



MAIN PASSAGES

- 1-2 Maccabees
- Luke 9:23-26
- John 10:22-30
- Hebrews 12:3-13

HANUKKAH: CHRISTIANITY

167 YEARS BEFORE CHRIST

- When Evil Rules
- Resisting Evil Authorities
- To Die is Gain

FOUNDATIONAL PASSAGES:

“Many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves **not to eat unclean things. They chose to die**, that they **might not be defiled with the food**, and that they might not profane the holy covenant; and they died. Exceedingly great wrath came upon Israel.” 1 Maccabees 1:62-64 WEBUS

“But **Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king’s delicacies**, nor with the wine which he drank. Therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” Daniel 1:8 WEBUS

“**Don’t you know that you are God’s temple** and that God’s Spirit lives in you? **If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is holy, which you are.**”

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 WEBUS

“Or don’t you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 WEBUS

“What agreement does a temple of God have with idols? **For you are a temple of the living God.** Even as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God and they will be my people.” Therefore **“Come out from among them, and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘Touch no unclean thing. I will receive you.”**

2 Corinthians 6:16-17 WEBUS

“He said to all, **“If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever will lose his life for my sake will save it.** For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits his own self? For **whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed** when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels.” Luke 9:23-26 WEBUS

“Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.”** Romans 12:1 WEBUS

“It was the Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in Solomon’s porch.” John 10:22-23 WEBUS

INTRODUCTION: Hanukkah: Christianity 167 Years before Christ

It was the Feast of Dedication and Y’shua was fully aware of what was about to happen and to what He was alluding. Today, Jews around the world, and even some Christians who have come to understand its deeper truths, commemorate this Festival of Lights. You might recognize the holiday as Hanukkah and it’s all about the fire of rededication.

It would be 200 years after the historical events from which the Feast of Dedication originates that Y’shua would declare to the world, at this celebration of lights, that He was indeed the Messiah, “I told you, and you don’t believe Me. The entire historical event began to testify of Me 167 years before I was born. My sheep heard My voice then, and they followed Me; they still do to this very day. I am the giver of eternal life; none of My sheep will perish. And no one can snatch any of them out of My hand, no matter how great the persecution. That is the true miracle of Hanukkah and the force behind the fierce dedication and courageous faith of the Maccabees. They were the warriors for My truth and radical faith-based obedience to God. They were responsible for rebuilding and

cleansing the altar, and for lighting the fire of the eight day rededication of My temple. And that is the imagery of what it means to dedicate your temple to Me!”

They couldn't have known then, but we do know now, the deeper meaning of why Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication, would become known as the Festival of Lights. At conception, at the moment the human egg becomes fertilized, there is a burst of light. That is precisely what occurred when Y'shua, the light of life, was supernaturally conceived. That is also what happened the moment you were born again, when that light of life came into your life and you became dedicated as the temple of the Holy Spirit. He is the light of the world and you too are the light of the world. Let us now rededicate our temples and may our fire shine into this world with such intense brightness that all the world would see the immense burst of light and would come to know the glory of our heavenly Father.

WHEN EVIL RULES

1. The Righteous Must Stand Up!

A. All it takes for evil to PREVAIL is for good men to stand by and do nothing!

(1) Introduction

(a) The Dreidel: Nun (נ), Gimel (ג), Hey (ה), and Shin (ש)

1. Nes Gadol Hayah Sham

a) A great miracle happened there (here). What Miracle?

1) A small rag tag bunch of freedom and liberty seeking Jews, who were willing to live and die for God's laws, defeated one of the greatest armies and certainly one of the cruelest despotic governments the world had ever known.

2. 1-2 Maccabees

a) The History of Rebellion against Evil

b) Dedication to Covenant unto Death

c) Apocrypha: biblical or related writings not forming part of the accepted canon of Scripture.

1) By how Paul's words in Romans 13:1-7, 225 years later are translated in common Bibles, you'd think the Maccabees were in error to rebel against their evil government.

(2) Romans 13:1-7 (NKJV)

(a) Subject yourself to every governing authority; they are all from God!

1. **“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by**

God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor." Romans 13:1-7 NKJV

(b) Romans 13:1-7 (How Paul's words should be interpreted in proper context.)

1. | **13:1** | Let's shift subjects to include godly corporate governance. Each one of us should place ourselves in subjection to a governing authority. And truly, there is no ultimate authority except that which is authorized, sanctioned, commissioned and empowered by God.

Authorities who operate in that realm only exist because they are indeed ordained and appointed by God.

2. | **13:2** | Therefore, whoever finds himself resisting God-appointed authorities, in actuality, is standing against the decrees of God; and if you are the one who finds himself in resistance to those who God ordained as leaders, God's ordinances demand judgment against you, and for that you will have no one to blame but yourself.
3. | **13:3** | Godly leaders are not in place to disrupt the good works of god-fearing people; quite the opposite is true, they exist to interfere with the evil propagated by those who oppose God. It's simple; if you desire to have no fear of godly authority, align yourself with what is good in the sight of God, and instead of being reprimanded by them, you will receive praise from them.
4. | **13:4** | Remember, these are ministers of God, serving Him to bring good to the world. If you participate in that which is evil, you should be afraid of them because they don't wield the sword of God's judgement for no good reason. They have literally

been assigned as God’s ministers—serving leaders who avenge God by executing His wrath on those who practice evil.

5. | **13:5** | As such, you must place yourself in subjection to them, but not only because you fear the wrath of God. You should do it because it is the right thing to do.
6. | **13:6** | Because these leaders are servants of God, working day and night, doing this very thing in full time ministry, you ought to feel privileged to support them financially; your obligation to do so should carry with it a sense of urgency, much like you feel about your requirement to pay taxes.
7. | **13:7** | The right mindset on this matter is to consider your support of God’s ministers like a debt. Give God’s serving leaders what you owe them. Again, much like you’d treat the taxes you owe, you’d pay the taxes. If there was a tariff on a business deal, you’d pay the tariff in order to stay in business. It even applies in matters that don’t relate to financial transactions, like respect and reverence for others. If a man is honorable, then pay him his due respect by treating him with honor.

(3) The History of One Despotic Government with Evil Rulership

(a) Forsake your God and follow me...

1. “King Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom that **all should be one people, and that each should forsake his own laws.** All the nations agreed according to the word of the king. **Many of Israel consented to his worship, sacrificed to the idols, and profaned the Sabbath.** The king sent letters by the hand of messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should **follow laws strange to the land,** and should **forbid whole burnt offerings and sacrifice and drink offerings** in the sanctuary; and should **profane the Sabbaths and feasts,** and **pollute the sanctuary and those who were holy;** that they should **build altars, and temples, and shrines for idols,** and should **sacrifice swine’s flesh and unclean animals;** and that they should **leave their sons uncircumcised,** that they should **make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation; so that they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances.** Whoever **doesn’t do according to the word of the king, he shall die.** According to all these

words wrote he to his whole kingdom. He appointed overseers over all the people, and he commanded the cities of Judah to sacrifice, city by city. **From the people were gathered together to them many, everyone who had forsaken the law; and they did evil things in the land.** They made Israel to hide themselves in every place of refuge which they had. **On the fifteenth day of Chislev,** in the one hundred forty fifth year, they **built an abomination of desolation upon the altar,** and in the cities of Judah on every side they built idol altars. At the doors of the houses and in the streets they burned incense. **They tore the books of the law which they found in pieces and set them on fire. Anyone who was found with any a book of the covenant, and if any consented to the law, the king's sentence delivered him to death.** Thus did they in their might to Israel, to those who were found month by month in the cities. **On the twenty-fifth day of the month they sacrificed upon the idol altar that was on top of the altar of burnt offering.** They **put to death women who had circumcised their children, according to the commandment.** They **hung their babies around their**

necks, and their houses, and those who had circumcised them.” 1 Maccabees 1:41-61 WEBUS

2. The Musings of an Evil King (Antiochus 167 BC)
 - a) We should all be one people under my laws; anyone beholden to another law should forsake it.
 - b) Jews should...
 - 1) Forbid offerings and sacrifice in the sanctuary.
 - 2) Profane the Sabbaths and feasts.
 - 3) Pollute the sanctuary and those who are holy.
 - 4) Build altars, temples, and shrines for idols.
 - 5) Sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean animals.
 - 6) Leave their sons uncircumcised.
 - 7) Violate their conscience (souls) with whatever abominable thing the king requires—no matter how unclean or profane.
 - c) Why?
 - 1) To cause the Jews to forget the law; change all the ordinances of Yahweh; and violate their covenants with Him.
 - d) Warning!
 - 1) Whoever doesn't do according to the word of the king shall die.
 - e) Results:

- 1) Many of Israel consented to the king's worship and followed his laws
- 2) They sacrificed to the idols and profaned the Sabbath.

