

Christ in Prophecy

Israel 56: Feasts of Hannukah & Purim

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Part 1

Tim Moore: Hello again and welcome to Christ in Prophecy. You know, several months ago we envisioned a series on the Feast of Israel or the Feast of the Lord, and for the last seven episodes of Christ in Prophecy, we brought you just that. And I hope it's been a great blessing of insight and encouragement. The seven feasts ordained by God in the Old Testament follow the agricultural progression from spring to fall. Starting with Passover Jews celebrate in turn the Feast of Unleavened Bread and First Fruits, Shavuot or Pentecost, Yom Teruah or Trumpets, Yom Kippur and then Sukkot. All of them are uniquely Jewish in flavor and tradition and commemorated to this day by religious and secular Jews. And although we've shared testimonials from several friends of Lamb & Lion Ministries, our expert witness throughout this series has been Richard Hill, a messianic pastor and gifted teacher of God's Word. Richard, thank you for sticking with us for this entire series, for all the different feast. And now we come to two more that are even extra biblical, you might say.

Richard Hill: Yeah, I'm just excited to be here and be able to get through this whole series. And now we get to the last two.

Tim Moore: We get to the last two. And as I said, these aren't even really in the Bible. But before we jump in, tell our viewers one more time how they could get more information from you about the feasts that we've already been studying.

Richard Hill: Well, just go to the website that is on the screen, it's called BethYeshualv.org. That's our congregation Beth Yeshua Messianic Congregation in Las Vegas. And you can go to our Facebook and go to our YouTube page from there, very easy to do and just go to all our all our teachings and all our videos.

Tim Moore: Very good. Well, Dr. Hill, now that we've covered the seven feasts ordained by God, we promised that there would be a bonus round, if you will, talking about two more feasts or holidays. That, of course, being Hanukkah and Purim, two that Jews to this day celebrate, and I dare say Jesus celebrated even in His day and age. So let's dive into Hanukkah first. Tell us where this feast or this holiday originated.

Richard Hill: Well, first, let's get to our theme.

Tim Moore: Yeah.

Richard Hill: This is our family theme.

Tim Moore: Okay.

Richard Hill: And this is family oriented. And Hanukkah is a big time family oriented.

Tim Moore: Yes, it is.

Richard Hill: And a celebration of eight days, in the home as well, but you also celebrate in the congregation, or the temple or the synagogue. But it's all about the family getting together. And especially the children love Hanukkah. You know why?

Tim Moore: Because they exchange gifts and they get presents.

Richard Hill: You get presents and you get at least one present every single day of Hanukkah.

Tim Moore: I think I'm going to have celebrate Hanukkah, too, from now on.

Richard Hill: Well, that's when I tell the churches, I say, you know what, children, you need to talk to your parents because Christmas, you get only one day to celebrate, and Hanukkah, you get eight days.

Tim Moore: Wow. Okay, so why the eight days of celebration around Hanukkah?

Richard Hill: Well, now we got to go back to the history. And we get the history from First Maccabees.

Tim Moore: Okay, so a book that's not in our Bible, but still a historical record that the Jews would look to for relevance to why this feast came about.

Richard Hill: And it's a very good historical written document, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees is not. So, we can't trust the information in 2 Maccabees, but we can in 1 Maccabees.

Tim Moore: Okay, all right.

Richard Hill: And it tells us that Antiochus Epiphanies, that is a Syrian King came into Israel. And this was after his conquest of Egypt and also his non-conquest of Egypt, he had a couple of wars with Egypt. He came into Israel. And he came into Israel because the Romans basically stopped him from attacking Egypt in his last time. And they said, nope, you can't do that anymore, if you do, we're just going to wipe you out. And so with his tail between his legs, he came into Israel because they couldn't care less about Israel at that time. And in 168, he basically took over Israel and said, okay, now all you Jews you need to become Greeks in all facets of life.

Tim Moore: So you said Syrian king but he had a Greek background, so Greek heritage, and so he was trying to turn the Jewish people into Greek citizens, so to speak.

