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# The Feast of Dedication

## Overcoming of the anti-messiah spirit

In between the books of Malachi and Matthew is a history that was once contained within our Scriptures. Without a knowledge of this history the prophetic understanding needed to properly discern past and future events, as they pertain to prophecy especially in relation to Daniel 11, falls short. Sparing you the tedious details I will summarize our Scriptures history: councils of men have debated since the second century how many books should be included in our Scripture and as a result many of the books contained originally are missing from the post-19th century Protestant Scripture.

As one example, when Martin Luther translated the Scripture in AD 1536 he did not include the books of Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation in the Renewed Covenant or New Testament. Can you imagine not having the precious truth contained in these books today? The 1560 Geneva translation and the 1611 King James translation both contained many of these excluded books with a total of 81 books instead of the 66 books commonly selected today.

Some of these “extra” books were assigned over time to a category known as “apocryphal writings” meaning hidden or secret. The purpose of this categorization is to insinuate that these books are too sacred for the general public such as you and I. YHVH in His faithfulness however, is causing many of these writings to be restored to His people as we continue towards the “restoration of all things” (Acts 3:21). The Book of 1 Maccabees is one such book and is important for the purpose of this article on The Feast of Dedication or better known as Hanukkah, which simply means dedicated.

Now when you mention Hanukkah to most people today they may recognize it as a special holiday the Jews celebrate and sadly most who have read the Scriptures have never been taught about it’s mention still left in our Renewed Covenant (New Testament).

*At that time the Hanukkah came to be In Yerushalayim, and it was winter. And Yehoshua was walking in the Set-apart Place, in the porch of Shelmoh. John 10:22-23 TS*

*And it was at Jerusalem the feast of dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. John 10:-22-23 KJV*

What is this Hanukkah or feast of dedication and why is Yehoshua's presence mentioned here? This is where the book of 1 Maccabees, that was once in our Scripture, restores to us the back story of what is going on here and why Yehoshua would be present at this occasion.

I am not going to give an in-depth breakdown of all of this history here but as a means of introduction to what the Feast of Dedication is and why followers of Yehoshua benefit in learning of this history I would like to give an overview.

Before I do it needs to be stated for those in the Messianic congregations who are desiring to guard the prophetic rehearsals of the appointed times of YHVH found in the Torah, as in Lev. 23, that the Feast of Dedication is NOT one of these appointed times. However, it is found in our Scripture as we read in John and it was understood and observed by the first century congregations. It is a part of our history and has important principals and lessons we all benefit from in knowing. This will become apparent as we continue.

Daniel chapter 11 is an amazing read. This chapter contains an astounding futuristic prophetic overview of worldly empires given to Daniel by the messenger or angel that was speaking to him starting in chapter 10 verse 5. This chapter miraculously details what some have mistakenly labeled "the 400 years of silence" between Malachi and Matthew. These years are actually prophesied here in this chapter starting with the Persian Empire, covering around 375 years and concluding with the yet to be fulfilled coming anti-messiah who will lead the last world empire before the return of the Reign of YHVH on the earth.

When we study the prophets in the First Covenant or Old Testament there is a commonly understood principal found in the First Covenant known as types or foreshadowings. These types can be people or things that foreshadows a coming ultimate fulfillment of this type. For instance, Joshua who led Israel in the war campaigns of taking Canaan was a type foreshadowing the

ultimate fulfillment of Yehoshua (Jesus) or Joshua our Deliverer. The tabernacle that Moses was instructed to build in the wilderness was a type that foreshadowed the everlasting Dwelling Place or temple of YHVH that we see coming back to earth in the book of Revelation. **So in Daniel 11 we find the foreshadowing of the yet to be fulfilled final type of the anti-messiah who will complete the final abomination of desolation that will take place in the Dwelling Place (temple) of YHVH.** This final fulfillment will bring the Day of YHVH and His wrath which will usher in the Messianic Millennial Reign. Halleluyah!

This past historical type of anti-messiah given to Daniel in this chapter is exactly what occurred in between Malachi and Matthew and we find it recorded in the book of 1 Maccabees. So hopefully you can start to see why having a good understanding of this past type of the coming anti-messiah, that we learn about in the history of the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah, is important to us today. As we understand the past type, it brings understanding of the future type.

The Feast of Dedication was important to the first century congregations and that is why it is in our Book of John. A first century member of the congregation would have understood all about it and the lessons we need to learn from this history once contained in our Scriptures and Set-apart (Holy) Spirit is preparing today's believers for the future by restoring it to us. You may also start to understand why "the powers that be" do not desire for YHVH'S people to have this knowledge but with this in mind, let us reconstruct a bit of our history here.

