

Goodnews Christian Ministry
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CHRISTMAS

God's True Festival of Lights

"For there is a child born for us, a son given to us,
and dominion is laid on his shoulders;
and this is the name they give him: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace."
Isaiah 9:5-7

Built on a Hebrew template called the Feast of Lights (Hannukah),
Christmas displays to the world a far brighter light than the Jewish elders
could ever imagine -- the light of the Son of God.

"I am the light of the world; anyone who
follows me will not be walking in the dark; he
will have the light of life'." (Jn.8:12).

Christmas - God's True Festival of Lights That light is the illuminating
beacon which God dedicated to the world on a holy night in December when
He consecrated with shepards and angels His living temple on earth. It was a
light that changed the calendars of the planet.

The Son's light signaled the coming dawn of the Day of Atonement, the Day
of God on earth which was to begin with Pentecost, the day the Holy Spirit
returned to earth filled with the power of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We
call Christ's Day of Atonement a "millenium" because scripture tells us that
a day to God is like a thousand years to man. Joshua revealed in prophecy

that God would stop the sun in the sky and make that one day into almost two. The sun that God stopped in the sky was the Son of God.

That first Christmas was the signal to the world that God's promised light had come to earth.

Long before the Light of God appeared, the Law had foreseen His coming. Moses tried to prepare the people of Israel for that moment, warning that they had to listen and obey Him under penalty of death. The people waited in great expectation. Over the years, Hebrew tradition prepared a backdrop to highlight the moment. So it was, when the moment was near that in the dead of winter, on the 25th day of Chislev in the Jewish calendar, an eight-day celebration called the 'Festival of Lights' began.

The Hebrew month of Chislev correlates with December, and the 25th day of that month with the celebrated birth of Jesus, both firm indications that Holy Spirit engineered the design that intertwines them.

This Jewish 'Feast of Dedication' (Hannukah as it is also called) honors the rededication of the Jewish temple after it had been defiled by the forces of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The Festival of Lights proclaims the cleansing of the temple and its altar by Judas Maccabees in the aftermath of the Old Testament incident on which Daniel's 'Abomination of Desolation' was based.

The desolating sacrifice was instituted on the 15th day of Chislev (1 Macc.1:57), a lunar Hebrew month which correlates with the Christian solar month of December (December 8, 167 B.C.).

The temple was purified three years later on the 25th day of Chislev (1 Macc.4:52), an event commemorated by Hannukah. (December, 164 B.C.)

Ten days in December separate these two events, the same number of days that often separate Hannukah from Christmas. The coincidence in the two dates and their season (winter/December) are so striking that there can be little doubt that they, too, are portents of the future.

The true re-purification of God's temple occurred, not by the hand of a Maccabee, but with the birth of Jesus Christ. Born on earth in a dedication ceremony directed by God Himself, Jesus cleansed the temple with a whip and a cross - driving out its desecrators (all who sin) and in this way bringing true worship to the altar of God. That is why the Church celebrates

the birth of Jesus in the schematic framework of Hannukah.

The Holy Spirit superimposed these two celebrations, touching one with the other in calendar time for good reason. The true re-purification of God's temple occurred, not by the hand of a Maccabee, but with the birth of Jesus Christ. Born on earth in a dedication ceremony directed by God Himself, Jesus cleansed the temple with a whip and a cross -- driving out its desecrators and bringing true worship to the altar of God. That is why the Church celebrates the birth of Jesus in the schematic framework of Hannukah.

Jesus was the true meaning of Hannukah. He offered Himself to purify the sacrifice and cleanse a contaminated people so that they could be restored to God. He appeared as the true light of God on earth, a light that imparted eternal life. A festival of light to honor His coming was in perfect keeping with the religious calendar, especially a calendar in which the two dates so closely coincide.

Moses, having been given authority by God to make the Old Testament the template for the new covenant, carefully chronicled a series of holy festivals and feast days, almost all of which now have Christian counterparts which have superseded and fulfilled what they originally stood for.

The argument that Christian festivals were formed on pagan holidays is incorrect. We can see in the construct of the holy days of Christianity that they come superimposed on the Hebrew holy days that preceded them. That has to be the work and mandate of the Holy Spirit. What it shows is that the Spirit has directed that religion of Christ be constructed on the template of Moses.

All Christian holy days carefully follow the Hebrew schematic laid down by Moses and his heirs. Pagan holidays and festivals may have co-existed with the Hebrew dates, but they were not the architecture for them.

The Roman empire ruled the world at the time of Christ and soon after His death, converted to His message. In 300 A.D. when Constantine appeared and built a second Rome in a city he named for himself at the Bosphorus on the Black Sea, the empire divided into two segments, one controlling the western section of the empire and the other the eastern section. Two different emperor's ruled this now divided kingdom.

The result formed two overruling centers of Christian worship in the world.

Rome and Constantinople. These two centers disagreed as to the date of Christ's birth. Both agreed that it should be in the dead of winter in relation to the Hebrew festival. Rome chose December 25, a day that correlated to the 25th day of Chislev (December). Constantinople chose January 6, the day now known as 'Epiphany', a day steeped in prophecy.