3. Administration:

- a) The king appointed overseers to institute his laws:
 - 1) They gathered many people together who were willing to forsake God's law and participate in the evil rulings of a wicked government.
 - 2) They caused some from Israel (who were unwilling) to hide themselves.
 - 3) On **the fifteenth day of Chislev**, they built an abomination of desolation upon the altar.
 - a. An unauthorized authority in God's Holy Place (a pagan altar atop God's altar)!
 - b. (Read Matthew 24) *“When, therefore, you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel [See 9:24-27] the prophet, **standing in the holy place** (let the reader understand),”* Matthew 24:15 WEBUS
- b) They tore the books of the law into pieces and set them on fire.

- 1) Tearing the Torah Scrolls has tremendous hidden imagery as Y'shua, the living Word of God was torn!
 - a. *"**the beginning was the Word**, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.**"* John 1:1 WEBUS
 - b. *"**The Word became flesh and lived among us...**"* John 1:14 WEBUS
 - c. *"But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was **crushed for our iniquities**. The punishment that brought our peace was on him; and by his wounds we are healed."* Isaiah 53:5 WEBUS
 - d. *"So **Pilate then took Jesus and flogged him. The soldiers twisted thorns into a crown and put it on his head**, and dressed him in a purple garment."* John 19:1-2 WEBUS
- 2) Research one Roman flogging (Torn flesh: *"the Word became flesh!"*)
 - a. "The Roman flogging consisted of the victim being stripped of his garments and stretched against a pillar or bent over a low post with the hands tied. The instrument of torture was

a short wooden handle that had several strips of leather attached to it. Bits of iron or bones were interwoven into the pieces of leather. Two men usually whipped the victim, one lashing the victim from one side, one from the other side. This resulted in the flesh being cut so severely that veins, arteries, and sometimes even inner organs were exposed. Sometimes victims died during the flogging. Flogging was a brutal form of torture. The severe flogging that Jesus endured was surely the greatest physical reason that he was unable to carry his own cross all the way to Golgotha.”

- b. And about the crown of thorns: there are some trees plants that have long thorns, much bigger than the rose bush. One such plant is the euphoria milli which is believed to be the thorny bush used. Having that push down over your head by people who practice brutality.
- 3) Certainly, Jesus was beaten so bad that people who had known him during his ministry would

not be able to recognize Him. As Isaiah prophesied:

- a. *“Just as many were astonished at you— **his appearance was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men— so he will cleanse many nations. Kings will shut their mouths at him; for they will see that which had not been told them, and they will understand that which they had not heard.**”*

Isaiah 52:14-15 WEBUS

- b. Who ordered the tearing apart of God’s Word to then be burned? The King! Notice to whom this witnesses: The King!
- 4) Anyone who was found with any a book of the covenant, and if any consented to the law, the king’s sentence delivered him to death.
- 5) On the **twenty-fifth day of the month** they sacrificed upon **the idol altar** that was on top of God’s altar.
- 6) They put to death women who had circumcised their children.

7) They hung their babies around their necks, and killed members of their families and those who performed the circumcision.

(b) The response of some: Dedication to Covenant unto Death (WHAT AN EXAMPLE!)

1. “Many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves **not to eat unclean things. They chose to die**, that they might **not be defiled with the food**, and that they might **not profane the holy covenant**; and they died. Exceedingly great wrath came upon Israel.” 1 Maccabees 1:62-64 WEBUS

a) Some were willing to die for their faith!

1) *“They overcame him because of the Lamb’s blood, and because of the word of their testimony. **They didn’t love their life, even to death.**”* Revelation 12:11 WEBUS

b) Some were not willing to die for their faith!

1) *“For consider him who has endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **that you don’t grow weary, fainting in your souls. You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin.**”* Hebrews 12:3-4 WEBUS

(4) Enforcing Apostasy

- (a) Enrolling leaders to minimize resistance against instituting a diabolical agenda:
1. “And the king’s officers who were **enforcing the apostasy** came into the city Modin to sacrifice. Many of Israel came to them, and **Mattathias and his sons** were gathered together. The king’s officers answered and spoke to Mattathias, saying, “**You are a ruler** and an honorable and great man in this city, and strengthened with sons and kindred. **Now therefore come first and do the commandment of the king**, as all the nations have done, including the men of Judah and those who remain in Jerusalem. **You and your house will be numbered among the king’s friends, and you and your sons will be honored with silver and gold and many gifts.**” And Mattathias answered and said with a loud voice, “**If all the nations that are in the house of the king’s dominion listen to him, to fall away each one from the worship of his fathers, and have made choice to follow his commandments, yet I and my sons and my kindred will walk in the covenant of our fathers. Far be it from us that we should forsake the law and the ordinances. We will not listen to the king’s words, to**

turn aside from our worship, to the right hand, or to the left.” When he had finished speaking these words, **a Jew came in the sight of all to sacrifice on the altar** which was at Modin, according to the king’s commandment. Mattathias saw it, **so his zeal was kindled, and his guts trembled, and he vented his wrath according to judgment, and ran and killed him upon the altar.** He **killed the king’s officer**, who compelled men to sacrifice, at the same time, and **pulled down the altar. He was zealous for the law, even as Phinehas did** to Zimri the son of Salu.

Mattathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying, **“Whoever is zealous for the law and maintains the covenant, let him follow me!”** He and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that they had in the city. Then many who sought justice and judgment went down into the wilderness to live there — they, their children, their wives, and their livestock — because evils were multiplied upon them. It was told the king’s officers and the forces that were in Jerusalem, the city of David, that certain men who had broken the king’s commandment had gone down into the secret places in the wilderness; and many

pursued after them, and having overtaken them, they encamped against them and **set the battle in array against them on the Sabbath day.** They said to them, “Enough of this! **Come out and do according to the word of the king, and you will all live!**” They said, **“We won’t come out. We won’t do the word of the king, to profane the Sabbath day.”** Then the enemy hurried to attack them. They didn’t answer them. They didn’t cast a stone at them, or block their secret places, saying, **“Let’s all die in our innocence. Heaven and earth testify for us, that you put us to death unjustly.”** So they attacked them on the **Sabbath, and they died**—they, their wives, their children, and their livestock—in number a thousand souls of men.” 1 Maccabees 2:15-38 WEBUS

2. Enforcing Apostasy: make this easier for us and you will be rewarded handsomely!
 - a) The king’s officers and those from Israel who had already capitulated make an offer to Mattathias Maccabee and his sons:
 - 1) You are an honorable ruler, a great man in the city, and your family is strong being fortified by many sons.

