiochus, but they also didn't want the real God, Yeshua! How would you and I have reacted in their places?

**E. Hanukkah's Ramifications:** Without Hanukkah Jerusalem would not have been recaptured, the Temple would not have been cleansed, the Biblical faith would have been replaced by Greek gods. There would not have been a Jewish people to receive the Messiah. The Biblical line for the Messiah would have been cut off. There would be no Judaism. There would be no Christianity. We might be worshiping Zeus and Aphrodite today! There would not have been any Christmas and Hanukkah presents! Thank You Father for Hanukkah!

### III. A TEMPLE REDEDICATION

**A. Past Temple Dedications:** There were several Temple Dedications in the Bible. They included:

1. *The Tabernacle:* The Tabernacle at Mt. Sinai dedication (Num 7): God spoke. Pillars of cloud & fire – God inhabited the Tabernacle
2. *Solomon's Temple's Dedication:* (2 Chro 7): Fire came down from heaven. The priests could not work because of God's presence was so thick. God inhabited the Temple. In 586BC the Babylonians torn down the Temple, stole its furnishings and the Ark of the Covenant disappeared (until the making of Raiders of the Lost Ark). There has been no recorded evidence of God's presence in the Temple after that.
3. *Ezra's Temple Dedication:* (Ezra 6:16-22): Lots of animals sacrificed. Great Celebration and a late Passover.

4. Judas Maccabee's Rededication (1 Mac 4:52-59): Great 8 day celebration with lots of sacrificed animals
5. Herod's Temple Rededication: No evidence of the presence of God in that Temple until John 2 where it talks about Yeshua being there.
6. Third Temple Dedication? What will happen then?

**B. We Are His Temple:** Where is God's Temple today? WE ARE HIS TEMPLE! The body of Christ (community of believers and in some places we as individuals) is the Temple of God. Our hearts are part of the Temple of God.

1. Jeremiah 31:31-34 (ESV) <sup>31</sup> "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. <sup>33</sup> For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup> And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
2. 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Run from sexual immorality! Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the fornicator sins against his own body! Or don't you know that your body is the Temple for the Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) Who lives inside of you, Who you received from God? The fact is you don't belong to yourselves, for you were bought at a price. So use your bodies to glorify God.

**C. When Was Your Temple (Re)-Dedicated?** So when did we have God's Torah placed in our hearts? When did His Holy Spirit invade us? When we gave our lives to Yeshua! But there is always more! On Shavuot (Day of Pentecost) something more happened to those gathered at the Temple in Jerusalem. They were already believers, but fires from heaven touched them and dedicated them. When did it happen to you?

**D. Personal Story:** My dedication happened in 1991. We had a weekend teaching on the Holy Spirit at St. Ambrose in Boulder led by Lee Buck, VP of NY Life.

1. After teaching us about the Holy Spirit for a day he asked if anyone wanted to be filled with God's Spirit. 12 of us went forward and stood around the altar table. He said "Come Holy Spirit" and all 12 of us immediately started speaking in tongues and some fell down.
2. My life has never been the same. I feel like that was the dedication of my Temple. After that I saw the world with new eyes. I had empathy for other people as never before. Colors seemed brighter too.

**E. God's Temple in YOU!** When did God dedicate His Temple in you?

1. Does It Need to be Rededicated Again? Has there been an Antiochus that has defiled God's altar in your heart? If so, have you battled your way back like a Maccabee depending upon God's help? Or are you still fighting? I have had to rededicate my Temple (heart) several times. Hanukkah is a perfect time to do it.
2. Returning to His Temple in You: God wants to return to His Temple in you by His Spirit. God calls us to recognize that He is in our hearts every day. But just like the Jerusalem Temple, sins pile up in our Temples. They need to be purged. We need to rededicate ourselves to Him – sometimes daily!
3. Personal Rededication: Is God calling you to rededicate yourself to Him? Is He asking you to take a Mikvah, either physical or spiritual? Does He want you to make a life style change? I am praying for a big change in me. The result of the rededication produces One New Man or One New Woman!
4. Cleaning Out the Junk: In our Temple rededication we are called to clean out the old junk. Some say our minds are as cluttered as our cars or homes. We need to get ride of the old junk or treasures that we are clinging on to, so God can give us new gifts. If our hands are full of old things, we can't receive new things. It's the empty hands that can receive gifts from God.

5. Ask God: Ask God what does rededication look like for you? What gift would you like to receive from God? What vision of the future has He given you? What legacy are you going to leave behind when you're gone on to be with Yeshua?
  6. Shining God's Light: Is God's Light on in God's Temple in you? You can let it out or keep it hidden. Yeshua is the Light of the world. If He lives in us, we are to be the Light of the world also. We are called to let His light shine through us. Maybe that's why you are in the Lighthouse!
    - a. *a unique expression*: What does God's Light in you look like? It's different from everyone else's Light. Everyone has different color, brightness, focus, luster, glitter, sparkle. Some are searchlights, some are candle flames. God has given you exactly what He needs. Are you hiding His Light from those around you?
    - b. *let it shine*: It will change the world around you. It will open up the calling God has for you. God's Light is in you and it wants to get out. You have to intentionally stop it from leaking out. There are places where you can share God's love everywhere you look. We have to intentionally decide, "no I'm not going to speak to that person, because he/she is different than I am." "No, I'm not going to time or money to that cause because God isn't big enough to take care of my needs if I do." (Ouch!!!!) "I'm not going to pray for that person because I might say the wrong thing or be rejected."
    - c. *hell is real*: Steward Winograd's Jewish Joke from two weeks ago: "Christians are the cruelest people on earth because if they really believed in hell they would try to tell everyone about a way to avoid it." That pierced my heart! What am I doing about it? I'm preaching to myself! We need to let God's Light out of His Temple in US!
- F. Final Question:** What is ONE thing that is blocking God's Light from shining out of the Temple in us? REMOVE IT NOW! Let GOD'S Temple's Light Shine out of us today! Make that your Hanukkah gift to God and yourself! What is ONE thing you are going to do to let God, Who lives in you, shine His light out of you? ONE THING?

### **Hanukkah is The Festival of Lights!**