Richard Hill: Yes. Not only citizens, but also their religion.

Tim Moore: Of course.

Richard Hill: So you had the Greco-Roman gods that they worshiped and they wanted all of Israel to turn into these Greeks. And so what happened? Well, some were okay with that and some did. But then you had the Maccabees and Judah Maccabee, and the fight now begins.

Tim Moore: Okay.

Richard Hill: And so there was a three year guerrilla war against the Syrians in the land of Israel. And after three years, the Jews finally won. But specifically, it won in 65 B.C., they were able to take back the temple. And that was the key aspect of winning the war, take back the temple. So now what do we do? Well, the temple was basically destroyed, but not completely

destroyed. Just kind of it needed a remodeling, it needed also a rededication. Now, for three years, they were not able to worship in the temple and it was decimated, dirty.

Tim Moore: Yeah it was decimated and desecrated, we might say, because Antiochus Epiphanies also sacrificed a pig right there in the temple, totally desecrating the temple to his Greek god. And so it was a high offense, not only to the true and living God, but the Jews living in the land.

Richard Hill: Exactly. And so when they took that temple back in war, and they won Jerusalem back, now they had to rededicate the temple. But first you had to remodel and get it back into working order.

Tim Moore: So they did that. And how did they go about rededicating?

Richard Hill: Well, here's the problem. They put together a makeshift sort of menorah, like this kind of menorah here.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Richard Hill: And this is a seven branch menorah, and this is what you would find inside the Temple. And so this would be the kind of menorah that they would have, you know, re-put together because they didn't have their original menorah at that point. And so then what you have to have is pure oil, kosher oil inside of all of the bowls that are on top of this menorah. And so they didn't have enough oil to last a long period of time, only for one day.

Tim Moore: Yeah, they thought the oil would last for one day, and in in order to purify the temple, to rededicate it they needed the oil or the light to last for how long?

Richard Hill: Well, a longer, much longer time period. They didn't come up to the eight day feast until this miracle.

Tim Moore: So the miracle happened and that's where we got the feast. And what was the miracle?

Richard Hill: The miracle is that the oil that was in those bowls instead of lasting only one day, which is what they calculated it to be, it lasted eight days.

Tim Moore: A miracle that they took as a sign that God was blessing their effort to rededicate the Temple, to reconstitute worship of the true and living God.

Richard Hill: Exactly.

Tim Moore: Okay.

Richard Hill: And so now you have an eight day feast. And in their mindset, they're already thinking, well, we need to celebrate a feast that is very joyous. And of course, then they were like, okay, let's pick eight days, because Tabernacles is the joyous feast, and so they wanted to pattern it after Tabernacles as well. So you have an eight day feast now and giving God glory and just, you know, exhilarated because of what God had been doing. And then they finally after that, then they went back to finishing out the war and kicking out all the Syrian soldiers out of the land of Israel.

Tim Moore: So that's why it's called the Festival of Lights because the lights lasted throughout the period of purification. And we know that Jesus would have celebrated this festival or at least participated in it because it talks about it in the New Testament. Right?

Richard Hill: And very similar to the Feast of Tabernacles, the light of God, you see, this light is also reminiscent of God being the light of the world. And so then now we're seeing Jesus in John 10, celebrating a feast. Let's look at verse 22 to 24.

Tim Moore: Very good.

Richard Hill: "At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple area, in the portico of Solomon." And so the timing here says the Feast of Dedication. Well, a lot of believers don't understand that the word Hanukkah means dedication.

Tim Moore: There you go.

Richard Hill: And so it was the dedication of the Temple back to God for worship. So you have the Feast of Lights, which is patterned after the miracle of the lights. And now you've got this dedication of the Temple. And I see this as a very prophetic aspect of it as well.

Tim Moore: Of course.

Richard Hill: But let's move on with this. So it took place in Jerusalem and then it was wintertime. Well, we've already studied all the other seven feasts, were there any feast in the wintertime?

Tim Moore: No, no, they all ended in the fall.