- 2) Why don't you aid the process of submission by openly coming into alignment with the commandment of the king, as other nations under his rule have already done, including some of the men of Judah.
 - 3) You will be rewarded as if you are a great friend of the king. You and your sons will be lavished with silver and gold and many other gifts if you stand out as a great example of capitulation.
3. Mattathias Maccabee responds...
- a) He does so conspicuously and with certainty for all to hear:
 - 1) It would not matter if every nation and every person within those nations, who were under the rulership of your king's dominion, came into compliance and followed the king's commands down to the letter, I and my sons and my whole family will ONLY walk according to the covenant Israel has with Yahweh.
 - 2) We will NEVER forsake God's law and His ordinances!

- 3) We will not listen to the king's words, or turn away from the worship of our God, to the right hand, or to the left.
- b) Does this not align perfectly with the law, the prophets, the Psalms, and Proverbs?
- 1) **Words of Y'shua:** *“**“Don't think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I didn't come to destroy, but to fulfill. For most certainly, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, **not even one smallest letter or one tiny pen stroke shall in any way pass away from the law, until all things are accomplished.**”** Matthew 5:17-18*
WEBUS
- 2) **The Law:** *“Yahweh will make you the head, and not the tail. You will be above only, and you will not be beneath, if you listen to the commandments of Yahweh your God which I command you today, to observe and to do, and **shall not turn away from any of the words which I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.**”* Deuteronomy 28:13-14 WEBUS

- 3) **The Prophets:** *“Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers won’t be hidden any more, but your eyes will see your teachers; and when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way. Walk in it.””* Isaiah 30:20-21 WEBUS
- 4) **The Psalms:** *“Blessed is the man who makes Yahweh his trust, and doesn’t respect the proud, nor such as turn away to lies.”* (Psalms 40:4 WEBUS) *“The arrogant mock me excessively, but I don’t swerve from your law.”* Psalms 119:51 WEBUS
- 5) **Proverbs:** *“Don’t turn to the right hand nor to the left. Remove your foot from evil.”* Proverbs 4:27 WEBUS
- c) **Time Travel:** You would think Mattathias was on the Road to Emmaus with Christ 200 Years later, or he was reading from the Gospel of John, or learning from Paul’s letter to the Romans! What is true is that he knew the words of Moses and the Prophets and that they were speaking of Christ.

1) **Christ shows Himself in the Old Testament**

Scriptures: *“Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. {31}*

*Their eyes were opened and they recognized him; then he vanished out of their sight. They said to one another, “Weren’t our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us along the way, and **while he opened the Scriptures to us?**”*

*{44} He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you, that all **things which are written in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms concerning me** must be fulfilled.”” Luke 24:27, 31-32, 44 WEBUS*

2) *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for **he wrote about me.**” John 5:46 WEBUS*

a. **Moses wrote:** You *“**shall not turn away from any of the words which I command you today, to the right hand or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.**”*

Deuteronomy 28:14 WEBUS

3) **Paul wrote:** *“But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart;”*

that is, the word of faith which we preach:"

Romans 10:8 WEBUS

a. **Paul revealed what Moses wrote about**

Christ: *"But the word is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, **that you may do it.**"*Deuteronomy 30:14 WEBUS

4) **Mattathias said:** *"We will not listen to the king's words, to turn aside from our worship, **to the right hand, or to the left.**"* 1 Maccabees 2:22
WEBUS

(b) The righteous witnessing the unrighteous!

1. When he had finished speaking these words, **a Jew came in the sight of all to sacrifice on the altar** which was at Modin, according to the king's commandment. Mattathias saw it, **so his zeal was kindled, and his guts trembled, and he vented his wrath according to judgment, and ran and killed him upon the altar.** He **killed the king's officer**, who compelled men to sacrifice, at the same time, and **pulled down the altar. He was zealous for the law, even as Phinehas did** to Zimri the son of Salu.
2. Mattathias acts with zeal based on God's Law

a) He was zealous for the law, even as Phinehas.

Again Mattathias new the Torah!

1) *“And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. **Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.** And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand. Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:*

“Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace;

and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.' ""

Numbers 25:6-13 NKJV

(c) Choose today whom you will serve! (Sound familiar?)

1. Mattathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying, **“Whoever is zealous for the law and maintains the covenant, let him follow me!”** He and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that they had in the city. Then **many who sought justice and judgment went down into the wilderness to live there**— they, their children, their wives, and their livestock—because evils were multiplied upon them. **It was told** the king’s officers and the forces that were in Jerusalem, the city of David, **that certain men who had broken the king’s commandment** had gone down into the secret places in the wilderness; and many pursued after them, and having overtaken them, they encamped against them and **set the battle in array against them on the Sabbath day**. They said to them, “Enough of this! **Come out and do according to the word of the king, and you will all**

live!” They said, **“We won’t come out. We won’t do the word of the king, to profane the Sabbath day.”**

Then the enemy hurried to attack them. They didn’t answer them. They didn’t cast a stone at them, or block their secret places, saying, **“Let’s all die in our innocence. Heaven and earth testify for us, that you put us to death unjustly.”** So they attacked them on the Sabbath, and they died—they, their wives, their children, and their livestock—in number a thousand souls of men.” 1 Maccabees 2:15-38 WEBUS

2. Mattathias openly draws a line in the sand...
 - a) “Whoever is zealous for the law and maintains the covenant, let him follow me!”
 - b) Many who sought justice and judgment followed him. Just like Joshua in the Torah!
 - 1) **The Beginning of Joshua:** *“Only be strong and very courageous. **Be careful to observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you. Don’t turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may***

observe to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success. Haven't I commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Don't be afraid. **Don't be dismayed, for Yahweh your God is with you wherever you go.**" Joshua 1:7-9 WEBUS

- 2) **The End of Joshua:** "Now therefore fear Yahweh, and serve him in sincerity and in truth. Put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, in Egypt; and serve Yahweh. If it seems evil to you to serve Yahweh, **choose today whom you will serve;** whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell; **but as for me and my house, we will serve Yahweh.**" The people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake Yahweh, to serve **other gods;** for it is Yahweh our God who brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way in which we went, and among all

the peoples through the middle of whom we passed. Yahweh drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve Yahweh; for he is our God." Joshua said to the people, **"You can't serve Yahweh, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God. He will not forgive your disobedience nor your sins. If you forsake Yahweh, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after he has done you good."** The people said to Joshua, **"No, but we will serve Yahweh."** Joshua said to the people, **"You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen Yahweh yourselves, to serve him."** They said, **"We are witnesses."** "Now therefore put away the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart to Yahweh, the God of Israel." The people said to Joshua, **"We will serve Yahweh our God, and we will listen to his voice."** So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem. Joshua wrote these

*words in the book of the law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of Yahweh. Joshua said to all the people, “**Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all Yahweh’s words which he spoke to us. It shall be therefore a witness against you, lest you deny your God.**” So Joshua sent the people away, each to his own inheritance.”* Joshua 24:14-28 WEBUS

3. The king’s officers are notified of the rebellion against the king’s commandment.
 - a) They encamped against the rebels in battle array on the Sabbath day.
 - 1) Warning: *“Enough of this! Come out and do according to the word of the king, and you will all live!”*
 - 2) Response: *“We won’t come out. We won’t do the word of the king, to profane the Sabbath day.”*
 - 3) The enemy attacks the rebels and they don’t defend themselves.
 - b) Trust in the Lord!