Epiphany, the day of "appearing" is also called the "Twelfth Day" because it comes 12 days after December 25th, thus completing the 12 days of Christmas. In prophecy Epiphany relates to the Second Coming of Christ, and, because of the date's correlation to the Beast's desecration of the Perpetual Sacrifice, and his usurping of the throne of Peter, it relates to his appearance as well. These dual manifestations, and the similarity of their dates harkens back to the similarity of dates that marked the Jewish Temple desecration by Antiochus, and its cleaning by the Maccabees.

Remember, the desecration of the Temple and its cleansing both occurred in Chislev (December), just 10 days apart. The date of Epiphany shows us that the future separation will likely be 12 days.

We can see this same symbolism repeated in the December sky when Venus, called "Daystar" rises at the darkest part of the night, just before the appearance of the sun. First comes the pretender of light (a bright planet), The Rebel who tries to usurp the throne of Peter in the Vatican, followed right on his heels by the true light, the Son of God, who returns with all the glory and angels of heaven, in a Sonshine that will never end.

Also related to the planet Venus in its pre-dawn winter phase is the name 'Lucifer' which means 'light-bringer'. In Hebrew, the word 'Lucifer' is 'helel', the 'shining one', also a reference to Venus.

We can see in this winter-time cosmic sequence, and it's mention in scripture, that the reasoning of those who insist Christmas is structured on the pagan feast of Sol (the sun god), is far too shallow. The relationship goes far deeper than that. It has something to do with the devil, but it has been implemented by God, not pagans. One who can architect the sky can easily move pagans.

And, indeed, He did move them. In northern Europe the pagan Celtic and German tribes considered the winter solstice the most important event of the year. On this occasion they celebrated their chief festival, an event called 'Yule', to commemorate the return of the burning-wheel. Holly, the wassail bowl, mistletoe and the Yule log are all ancient relics of this Celtic and

German past -- a pagan past now long forgotten because of its transformation to Christ.

Just as the Holy Spirit structured Christmas on Hannukah, all major Christian holidays are similarly superimposed on the Jewish holy days that related to them. The Holy Spirit has done this to increase our understanding of what we see in them. Be careful of what you read to the contrary. The proof is in the ancient Hebrew days. Almost every Christian holy day is so structured.

It was in December (the 25th day of Chislev) at the feast of Hannukah, that Jesus first revealed to the world the fact that He was God:

"It was the time when the feast of Dedication was being celebrated in Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the Temple walking up and down in the Portico of Solomon. The Jews gathered round him and said, 'How much longer are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly'. Jesus replied: 'I have told you, but you do not believe me...the Father and I are one'." (Jn.10:22-29).

The Jews were furious at this reply and planned to stone Him for it, because, in language as plain as they would ever hear, Jesus had just let them know in a public proclamation that He was, indeed, the Christ.

His December declaration is a proclamation we repeat with bells, carols and music every time the season surrounding this feast returns. In the same way and season that Jesus announced His Messiahship, we restate His revelation in public as emphatically as we possibly can, but we use a calendar that follows the sun, not the moon.

Since the Hebrew calendar is based on lunar months and the Christian calendar on solar months, Hannukah and Christmas, though close, cannot be united. The Jewish date rotates around the Christian date like a floppy appendage. There is deep symbolism in this because the days of the Hebrew calendar, built on the reflected light of the moon are always in a state of flux, falling on a different day every year -- imitating the traditions of the elders, which change this way and that because they are only a reflection of the light of God.

Focusing on that symbolism, the Christian calendar follows the sun because it is fixed on the testimony of the Son of God, i.e., the direct Sonlight of heaven. Its days, therefore, are fixed and usually constant. Since one calendar offers fluctuating days and the other does not, it is impossible to assign a fixed Christian date that precisely coincides with the fluctuating Hebrew day -- but in this case, both are celebrated on the 25th day of their coincident winter months (Chislev/December).

So every December, on a 25th day, and honoring two versions of the temple flame, the celebrations of Christmas and Hannukah both appear and each are surrounded by a festival of lights.

"The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone." (Is.9:1).

The lights of Christmas signify that Jesus is the light of the world -- a proclamation we repeat on every anniversary of the celebration of His birth. It is the Christian world's public prophecy affirming His Divinity.

Our proclamation clarions throughout the world in the loudest terms, with bells and music, this message for all to hear and take notice:

"For there is a child born for us, a son given to us and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end, for the throne of David and for his royal power, which he establishes and makes secure in justice and integrity...forever." (Is.9:5-7).

The feast of lights, therefore, is the day when proclamation and prophecy unite.

Now, almost 2000 years later we find ourselves in the sunset of God's Day on earth. The ever lengthening shadows of evening bear stark witness to the darkness that lies close ahead, a darkness that Jesus warned would come because God's offer of atonement had a time limit. But it is not dark just yet. There is still time to follow that light to salvation.

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**"The Only Thing They Insisted On Was That
We Should Remember to Feed the Poor"**
Galatians 2:10