Richard Hill: Yeah, and they start in the spring and they end in the fall. There's nothing in the wintertime except for Hanukkah. Yes, Hanukkah. So, and Jesus was walking in the Temple in the Portico of Solomon. So what did Jesus do at every single feast? He would go to the Temple and He would teach.

Tim Moore: Of course.

Richard Hill: So guess what He's going to do here in verse 24? "The Jews therefore gathered around Him and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Mashiach or the Messiah, tell us plainly." Now, during Hanukkah, now, can you imagine 165 B.C., alright God has blessed us. Let's start the, let's get the Temple worship going again. And now there's a great hope that the Messiah is going to come during the Feast of Hanukkah.

Tim Moore: Right.

Richard Hill: They just won a war. That's great. But in the future, soon future.

Tim Moore: God has indicated His blessing on us through the miraculous provision. So we're on the cusp of something great.

Richard Hill: So the Messiah is coming, hopefully coming soon. And the idea is during Hanukkah, He's going to come.

Tim Moore: They didn't know it, but He did come soon relative to the thousands of years we've waited, He came shortly after that. But read on, you're getting me excited now.

Richard Hill: And they missed it out, though.

Tim Moore: They missed it.

Richard Hill: Yeah, unfortunately. So if you are the Messiah, tell us plainly. And Yeshua answered them, "I told you, you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name these bear witness of Me." And then in verse 30, you jump down there, "I and the Father are one." "Echadh" we use that Hebrew word "echadh."

Tim Moore: Yeah, exactly right. Wow.

Richard Hill: And so now He is proclaiming I am God, I am the Messiah. Now He's basically telling them that this is what He is, and they're not necessarily what? Believing, they're not believing it. And so the expectation was for Messiah to come. And He came and He told them, "Yes, I'm the one." And they didn't believe.

Tim Moore: And they didn't believe. You know, the funny thing is, it's not funny, it's sad that they didn't believe. But some did. Some got it. And you were referencing John the Apostle, he clearly got it because in the very opening chapter of his book and you wonder why he uses certain symbology, I think this points right to it. So in John 1:4-5 the Apostle writes "In Him, (Jesus Christ) was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." So he is telling us right there, Jesus is the light. He provided not only the miracle of Hanukkah, but the light in the darkness of the world itself. And yet so many in that day and age and still today don't get it. They don't see it.

Richard Hill: And He told them over and over on all the feasts as well.

Tim Moore: Yes, He did.

Richard Hill: Even at Tabernacles, He was the light of the of the tabernacle.

Tim Moore: So even this this feast which Jews celebrate to this day, giving gifts, it's also a reminder and a commemoration of God's miraculous provision for them. I mean, He sustained them through that dark period between the Testaments. He provided the oil to linger and last in the lamps. And He's always provided for them, which takes us really to our next feast, and that is Purim.

Richard Hill: Well, you want to talk about the prophetic, though?

Tim Moore: I do. Clearly. So go ahead.

Richard Hill: So this is something that the Lord has just touched on my heart.

Tim Moore: Okay.

Richard Hill: Can't say that this is the actual prophetic fulfillment of Hanukkah, but I believe, I believe because this Scripture and there are other Scriptures as well, that the fulfillment is going to be the first eight days of the Messianic Millennial Kingdom. I believe that's going to be Hanukkah. So let's take a look. We're going to be in Ezekiel 43, and I'm just going to start in verse 18, it goes all the way to 27 in this section. But this is going to be the consecration of the altar.

Tim Moore: All right.

Richard Hill: And we know from Chapter 40-48 in Ezekiel is talking about the Millennial Kingdom, the 1,000 year reign of Jesus, the Messianic kingdom. So this is talking about the altar that they're going to use for the sacrifices during that kingdom.

Tim Moore: All right.

Richard Hill: Okay. Now, before we even get to that, we know that Jesus is going to build the Temple. He's going to consecrate it, and He's going to anoint it. He also is going to provide Levites and Kohens for this temple. They're going to be involved in worshiping Him, of course, and worshiping the Father. And so this is just involved in all of those Scriptures.