- 1) We are willing to die in our innocence.
 - 2) Heaven and earth will testify for us that you put us to death unjustly.
- c) Does this sound exactly like Christianity?
- 1) *“I tell you, my friends, **don’t be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.** But I will warn you whom you should fear. **Fear him who after he has killed, has power to cast into Gehenna.** Yes, I tell you, fear him.”* Luke 12:4-5 WEBUS
 - 2) *“We know that **all things work together for good** for those who **love God**, for those who are **called according to his purpose.**”* Romans 8:28 WEBUS
 - 3) *“**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Could oppression, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?** Even as it is written, “For your sake we are killed all day long. We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” No, **in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things*

*present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, **nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from God's love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***" Romans 8:35-39 WEBUS

(d) They were attacked on the Sabbath and 1000 of them died. Mattathias finds out about the slaughter!

1. **"When Mattathias and his friends found out about it,** and they mourned over them exceedingly. One said to another, **"If we all do as our kindred have done, and don't fight against the Gentiles for our lives and our ordinances, they will quickly destroy us from off the earth."** So they decided that day, saying, **"Whoever comes against us to battle on the Sabbath day, let's fight against him,** and we will in no way all die, as our kindred died in the secret places."¹
Maccabees 2:39-41 WEBUS

2. Mattathias must make a hard choice

- a) If we continue to not defend ourselves against the Gentiles who come against God's laws we will be annihilated from the earth.
- b) So if they come against us on the Sabbath day, we will fight!

(5) Massacre and Slavery

(a) Eighty Thousand Casualties

1. **“Then there was killing** of young and old, destruction of boys, women, and children, and slaying of virgins and infants. **In a total of three days, eighty thousand were destroyed**, of which forty thousand were slain in close combat, and **no fewer were sold into slavery than slain.**” 2 Maccabees 5:13-14 WEBUS

a) A Massacre and Slavery (in just 3 days)

- 1) 40,000 thousand slain
- 2) 40,000 sold into slavery

b) A sample of Public Execution

- 1) **“For example**, two women were brought in for having circumcised their children. These, **when they had led them publicly** around the city with the babes hung from their breasts, they threw down headlong from the wall.” 2 Maccabees 6:10 WEBUS

RESISTING EVIL AUTHORITY

2. **The Righteous Must Stand Up!**

- A. **All it takes for evil to FAIL is for good men to stand up and do something!**

(1) Judas Maccabee (the Hammer)

(a) The Son of Mattathias

1. “Judas said, **“It is an easy thing for many to be hemmed in by the hands of a few.** With heaven it is all one, to save by many or by few; **for victory in battle stands not in the multitude of an army, but strength is from heaven. They come to us in fullness of insolence and lawlessness,** to destroy us and our wives and our children, and to plunder us, but **we fight for our lives and our laws. He himself will crush them before our face; but as for you, don’t be afraid of them.”** 1 Maccabees 3:18-22 WEBUS

2. The Victory is the Lord’s: it is an easy thing for many to be hemmed in on all sides by the hands of a few. (it does not matter!)

a) Judas knew it was just like when the Lord hemmed in Israel against the sea, after the exodus, by directing them to take the long route, only to use it defeat Egypt and the most powerful military in the world at that time. (See: Exodus 13:17-14:31)

1) *“When Pharaoh had let the people go, **God didn’t lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God***

said, “Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and they return to Egypt”; but God led the people around by the way of the wilderness by the Red Sea; and the children of Israel went up armed out of the land of Egypt.” Exodus 13:17-18 WEBUS

2) “The waters returned, and **covered the chariots and the horsemen, even all Pharaoh’s army** that went in after them into the sea. **There remained not so much as one of them.**” Exodus 14:28

WEBUS

b) **Think about how Judas’ words speak of Christ:** “It is an easy thing for many to be hemmed in by the hands of a few. With heaven it is all one, to save by many or by few; for victory in battle stands not in the multitude of an army, but strength is from heaven.” We too, as Christians, are hard-pressed on every side, and we too like the Maccabees are “delivered to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh.”

1) “But we have this treasure in clay vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves. **We are pressed on**

every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not to despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed; always carrying in the body the putting to death of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. So then death works in us, but life in you." 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 WEBUS

- c) Victory in battle stands not in the multitude of an army, but strength is from heaven.
 - 1) *"Therefore **I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong.**"* 2 Corinthians 12:10 WEBUS
 - 2) *"**Vengeance is mine, and recompense, at the time when their foot slides, for the day of their calamity is at hand. Their doom rushes at them.**"* Deuteronomy 32:35 WEBUS
- d) **Judas stands with the testimony of David:** They come to us in fullness of insolence and lawlessness; we fight for our lives and our laws!

- 1) *“Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin; **but I come to you in the name of Yahweh of Armies, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”** 1 Samuel 17:45
WEBUS (See: 1 Samuel 17)*
- e) **David continued...** God will crush them before our face; but as for you, don't be afraid of them.
 - 1) *“Today, Yahweh will deliver you into my hand. I will strike you and take your head from off you. I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines today to the birds of the sky and to the wild animals of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, **and that all this assembly may know that Yahweh doesn't save with sword and spear; for the battle is Yahweh's, and he will give you into our hand.”**”
1 Samuel 17:46-47 WEBUS*
 - 2) Also, see the story of Gideon in Judges 6-7 when Gideon never had to fight to have victory!
*“They blew the three hundred trumpets, **and Yahweh set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army***

fled as far as Beth Shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath."

Judges 7:22 WEBUS

(2) Three Years Later:

(a) The enemies are defeated, now what?

1. "But Judas and his kindred said, "**Behold, our enemies are defeated.** Let's go up to **cleanse the holy place and to rededicate it.**" All the army was gathered together, and they went up to mount Zion. **They saw the sanctuary laid desolate, the altar profaned,** the gates burned up, shrubs growing in the courts as in a forest or as on one of the mountains, and the priests' chambers pulled down; and they tore their clothes, made great lamentation, put ashes upon their heads, fell on their faces to the ground, blew with the solemn trumpets, and cried toward heaven. Then **Judas appointed certain men to fight against those who were in the citadel until he had cleansed the holy place.** He **chose blameless priests who were devoted to the law; and they cleansed the holy place and carried the defiled stones out to an unclean place.** They **deliberated what to do with the altar** of burnt offerings, which had been profaned. **A good**

plan came into their mind, that they should pull it down, lest it would be a reproach to them, because the Gentiles had defiled it. So they pulled down the altar and laid up the stones on the temple hill in a convenient place, until a prophet would come to give an answer concerning them. **They took whole stones according to the law, and built a new altar like the former. They built the holy place and the inner parts of the house; and they consecrated the courts.** They made **new holy vessels, and they brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. They burned incense on the altar, and they lit the lamps that were upon the lampstand, and they gave light in the temple.** They set loaves upon the table, hung up the curtains, and finished all the work which they had done. They rose up early in the morning, **on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is the month Chislev,** in the one hundred forty eighth year, and **offered sacrifice according to the law on the new altar** of burnt offerings which they had made. **At the time and day the Gentiles had profaned it,** even then it was dedicated with songs, harps, lutes, and with cymbals.

All **the people fell on their faces, worshiped, and gave praise toward heaven**, which had given them good success. **They celebrated the dedication of the altar eight days**, and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed a sacrifice of deliverance and praise. They decorated the front of the temple with crowns of gold and small shields. They dedicated the gates and the priests' chambers, and made doors for them. There was exceedingly great gladness among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles was turned away. **Judas and his kindred and the whole congregation of Israel ordained that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their seasons from year to year for eight days, from the twenty-fifth day of the month Chislev**, with gladness and joy." 1 Maccabees 4:36-59 WEBUS

2. Let's cleanse the holy place and rededicate it.
 - a) They find it in complete disrepair:
 - 1) The Sanctuary
 - 2) The Altar
 - 3) The Gates
 - 4) There are shrubs growing in the courts.
 - 5) The priests' chambers are dilapidated.

b) Restoration

- 1) Judas appointed certain men to defend them during the restoration of the holy place.
- 2) He chose blameless priests who were devoted to the law.
- 3) They deliberated what to do with the altar and determined to pull it down and to rebuild it according to the law.
- 4) They rebuilt the holy place and the holy of holies, and they consecrated the courts.
- 5) They made new holy vessels, brought in the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table.
- 6) They burned incense on the altar, and they lit the lamps (for eight days) that gave light in the temple (the light of the world!)
- 7) They set loaves upon the table, hung up the curtains, and finished all the work.