Verses 21-24 detail the coming to power by the Seleucid's King Antiochus Epiphanies the 4th of whom history would record fulfills these verses foretold to Daniel.

*"And in his place (Antiochus 3rd) shall arise a despised one, to whom they shall not give the excellency of the rule. But he shall come in peaceably, and seize the rule by flatteries. And the arms of the flood shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant. And after they join him, he shall work deceit, and shall come up and be strong with a small nation. He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province, and do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: distribute among them plunder and spoil and supplies and devise his plots against the strongholds, but only for a time,"*

Because Antiochus the 4th was a type of the coming anti-messiah there are many beneficial insights we can mine here concerning how the final anti-messiah will come into power. I hope you will meditate on these and others verses concerning his rising. Here are a few insights.

Notice that it was not through war. He came to power peaceably and through flatteries. In other words he is going to be saying what people want to hear but remember, he who has flattering lips always has an ulterior motive and it is never in your best interests.

He shall arise to power through the working of deceit. Deceit is always an attribute connected with the final anti-messiah and carries the implication that he will say one thing, but in his heart mean another. He will not be who he appears to be and his true intentions will be cloaked until he is in place.

He will distribute plunder, spoil and supplies. As we watch the development of a new economic system where leaders desire wealth to be distributed and as the World Economic Forum puts it, “you will own nothing and be happy”, it appears there may very well be some type of universal income put in place with this coming beast system. I believe this will be accompanied with new technologies we have not seen before and will be presented to mankind for the intention of saving our earth. It will have the appearance of being a good thing to those who do not have the Spirit of YHVH in them. We see the foundations for this already being laid at the time of this writing.

This emerging leader will be seen as generous, the giver of new technologies and a type of “savior” aka, an “anti” meaning “in place of” messiah. However, his intentions for humanity will not be as they appear.

In verses 31-34 the messenger continues to deliver to Daniel insight foretelling an event that would be performed by Antiochus the 4th known in Scripture as “the abomination that maketh desolate” or “the abomination that lays waste”. This is what Yehoshua refers to as an important sign to be looking for as spoken of by the prophet Daniel in Matthew 24. Because this “abomination” is the very event that happened in the history of Hanukkah, Hanukkah helps us understand what abomination we are to be looking for. As you read this overview I believe you will easily see the parallels between what was happening then and what will happen again in the near future. Here is the foretold account from Daniel:

*“And strong ones shall arise from him and profane the set-apart place, the stronghold, and shall take away that which is continual, and set up the abomination that lays waste. And by flatteries he shall profane those who do wrong against the covenant, but the people who know their Elohim shall be strong, and shall act. And those of the people who have insight shall give understanding to many. And they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering, for days. And when they stumble, they shall be helped, a little help, but many shall join them by flatteries.”*

Amazingly, if you know your history, or if you have ever read 1 Maccabees, you will know the past fulfillment of these words the messenger spoke to Daniel is incredibly accurate. History tells us of the rise of the Sovereign of the Seleucid Empire named Antiochus Epiphanes the 4th who rose to power not by war, but is strongly suspected of have murdered his brother, the previous sovereign. He flattered Eumenes, sovereign of Pergamus, and his brother Attalus. He used flatteries with the Romans and the Syrians to gain his position. He chose the title Epiphanes which meant, “the illustrious”. Others chose however to call him Epimanes, meaning madman!

The history of Hanukkah that led to the abominable act prophesied of in this text occurred when Antiochus was returning home from a terrible military defeat. Lets just say he wasn't in a good mood. During his return he and his army passed through Jerusalem and he chose to vent his anger there. He had already sold the office of the High Priest to the highest bidder and corruption was on the rise in Jerusalem. Much of the leadership had sold out already and did not have the people's best interest at heart. Their thoughts were on bribes and power.

Antiochus began a campaign of persecution against any Israelite who would not forsake the commands of Torah and convert to his religion and his kingdom, the Greek culture. The Torah was declared illegal, all were called upon to worship their idols, use their currency, circumcision and observance of Sabbath and Feasts were punishable by death. In fact any observance of Torah was forbidden and whoever did not obey the command of the king would die. It is believed that Antiochus Epiphanes killed around 80,000 Israelites took more than 40,000 prisoners, another 40,000 slaves and plundered the Dwelling Place or temple.

This was a big test to the hearts of Elohim's people. Many caved and embraced the new Greek culture, forsook the Torah and did evil in the land. Others held to their beliefs. They

chose to die rather than become defiled or profane the Everlasting Covenant. As a result, the society became divided and split - brother against brother.