Tim Moore: All right.

Richard Hill: Like I said, we don't have the time to do all of that. But let's just look at this one right here in verse 18: And He said to me, "Son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'These are the statutes for the altar on the day it is built, to offer burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it. You shall give to the Levitical priests (the Levites) who are from the offspring of Zadok, who draw near to Me to minister to Me,' declares the Lord God, 'a young bull for a sin offering.' So there's going to be offerings performed in the Kingdom, and there's even going to be for sin offerings as well. Now, we can leave that for another show.

Tim Moore: Yeah, because we know Jesus was a sin offering. So we could definitely have to unpack this in another show.

Richard Hill: Yes.

Tim Moore: All right.

Richard Hill: We'll leave it, we're just got to leave it for the audience at this time. Yes, there will be sin offerings at this time. Yes, there will be sin offerings in the Kingdom.

Tim Moore: You will have to come back and explain this again.

Richard Hill: Yes. "And you shall take some of its blood and put it on its four horns (those are the four corners of the altar) and on the four corners of the ledge and on the border around about; thus you shall cleanse it and make atonement for it." So, they are getting this altar ready. "You shall also take the bull for the sin offering, and it shall be burned in the appointed place of the house, outside the sanctuary. And on the second day (so that is all done on the first day) on the second day you shall offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering, and they shall cleanse the altar as they cleansed it with the bull."

Well, now jump down to verse 25, "For seven days you shall prepare daily a goat for a sin offering; also a young bull and a ram from the flock, without blemish, shall be prepared. For seven days they shall make atonement for the altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it." Look at verse 27, "When they have completed the days, it shall be that on the eighth day and onward, the priests shall offer your burnt offerings on the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you." Ratson in the Hebrew. You'll have God's favor upon you in this Kingdom, declares the Lord God.

So it's an eight day feast. What feast could it be? Is it Passover?

Tim Moore: None of the others are eight days.

Richard Hill: What about Tabernacles? Well, Passover and Unleavened Bread would be an eight day total feast. Right. Tabernacles is an eight day feast.

Tim Moore: But standing alone none of them are eight days on their own.

Richard Hill: And the only feast that I see that it could be is Hanukkah.

Tim Moore: All right, so I think that again, Jesus celebrated this feast. He clearly identified Himself as the Light of the world. So Hanukkah being a festival of lights, I think it harkens to Jesus Christ and there is a coming fulfillment. But again, I want to get one more of our feast in to discuss, and that is Purim, because God's provision for His people was not just demonstrated in oil in a lamp, as important as that was, it was demonstrated in another book of the Bible that critics will scoff and say, well, God's not even mentioned in the Book of Esther, but God's provision and Providence for His people is woven throughout that account. And we don't have time to go through the entire narrative. But what's the big picture of Purim? What do we recognize?

Richard Hill: Well, that's what we do on Purim. We go to the congregation or the synagogue, and we will read the whole book.

Tim Moore: Exactly.

Richard Hill: But what happens is now you have family, and fun, and friends in the whole congregation, everybody is dressing up. Pick a character out of the out of the Book of Esther, and that's who you dress up as. And usually the people that get picked or picked as Haman, well, they have a difficult time that night.

Tim Moore: Now, of course, if you say the word or the name Haman I'm supposed to boo and yell and cheer and make noisemakers because his name is to be wiped out and obliterated and basically overridden by ridicule because Haman, like Hitler, like so many others down through the centuries, have tried to destroy the Jewish people. Satanically inspired, but God did not allow that to happen.

Richard Hill: And you wish they would read the Bible.

Tim Moore: You do.

Richard Hill: Before they do that because in Jeremiah 31, God says you can't destroy the Jewish people.

Tim Moore: No.

Richard Hill: Unless you're going to destroy the moon first or the sun.

Tim Moore: So just from a historic perspective, let's remind people what the word Purim means in of itself.