3. Rededication on 25th day of Chislev

- a) They offered sacrifices according to the law on the new altar (the exact same time and day the Gentiles had profaned it)
- b) They celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days.

c) **Hanukkah (The Feast of Dedication is Born):** Judas and his family and the whole congregation of Israel ordained that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their seasons from year to year for eight days, from the twenty-fifth day of the month Chislev.

(3) The battle is won but the war is not ended.

(a) Fortify the City

1. “At that time, **they fortified mount Zion with high walls and strong towers around it, lest perhaps the Gentiles might come and trample them down,** as they had done before. Judas stationed a garrison to guard it. They fortified Bethsura to keep it, that the people might have a stronghold near Idumaea.” 1 Maccabees 4:60-61 WEBUS

a) Fortify the walls of the city

1) Even after victory you must fortify your walls!

2) But I thought the enemy was gone—the war is never over!

3) This was not the end by any means.

b) Fortify the walls of your temple: more Christian Imagery

1) ***“Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”*** 1 Peter 5:8

WEBUS

2) ***“Don’t be unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what fellowship do righteousness and iniquity have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what portion does a believer have with an unbeliever? What agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are a temple of the living God. Even as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God and they will be my people.””*** 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 WEBUS

(b) The Gentiles are not happy!

1. ***“It came to pass, when the Gentiles all around heard that the altar had been rebuilt and the sanctuary dedicated as before, they were exceedingly angry.***

They took counsel to destroy the race of Jacob that was in the midst of them, and they began to kill and destroy among the people.” 1 Maccabees 5:1-2

WEBUS

- a) The taking of Jerusalem and the rededication of the sanctuary made the enemies of Israel even more resolute to destroy them!
- b) Read 1 Maccabees 5-16
 - 1) An extraordinary narrative: more battles, killing, victories and defeats.
 - 2) Reads like a complete drama, all as the Maccabees continue to stand for holiness, truth and obedience to God.
- c) The Life of a Christian: a permanent stance against paganism, no matter what battles you face!
 - 1) *“Therefore, **since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that you no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.** For we have spent enough of our past time **doing the desire of the Gentiles**, and having walked in lewdness, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, carousings, and abominable idolatries.”* 1 Peter 4:1-3 WEBUS

TO DIE IS GAIN

3. Identifying Sons

A. Legitimate Sons

(1) The Chastening of Sons

(a) Do not be discouraged when things get tough!

1. “I urge those who read this book to **not be discouraged** because of the calamities, but recognize that these punishments were not for the destruction, **but for the chastening of our race**. For indeed it is a **sign of great kindness that those who act impiously are not let alone for a long time, but immediately meet with retribution**. For in the case of the other nations, **the Sovereign Lord waits patiently to punish them until they have attained to the full measure of their sins; but not with us**, that he may not take vengeance on us afterward, when we have come to **the height of our sins**. Therefore he never withdraws his mercy from us; **but though he chastens with calamity, he doesn’t forsake his own people**.

However let this that we have spoken suffice to remind you; but after a few words, we must come to the narrative. **Eleazar, one of the principal scribes**, a man already well advanced in years, and of a noble

countenance, **was compelled to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. But he, welcoming death with honor rather than life with defilement,** advanced of his own accord to the instrument of torture, but first spat out the flesh, **as men ought to come who are resolute to repel such things as not even for the natural love of life** is it lawful to taste. But those who had the charge of that forbidden sacrificial feast took the man aside, for the acquaintance which of old times they had with him, **and privately implored him to bring flesh of his own providing, such as was proper for him to use, and to make as if he did eat of the flesh from the sacrifice, as had been commanded by the king;** that by so doing he might be delivered from death, and so his ancient friendship with them might be treated kindly. **But he, having formed a high resolve, and one that became his years, the dignity of old age, and the gray hairs which he had reached with honor, and his excellent education** from a child, or **rather the holy laws of God's ordaining,** declared his mind accordingly, bidding them to quickly send him to Hades. **"For it doesn't become our years to dissemble [conceal one's true motives],"** he said,

“that **many of the young should suppose** that Eleazar, the man of ninety years, had gone over to an alien religion; and so they, by reason of my deception, and **for the sake of this brief and momentary life**, would be **led astray because of me**, and I defile and disgrace myself in my old age. **For even if for the present time I would remove from me the punishment of men, yet whether I live or die, I wouldn't escape the hands of the Almighty. Therefore, by bravely parting with my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age, and leave behind a noble example to the young to die willingly and nobly a glorious death for the revered and holy laws.**” When he had said these words, he went immediately to the instrument of torture. When they changed the good will they bore toward him a little before into ill will because these words of his were, as they thought, sheer madness, and **when he was at the point to die with the blows, he groaned aloud and said, “To the Lord, who has the holy knowledge, it is manifest that, while I might have been delivered from death, I endure severe pains in my body by being scourged; but in soul I gladly suffer these**

things because of my fear of him.” So this man also died like this, **leaving his death for an example of nobleness and a memorial of virtue, not only to the young but also to the great body of his nation.”** 2 Maccabees 6:12-31 WEBUS

2. Chastening of Sons

- a) Do not be discouraged because of calamities.
- b) These punishments are not meant to destroy us, but to chasten us.
- c) It is a sign of great kindness to meet with immediate retribution, rather than being permitted to reach the height of our sins.
 - 1) **That is a sign of Love:** *“You shall not hate your brother in your heart. **You shall surely rebuke your neighbor, and not bear sin** because of him. “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people; but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself.** I am Yahweh.”* Leviticus 19:17-18 WEBUS
- d) The Lord waits for pagans to reach the full measure of their sins and then He strikes; nevertheless He is patient with us, waiting until we come to repentance.

1) *“The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness; **but he is patient with us, not wishing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fervent heat; and **the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.** Therefore, since all these things will be destroyed like this, **what kind of people ought you to be in holy living and godliness,** looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, **which will cause the burning heavens to be dissolved, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?** But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.” 2 Peter 3:9-13 WEBUS*

- e) It is therefore God’s mercy that He chastens us with tribulation; leaving us in our sins would be a sign that He has forsaken us.
- f) Legitimate Sons:

- 1) *“For consider him who has endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, that you don’t grow weary, fainting in your souls. You have not yet resisted to blood, striving against sin. You have forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with children, **“My son, don’t take lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprovved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines, and chastises every son whom he receives.”** It is for discipline that you endure. God deals with you as with children, for what son is there whom his father doesn’t discipline? **But if you are without discipline, of which all have been made partakers, then you are illegitimate, and not children.** Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we paid them respect. **Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?** For they indeed for a few days disciplined us as seemed good to them, but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. **All chastening seems for the present to be not joyous but grievous;***

yet afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift up the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.” Hebrews 12:3-13 WEBUS

3. To Live is Christ; To Die is Gain
 - a) Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, was being compelled to open his mouth to eat swine’s flesh.
 - b) But he welcomed death with honor, rather than life with defilement.
 - 1) He said, *“Some men ought to come who are resolute to repel such things as not even for the natural love of life.”*
 - c) **Those who cared about him hatched a plan to save him:** The secretly implored him to bring kosher meat to swap out for the pig, and to make as if he did eat of the flesh from the sacrificial swine, as had been commanded by the king. By so doing he might be delivered from death!
 - d) Sounds like the Apostle Paul’s friends and that Paul had the same response as Eleazar! *“I am ready die*

at for the name of the Lord Jesus. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