The vile Antiochus commanded an image of his head placed on Zeus's body be set up in the Dwelling Place on Mount Zion in Jerusalem and demanded a pig be offered as a sacrifice upon the altar. This truly did desecrate the Dwelling Place of YHVH and as a result no one would come and worship there anymore.

Things were looking grime but all was not lost... YaH always has a remnant.

In 1 Maccabees 2 we get introduced to one of the heroes of our history, a priest named Mattathias and his five sons, one of which is named Maccabeus - the hammer - and would become a great leader in our story. When Mattathias was called upon to obey the kings command rather than obey the Torah, he was told of great rewards that would be given to him and his sons if he would chose the king. He answered as follows:

“Even if all of the nations that live under the rule of the king obey him, and have chosen to do his commandments, departing each one from the religion of his fathers, yet I am my sons and my brothers will live by the covenant of our fathers. Far be it from us to desert the law and its ordinances. We will not obey the king's words by turning aside from our religion to the right hand or to the left.” 1 Macc. 2:19-22

It then records that with the zeal of Phinehas, another great hero in our Scripture and in Matthathias family tree, Matthathias rose up and killed a Jew who had come forward to offer an idolatrous sacrifice on the altar. He then turned burning with zeal and struck down the kings officer and tore down the idolatrous altar. Next, Matthathias called out and summoned all those who supported the Everlasting Covenant to rally with him and they all, along with his sons, fled into the hills and from there led a revolt known as the Maccabean Revolt that lasted 3 years.

Miraculously, this ragtag army of simple farmers armed with spears, bows, arrows and rocks but with YHVH in their midst, fought this well trained army and cleared their way back to the Dwelling Place in Jerusalem and reclaimed it for YHVH!

They cleaned out the Dwelling Place, dismantled the defiled altar and rebuilt a new one with whole stones. Three years to the day after Antiochus' mad rampage the Maccabees held a re-**dedication** service (**Hanukkah**) for the Dwelling Place of YHVH.

*Early in the morning, on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month,... they rose and offered sacrifice, as the law directs, on the new altar of burnt offering which they had built. At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it, it was dedicated (Hanukkah) with songs and harps and lutes and cymbals. All the people fell on their faces and worshipped and blessed Heaven, who had prospered them. So they celebrated the dedication (Hanukkah) of the altar **for eight days**, and offered burnt offerings with gladness; they offered a sacrifice of deliverance and praise. They decorated the front of the temple with golden crowns and small shields... There was great gladness among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles (heathen) was removed.” 1 Macc. 4:52-52*

Is it no wonder that we find Yehoshua walking among those in the Dwelling Place at the Feast of Dedication in the book of John? There we find Him remembering the heroes of Israel who had held fast to the Everlasting Covenant and stood against the commands of the type of vile anti-messiah you and I are soon to stand against ourselves. It is comforting to know that Yeshua sees and Yeshua knows those whose are His!

What a wonderful heritage we have as a people of the faith. Many times we focus on the many who disobeyed, compromised and failed to prove faithful to our King, but there are many, albeit among the few but yet chosen, who obeyed at great cost and overcome by trusting in YHVH. When we rediscover this hidden history we find such heroes that inspire us still today.

I pray you will search out the book of 1 Maccabees and rediscover this history for yourself and maybe even consider observing Hanukkah and re-dedicate your dwelling place back to YHVH and His everlasting ways. You might choose to purchase a menorah and light a candle or lamp each evening while reading this inspiring account again so relevant to our time, or go through a studying of the Dwelling Place (temple) in the Scripture. We do not advocate to necessarily adopt the traditions that have become associated with Hanukkah as a secular holiday but to rediscover the Scriptural roots of this special feasts and its profound prophetic significance.

As an aside, some would argue that the Feast of Dedication is just a substitute for Christ-mass, which we have come to understand from another bit of hidden history is a pagan rooted festival known as Saturnalia that began to be mixed into some of the early congregations in the 4th century A.D. by another pagan sovereign who desired to unite all religions to his kingdom... but that is another article.

I would say rather the Feast of Dedication is the very antithesis to Christ-mass (speaking of it's pagan roots for it is not at the time of our Messiah's birth). **Hanukkah is the celebration of YHVH'S people being set-apart and overcoming the anti-messiah spirit, not mixing with it. It is in our Scripture and it brings great encouragement and many reflections for our generation poised to face the worst anti-messiah tyrant of them all, and that I believe even now is rising with flatteries and deceit.**

Let us arise in loving commitment as our fathers in the covenant did before us and guard His commands and keep His witness!

To the OVERCOMERS who keep their dwelling place dedicated to YHVH be the reward to reign with our King!

Happy Hanukkah!