Richard Hill: Purim means lot.

Tim Moore: Lot.

Richard Hill: Lots.

Tim Moore: And Purim would be lots because it is the plural. It is a casting of lots.

Richard Hill: It's casting a lots, it's like gambling, throwing dice. It's a chance type of game.

Tim Moore: And so people would think that this is all just chance, that it just so happened that a king put his queen aside. And then it just so happened that he was looking for a cohort. It just so happens he found Esther. It just so happens her father was involved and all these things, just so happened. But nothing just so happened. God's hand is at work always. Not just in the account of Esther, but in our lives as well. If we put our trust in Him, nothing is by chance, we are right in the middle of God's will if we determine to live there.

Richard Hill: Especially when God is going to be protecting His people.

Tim Moore: Exactly.

Richard Hill: And we see this in history over, and over, and over again. And yet our heroes and our heroines are Mordecai and Esther coming, living really by faith. Faith in God, right. But going before and putting their life on the line. And what happens? A lot of good happens. God blessed and now you have the preservation of the people once again.

Tim Moore: Well, I just got to say again, Satan has tried down through the millennium to destroy the Jewish people. I cited some of them already. There are others like Ferdinand, and Haj Amin al-Husseini, today we've got Hezbollah and Hamas, all of them. A lot of H's ironically trying to destroy the Jewish people. But God in His mercy and in His love is always going to protect the Jewish people because He promised to do so.

Richard Hill: Now there's going to be one more attack prophetically upon the Jewish people and, of course, believers too, Jew and Gentile alike.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Richard Hill: And I believe that this is the future prophetic aspect of Purim. After the thousand year reign of Jesus. What happens? Satan is then released from the pit. And he has a short period of time to get everybody together, all the evil ones, and they will then attack the camp. It says the camp. Right. And he's talking about the Temple Mount area where the Jews live. But there's going to be Gentiles there as well. And what happens? That's the final Purim war or the final Purim feast, where God will then just wipe them out from heaven. Fire comes down from Heaven. It's found in Revelation chapter 20; they can read about it. And I think that is the future fulfillment of Purim, the last final attack against the Jewish people thwarted by God in His sovereign will.

Tim Moore: One of the aspects of Purim is that it's a time to eat, drink and be merry. But as one of my guides one time said, people have been trying to kill us Jews forever, we just say they didn't succeed, let's have a party. And really it's a celebration of life, and life given by God, life preserved and protected by God. And again, God is going to keep every promise to the Jewish people. We as Gentile believers sometimes need to remember that God held liable nations that even dared to say, Aha, regarding the Jewish people. It is our responsibility and privilege to bless the Jewish people to this day.

Richard Hill: There's one more thing and there's a food attached to it as well, Hamantaschen, Haman cookies.

Tim Moore: Haman cookies, alright. Well, we'll have to have some Haman cookies next time we're together to celebrate Purim. But we hope that this has been a blessing to you, discussing

the Feasts of Israel. And really all the feasts that we've been discussing, finishing out with these two extra-biblical feasts that still have prophetic significance to us today. We hope that you again, have been drawn to see our Lord in every aspect of Scripture. And to use the feast analogy, we hope that this appetizer has whet your appetite to want to learn even more about our great God and Savior in the Feasts of Israel and throughout His Word. Dive in deep and be filled with what the Lord has to offer you.

Part 2

Tim Moore: I've never met a Jew who did not have fond memories of Hanukkah. Even if their family was relatively non-committal one other feasts they tended to celebrate the Festival of Lights. Many of them also celebrated Purim almost as an emphatic statement that in spite of pogroms and persecution, the Jewish people have persevered. A wonderful friend of Lamb & Lion Ministries, Olivier Melnick will now share his testimony of what these two holidays meant to him.