- 1) *"When we heard these things, both we and the people of that place **begged him not to go up to Jerusalem.** Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? **For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.**""*

Acts 21:12-13 WEBUS

- 2) *"**What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed.** I rejoice in this, yes, and will rejoice. For I know that this will turn out to my salvation through your prayers and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will in no way be disappointed, but with all boldness, as always, **now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.** But if I live on in the flesh, this will bring fruit from my work; yet I don't know what I will choose. But I am hard pressed between the two, having the desire*

*to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Yet to remain in the flesh is more needful for your sake. Having this confidence, I know that I will remain, yes, and remain with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, that your boasting may abound in Christ Jesus in me through my presence with you again. **Only let your way of life be worthy of the Good News of Christ**, that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your state, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the Good News; and in nothing frightened by the adversaries, **which is for them a proof of destruction, but to you of salvation, and that from God. Because it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer on his behalf, having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.**"* Philippians 1:18-30

WEBUS

- (b) Eleazar, having formed a high resolve, and one that became his years, the dignity of old age, and the gray hairs which he had reached with honor, and his

excellent education from a child, or rather the holy laws of God, He concludes, *“I will not defile and disgrace myself in my old age.”*

1. *“For it doesn’t become our years to dissemble [conceal one’s true motives], causing many of the young to suppose that Eleazar, by reason of my deception, and for the sake of this brief and momentary life, would be led astray.”*
2. Sound familiar: Woe to those who makes the least of these little ones stumble...
 - a) *““Whoever will cause one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble, **it would be better for him if he were thrown into the sea with a millstone hung around his neck.**”* Mark 9:42

WEBUS

- 1) Capitulating will for the present time remove the temporary punishment of men, yet whether I live or die, I wouldn’t escape the hands of the Almighty.
 - a. *“There is no creature that is hidden from his sight, but **all things are naked and laid open before the eyes** of him to whom we must give an account.”* Hebrews 4:13 WEBUS

- b. *“But there is nothing covered up **that will not be revealed**, nor hidden **that will not be known.**”* Luke 12:2 WEBUS
 - c. **Eleazar:** *“Therefore, by bravely parting with my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age, and leave behind a noble example to the young to die willingly and nobly a glorious death for the revered and holy laws.”*
 - d. **Paul:** *“I am ready die at for the name of the Lord Jesus. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*
- 2) When he was at the point to die, he groaned aloud and said, *“To the Lord, who has the holy knowledge, it is manifest that, while I might have been delivered from death, I endure severe pains in my body by being scourged; but in soul I gladly suffer these things because of my fear of him.”*
- 3) **Stephen:** Don’t hold this sin against them!
- a. *“They stoned Stephen as he called out, saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” He kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, **“Lord, don’t hold this sin against them!”**”*

*When he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts
7:59-60 WEBUS [Read Acts 7]*

- 4) **Eleazar:** died like that, leaving his death for an example of nobleness and a memorial of virtue, not only to the young but also to the great body of his nation.
- 5) **Y’shua:** Like a sheep to the slaughter he opened not his mouth; forgive them father...
 - a. *“He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he didn’t open his mouth. **As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he didn’t open his mouth.**”* Isaiah 53:7 WEBUS
 - b. *“Jesus said, **“Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”** Luke 23:34 WEBUS*

(2) Willing to Die for God’s Laws

- (a) Courageous Faith: Seven brothers and their mother...
 1. “It came to pass that **seven brothers and their mother** were at the king’s command taken and shamefully handled with scourges and cords, **to compel them to taste of the abominable swine’s flesh.** One of them made himself the **spokesman** and said, **“What would**

you ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors.”

The king fell into a rage, and **commanded that pans and caldrons be heated.** When these were immediately heated, he gave orders to **cut out the tongue of him who had been their spokesman,** and to **scalp him, and to cut off his extremities,** with the rest of his brothers and his mother looking on. And when he was utterly maimed, **the king gave orders to bring him to the fire, being yet alive, and to fry him in the pan.** And as the smoke from the pan spread far, they and **their mother also exhorted one another to die nobly,** saying this: **“The Lord God sees, and in truth is entreated for us,** as Moses declared in his song, which witnesses against the people to their faces, saying, **‘And he will have compassion on his servants.’”** And when the first had died like this, **they brought the second** to the mocking; and they **pulled off the skin of his head with the hair** and asked him, “Will you eat, before your body is punished in every limb?” But he answered in the language of his ancestors and said to them, “No.” Therefore he also underwent the next torture in succession, as the first

had done. When he was at the last gasp, he said, "You, miscreant, **release us out of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us who have died for his laws up to an everlasting renewal of life.**"

After him, **the third** was made a victim of their mocking. When he was required, **he quickly put out his tongue, and stretched out his hands**

courageously, and nobly said, "**I got these from heaven. For his laws' sake I treat these with contempt. From him, I hope to receive these back again.**"

As a result, the king himself and those who were with him were astonished at the young man's soul, for he **regarded the pains as nothing**. When he

too was dead, they shamefully handled and tortured **the fourth** in the same way. Being near to death he

said this: "**It is good to die at the hands of men and look for the hope which is given by God, that we will be raised up again by him. For as for you, you**

will have no resurrection to life."

Next after him, they brought **the fifth** and shamefully handled him.

But he looked toward the king and said, "**Because you have authority among men, though you are**

corruptible, you do what you please. But don't think

that our race has been forsaken by God. But hold on to your ways, and see how his sovereign majesty will torture you and your descendants!” After him they brought **the sixth**. When he was about to die, he said, **“Don’t be vainly deceived, for we suffer these things for our own doings, as sinning against our own God. Astounding things have come to pass; but don’t think you that you will be unpunished, having tried to fight against God!”** But above all, the mother was marvelous and worthy of honorable memory; for when **she watched seven sons perishing within the space of one day, she bore the sight with a good courage because of her hope in the Lord.** She exhorted each one of them in the language of their fathers, filled with a noble spirit and stirring up her woman’s thoughts with manly courage, saying to them, **“I don’t know how you came into my womb. It wasn’t I who gave you your spirit and your life. It wasn’t I who brought into order the first elements of each one of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the first origin of man and devised the first origin of all things, in mercy gives back to you again both your spirit and your life, as you now treat**

yourselves with contempt for his laws' sake." But Antiochus, thinking himself to be despised, and suspecting the reproachful voice, while the youngest was yet alive didn't only make his appeal to him by words, but also at the same time promised with oaths that he would enrich him and raise him to high honor if he would turn from the ways of his ancestors, and that he would take him for his friend and entrust him with public affairs. But when the young man would in no way listen, the king called to him his mother, and urged her to advise the youth to save himself. When he had urged her with many words, she undertook to persuade her son. But bending toward him, laughing the cruel tyrant to scorn, she spoke this in the language of her fathers: **"My son, have pity upon me who carried you nine months in my womb, and nursed you three years, and nourished and brought you up to this age, and sustained you. I beg you, my child, to lift your eyes to the sky and the earth, and to see all things that are in it, and thus to recognize that God made them not of things that were, and that the race of men in this way comes into being. Don't be afraid of this butcher, but,**

proving yourself worthy of your brothers, accept your death, that in God's mercy I may receive you again with your brothers." But before she had finished speaking, the young man said, "What are you all waiting for? I don't obey the commandment of the king, but I listen to the commandment of the law that was given to our fathers through Moses. But you, who have devised all kinds of evil against the Hebrews, will in no way escape God's hands. For we are suffering because of our own sins. If for rebuke and chastening, our living Lord has been angered a little while, yet he will again be reconciled with his own servants. But you, O unholy man and of all most vile, don't be vainly lifted up in your wild pride with uncertain hopes, raising your hand against the heavenly children. For you have not yet escaped the judgment of the Almighty God who sees all things. For these our brothers, having endured a short pain that brings everlasting life, have now died under God's covenant. But you, through God's judgment, will receive in just measure the penalties of your arrogance. But I, as my brothers, give up both body and soul for the laws of our fathers, calling upon

God that he may speedily become gracious to the nation, and that you, amidst trials and plagues, may confess that he alone is God, and that in me and my brothers you may bring to an end the wrath of the Almighty which has been justly brought upon our whole race.” But the king, falling into a rage, handled him worse than all the rest, being exasperated at his mocking. **So he also died pure, putting his whole trust in the Lord. Last of all, after her sons, the mother died.** Let it then suffice to have said thus much concerning the sacrificial feasts and the extreme tortures.” 2 Maccabees 7:1-42 WEBUS

2. Courageous Faith: compelled to taste abominable swine flesh (to transgress God’s command!) Or... ***the pans and caldrons will be heated! And cut out the tongue, scalp then, and to cut off their extremities...***
 - a) Daniel would rather face the Lion’s Den than transgress God’s laws.
 - 1) Read Daniel 7
 - b) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would rather burn in the furnace than transgress God’s laws.
 - 1) Read Daniel 3

3. Courageous Faith: Mom exhorts each son... *“Die nobly; the Lord sees, and in truth is entreated for us; as **Moses** says, ‘He will have compassion on his servants.’”*
 - a) *“For Yahweh will judge his people, **and have compassion on his servants, when he sees that their power is gone**, that there is no one remaining, shut up or left at large.” Deuteronomy 32:36 WEBUS*
4. Courageous Faith: Seven Sons who speak and believe like followers of Christ should speak and believe!
 - a) First Son (the spokesman)
 - 1) *“What would you ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors.”*
 - b) Second Son
 - 1) *“You, miscreant, release us out of this present life, but the King of the world will raise us who have died for his laws up to an everlasting renewal of life.”*
 - c) Third Son
 - 1) *“I got these [my tongue and hands] from heaven. For his laws’ sake I treat these with*

contempt. From him, I hope to receive these back again."

2) From the earth you have come to the earth you shall return:

a. *"...For you are dust, and you shall return to dust." Genesis 3:19 WEBUS*

b. *"All go to one place. All are from the dust, and all turn to dust again." Ecclesiastes 3:20 WEBUS*

d) Fourth Son

1) *"It is good to die at the hands of men and look for the hope which is given by God, that we will be raised up again by him. For as for you, you will have no resurrection to life."*

e) Fifth Son

1) *"Because you have authority among men, though you are corruptible, you do what you please. But don't think that our race has been forsaken by God. But hold on to your ways, and see how his sovereign majesty will torture you and your descendants!"*

a. *"Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one*

*takes it away from me, but I lay it down by myself. **I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.** I received this commandment from my Father.”” John 10:17-18 WEBUS*

b. *“Pilate therefore said to him, “Aren’t you speaking to me? **Don’t you know that I have power** to release you and have power to crucify you?”” John 19:11 WEBUS*

f) Sixth Son

1) *“Don’t be vainly deceived, for we suffer these things for our own doings, as sinning against our own God. Astounding things have come to pass; but don’t think you that you will be unpunished, having tried to fight against God!”*

g) Seventh Son (the youngest and most tortured watched it all as Antiochus promised him riches, honor, friendship and a powerful position, if he would just forsake his ancestry! He also died pure, putting his whole trust in the Lord. If you were to read all 40 verses of Psalm 37 before you read his words, you’d undoubtedly feel he held David’s declaration against evil close to his heart!) *“Don’t*

fret because of evildoers... For they shall soon be cut down..." (Psalms 37:1-2)

1) *"What are you all waiting for? I don't obey the commandment of the king, but I listen to the commandment of the law that was given to our fathers through Moses. But you, who have devised all kinds of evil against the Hebrews, will in no way escape God's hands. **For we are suffering because of our own sins. If for rebuke and chastening,** our living Lord has been angered a little while, yet he will again be reconciled with his own servants. But you, O unholy man and of all most vile, don't be vainly lifted up in your wild pride with uncertain hopes, raising your hand against the heavenly children. For you have not yet escaped the judgment of the Almighty God who sees all things. For these our brothers, having endured a short pain that brings everlasting life, have now died under God's covenant. But you, through God's judgment, will receive in just measure the penalties of your arrogance. But I, as my brothers, give up both body and soul for the*

laws of our fathers, calling upon God that he may speedily become gracious to the nation, and that you, amidst trials and plagues, may confess that he alone is God, and that in me and my brothers you may bring to an end the wrath of the Almighty which has been justly brought upon our whole race.”

h) The Mother Dies: above all, the mother was marvelous and worthy of honorable memory. She watched seven sons perishing within the space of one day; with courage and hope in the Lord, she exhorted each one of them! To the youngest she said...

1) *“I don’t know how you came into my womb. It wasn’t I who gave you your spirit and your life. It wasn’t I who brought into order the first elements of each one of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the first origin of man and devised the first origin of all things, in mercy gives back to you again both your spirit and your life, as you now treat yourselves with contempt for his laws’ sake.”*

(3) What three primary things did the pagans want the Jews to stop doing?

(a) Kosher, Circumcision, Shabbat

1. Why?

a) They wanted to eliminate the signs of God's Covenants

1) Kosher (Adamic Covenant)

2) Circumcision (Abrahamic Covenant)

3) Shabbat (Mosaic Covenant)

b) But they would rather be tortured and die than break these covenants!

(4) Do you really believe these covenants were nailed to the cross?

(a) Clearly, Y'shua thought it was necessary to keep the feast that commemorates this history!

1. **"It was the Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem.** It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in Solomon's porch. The Jews therefore came around him and said to him, **"How long will you hold us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."** Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you don't believe. **The works that I do in my Father's name, these testify about me.** But you don't believe, because you

are not of my sheep, as I told you. **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.** I give eternal life to them. **They will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.** My Father who has given them to me is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." John 10:22-30 WEBUS

- a) Listen to Y'shua and now you see the story of the Maccabees in His words as He commemorates the Feast of the Dedication (Hanukkah).
- 1) If you are the Christ, tell us plainly: *"Was that you at work in Maccabees?"*
 - 2) The works that I do in My Father's name, these testify about Me: *"The whole story was about overcoming with Me!"*
 - 3) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give eternal life to them: *"They followed My directions, kept my commands, and each was eternally redeemed."*
 - 4) They will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand: *"No matter how badly they were persecuted, they were in the palm of My hands the whole time!"*

b) From today's Introduction:

1) It was the Feast of Dedication and Y'shua was in Jerusalem celebrating. To what was He referring when He answered this question, *"How long will you hold us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."* The feast commemorates a specific historical account.

2) Y'shua answer that question in this context:

a. "I told you, and you don't believe Me. The entire historical event began to testify of Me 167 years before I was born. My sheep heard My voice then, and they followed Me; they still do to this very day. I am the giver of eternal life; none of My sheep will perish. And no one can snatch any of them out of My hand, no matter how great the persecution. That is the true miracle of Hanukkah and the force behind the fierce dedication and courageous faith of the Maccabees. They were the warriors for My truth and radical faith-based obedience to God. They were responsible for rebuilding and cleansing the altar, and for lighting the

fire of the eight day rededication of My temple. And that is the imagery of what it means to dedicate your temple to Me!”

(5) How about you?

(a) Run from what is unclean!