Olivier Melnick on Hanukkah

Olivier Melnick: The one that I have grown to like particularly, that actually is not part of the Levitical feasts is the feast of Hanukkah. I did not grow up celebrating the feast of Hanukkah, but I learned to appreciate it, over the years since I've been a believer for the last 40 years, a Jewish believer for the last 40 years. And Hanukkah means dedication. This is a feast of dedication or the Festival of Lights that started about the Second Century BC as a result of the revolt, the Maccabean revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes which actually is a type of the Antichrist, we read about him in Daniel 8, Daniel 11. And we get the idea of the Feast of Hanukkah from the Book of Daniel, the book of Maccabees and Josephus. And there's one more source that I will tell you about in a couple of minutes. But what I like about Hanukkah is that as the Jewish people rededicated the Temple, the story goes that there was only enough oil to restart the menorah, the seven branch menorah that's in the Temple for one day. And they had to make more oil, because they didn't have enough, they only had enough for one day.

So they put the oil for one day, and the story tells us that it lasted for eight days. And this is why we have an eight branch menorah known as a Chanukiah. In this eight branch menorah is one higher than the others or set aside and eight others. And those candles are quite interesting because what we do is we take the middle candle at Hanukkah on the first night, we light it. This is known as the Shammash, the servant candle. And with the servant candle we bring light to the others. First night of Hanukkah, then we put two, we light the next night we light the Shammash again, we light the two candles for the two nights. Then we put them again, new candles, we let them all go all the way down. And then we light each candle each night of the eight nights, always starting with the one that's either in the center or in the front or on the side, more prominent than the others is known as the Shammash, the servant.

So I don't want you to miss the symbolism, a servant comes to light and brings light in the darkness to all the others. And I find a parallel with Yeshua who came to serve and to take us all out of darkness. Now, this is a beautiful parallel here. And what I really like about Hanukkah is, and most people don't know that is the fact that actually Yeshua, believe it or not, Yeshua celebrated the Feast of Dedication in John 10:22-23, "At that time the Feast of the Dedication

took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Yeshua was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.” And so there you have Jesus, Yeshua celebrating Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights.

Closing

Tim Moore: We are so grateful for Olivier Melnick and all of our other guests who shared testimonies from afar during our Jewish Feasts series. Richard, we're also very grateful to you for spending so much time with us, helping us dive into the Feasts of Israel.

Richard Hill: Such a blessing for me personally to be able to be here and to teach.

Tim Moore: Well, you know, you've really blessed us. You blessed our viewers. I think you've glorified the Lord. I grew up learning to love God's Word and to worship and honor Jesus Christ. But only later in my life did I come to appreciate the Jewish roots, the historic background of what the Scripture has to reveal to me even as a Gentile. I now realize, as the one who testified to John the Apostle in Revelation 19:10, that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Richard Hill: That's one of my favorite verses when we talk about prophecy as well, because Jesus is the essence and the nature of prophecy.

Tim Moore: And so everything we talk about, everything in Scripture should focus and point to Him. And that's exactly what we've tried to do throughout this series.

Richard Hill: Amen.

Tim Moore: Amen. Well, thank you again. You will be back with us, I hope, at some point for another episode of Christ in Prophecy, we'll explore another dimension of our Jewish heritage even as Christians, whether Jew or Gentile.

Richard Hill: I look forward to it Kadima, is the word.

Tim Moore: Kadima. Alright, meaning?

Richard Hill: Looking forward.

Tim Moore: Looking forward. Well, there you have it, folks. We hope that this series has been a true blessing to you, that it helped invigorate your faith, encourage your heart and embolden your testimony. And really, I do hope that it has motivated you to seek a Jew to bless. We don't have to wait to act out the prophecy of Zechariah 9:23. God has, is, and will preserve the Jewish people. Why? Because He loves them and chose them to be the apple of His eye. I'm eternally grateful that He has also chosen to love me unworthy and unlovable as I am. He loved you enough to send His Son Jesus Christ, to die on a cross at Calvary. Do you know Him? Have you embraced our Jewish Messiah? Do so today and then join Richard and me in crying out Maranatha, Godspeed, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Until He comes, we will be looking up and being watchful for the Lord of Light, who protects and preserves His people is coming soon.

End of Program