1. “Many in Israel were fully resolved and confirmed in themselves **not to eat unclean things. They chose to die**, that they **might not be defiled with the food**, and that they might not profane the holy covenant; and they died. Exceedingly great wrath came upon Israel.” 1 Maccabees 1:62-64 WEBUS
2. “But **Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king’s delicacies**, nor with the wine which he drank. Therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” Daniel 1:8 WEBUS
3. “Don’t be unequally yoked with unbelievers, for what fellowship do righteousness and iniquity have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what portion does a believer have with an unbeliever? What agreement does a temple of God have with idols? **For you are a temple of the living God.** Even

as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them. I will be their God and they will be my people."

Therefore **"Come out from among them, and be separate,' says the Lord. 'Touch no unclean thing. I will receive you. [Isaiah 52:11]** I will be to you a Father. You will be to me sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 WEBUS

(b) You are the Temple

1. **"Don't you know that you are God's temple** and that God's Spirit lives in you? **If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, which you are."** 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 WEBUS
2. **"Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you,** whom you have from God? **You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.** Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 WEBUS

(c) Are you also willing to die?

1. "He said to all, **"If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever will lose his life for my sake will save it.**

For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits his own self? For **whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed** when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:23-26 WEBUS

2. "Therefore I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." Romans 12:1 WEBUS

(d) Remember the Feast (Found only in the New Testament)

1. "**It was the Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem.** It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in Solomon's porch." John 10:22-23 WEBUS

- a) This feast, which in the Bible is found in the New Testament, commemorates that...
 - 1) The Maccabees reclaimed and rededicated the temple.
 - 2) If not, Y'shua would not have been able to walk in it 200 years later and confirm that He is the Messiah.
- b) What the Maccabees did preserved the people of Israel!

1) Relatively Recent Catastrophic History: How insane to think that God had Israel go through all such horrors, gave victory to those who risked it all to uphold the Torah and to restore the temple, all so Y'shua would be born 167 years later and by 200 years later would fulfill all the prophecies, all to do away with the Torah that they died to defend!

(6) What about the oil?

(a) If one day of oil burned for eight days, it would have been mentioned somewhere in the 4 books of Maccabees, no? Well, it is not!

1. So why is Hanukkah eight days?

a) If the holy oil didn't burn for eight nights, where do we get the eight nights of Hanukkah?

(b) The Maccabees were keeping a the Feast of Tabernacles which they had missed (in captivity) and they were copying Nehemiah.

1. "Since we are **now about to celebrate the purification of the temple** in the month Chislew, on the twenty-fifth day, we thought it necessary to notify you, **so that you may also keep a feast of tabernacles, and remember the fire which was given**

when Nehemiah offered sacrifices, after he had built both the temple and the altar.” 2 Maccabees 1:18

WEBUS

2. “Then Maccabaeus and those who were with him, the Lord leading them on, **recovered the temple** and the city. They pulled down the altars that had been built in the marketplace by the foreigners, and also the sacred enclosures. **Having cleansed the sanctuary, they made another altar of sacrifice.** Striking flint and starting a fire, they offered sacrifices after they had ceased for two years, burned incense, lit lamps, and set out the show bread. When they had done these things, they fell prostrate and implored the Lord that they might fall no more into such evils; but that, if they ever did sin, they might be chastened by him with forbearance, and not be delivered to blaspheming and barbarous heathen. **Now on the same day that the sanctuary was profaned by foreigners, upon that very day it came to pass that the sanctuary was cleansed, even on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which is Chislev. They observed eight days with gladness in the manner of the feast of tabernacles, remembering how not long**

before, during the feast of tabernacles, they were wandering in the mountains and in the caves like wild animals. Therefore carrying wands wreathed with leaves, and beautiful branches, and palm fronds also, they offered up hymns of thanksgiving to him who had successfully brought to pass the cleansing of his own place. **They ordained also with a public statute and decree, for all the nation of the Jews, that they should observe these days every year." 2 Maccabees 10:1-8 WEBUS**

- a) They were honoring the Feast of Tabernacles and patterning Hanukkah after eight days
 - 1) *"Such were the events of the end of Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes."* 2 Maccabees 10:9
WEBUS

(7) If the oil is not the miracle, what was the true miracle?

- (a) That a small rag tag bunch of freedom and liberty seeking Jews, who were willing to live and die for God's laws, defeated one of the greatest armies and certainly one of the cruelest despotic governments the world had ever known.

1. They all tried to destroy Israel:

- a) Egyptians under Pharaoh

- b) Babylonians under Haman
- c) Syrians under Antiochus
- d) Romans under Pontius Pilot
- e) Church under Constantine
- f) Spain under the inquisition
- g) Germany under Hitler
- h) PLO under Arafat
- i) And most recently in October 2023

(8) What about your COURAGEOUS FAITH?

(a) Dedicate your temple unto Yahweh as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to Him!

1. Do it afraid like Mary when she said yes to birthing the light of the world!
2. It was at Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, that Y'shua was conceived.
3. *"Mary said, "Behold, the servant of the Lord; **let it be done to me according to your word.**" Then the angel departed from her."* Luke 1:38 WEBUS

(b) A burst of light at conception!

1. *Is there a burst of light at conception?* Yes, a burst of light occurs when a sperm fertilizes an egg, and it's caused by the release of zinc.

- a) *What happens?* When a sperm fertilizes an egg, calcium levels inside the cell increase, which triggers the release of zinc. The zinc then joins with small probes that emit light, creating a microscopic flash.
- b) *What it looks like:* The flash is described as a burst of zinc sparks.
- c) *What it means:* The **size of the flash** is directly related to the health of the egg and its ability to develop into an embryo.

2. Can you imagine the size of the flash?

- a) *“Behold, you will **conceive in your womb** and give birth to a son, and shall name him ‘Jesus.’ **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.** The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,” Luke 1:31-32 WEBUS*

(9) The Hidden Light of Hanukkah (the Festival of Lights)

- (a) *“God said, **“Let there be light,”** and there was light.”*
Genesis 1:3 WEBUS
- (b) *“Behold, **you will conceive in your womb** [a burst of light] and give birth to a son, and shall name him ‘Jesus.’”* Luke 1:31 WEBUS

- (c) **“In the beginning was the Word,** and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.”** John 1:1 WEBUS
- (d) **“The Word became flesh and lived among us.** We saw his glory, such glory as of the only born Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14 WEBUS
1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him. Without him, nothing was made that has been made. **In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness,** and the darkness hasn’t overcome it. There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came as a witness, that he might testify about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but was sent that he might testify about the light. **The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world.** He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world didn’t recognize him.” John 1:1-10 WEBUS
- (e) When one is born again there is a burst of light as the light the world invades your heart, and then you too become a light to the world!

1. "Again, therefore, Jesus spoke to them, saying, **"I am the light of the world.** He who follows me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12 WEBUS

- (f) Do you now recognize what has been hiding in plain sight—the hidden light of Hanukkah?

1. **"You are the light of the world.** A city located on a hill can't be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, **let your light shine before men,** that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16 WEBUS

- a. The Hanukkah menorah is called a Hanukkiah.
 - b. The Center candle in the Hanukkiah is called the shamash, in Hebrew the "servant" or "helper."
 - c. The shamash is used to light the other candles in the menorah.
 - d. *"I am the light of the world." "You are the light of the world."*
- (g) Does anyone wish to rededicate his temple and reignite your light?

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. Using the sermon video and notes, write a comprehensive essay about Hanukkah detailing the following ideas:

- A. The Maccabees were looking forward to Christ by looking back to the Torah, Prophets and Psalms.
- B. Match the words of Y'shua, Paul, and Peter to the sentiments and steadfast faith of those who rebelled against a tyrannical government.
- C. Discuss courageous faith and a willingness to be dedicated to God's covenants unto death.
- D. Include the significant symbolism of the Hanukkah menorah and the hidden light of the Festival of Lights.