



Messiah's great light

As we move deeper into the winter season of longer nights, we remember two miracles of supernatural light.

One is the miracle of the lamp that remained lit far longer than its 1-day supply of oil would normally allow (see "Jesus in the Hanukkah Story" in this issue). The other even more astonishing miracle is the birth of Messiah, the light of the world.

"But wait, Jorge," you may say, "I thought Jewish believers in Jesus such as yourself don't celebrate Christmas."

My wife and I do celebrate Christmas. I think all believers in Yeshua should, too, and here's why: there's no good reason not to!

I've written before about the not-very-convincing arguments against Christmas, but I'll include a few here.

First is the idea that instead of December 25, Messiah's birth likely took place during Sukkot. If you think that, then why don't you celebrate it during Sukkot?

Some say that Scripture doesn't command us to celebrate His birth. True, but neither does it command Jewish people to celebrate Purim or Hanukkah, and yet, by tradition, we do.

Messiah's birth is the focal point of the Old and New Testaments. It's the key that illuminates their mysteries.

It's your free choice, but why pass up the opportunity to bring glory to Yeshua by celebrating His birth alongside millions of others this month?

Until all Israel is saved,

Jorge Sedaca

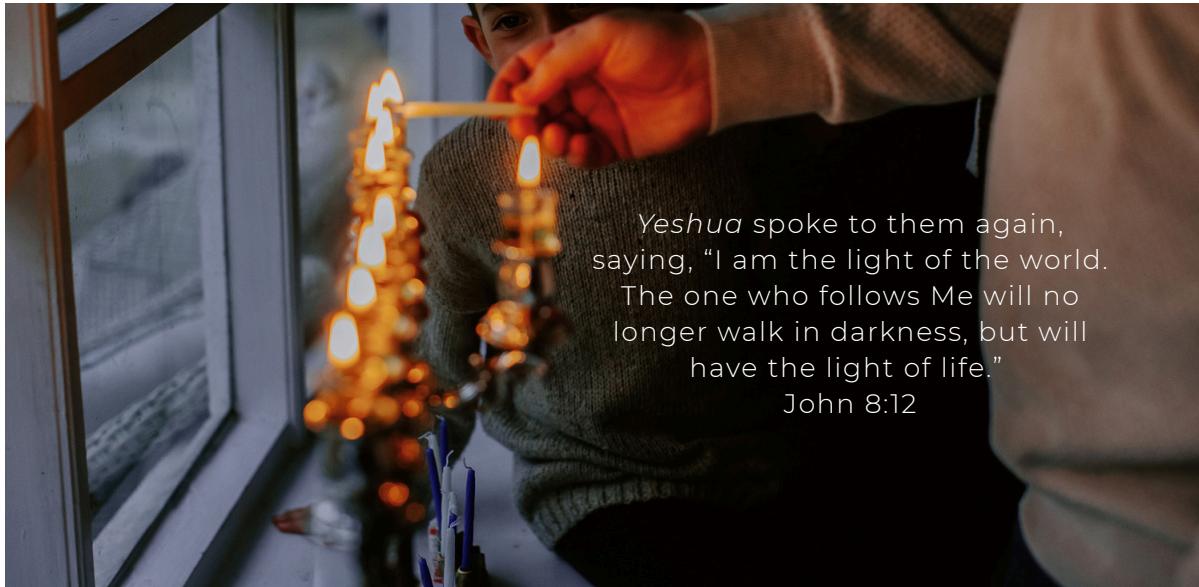
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Yeshua spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows Me will no longer walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Yeshua in the Hanukkah story

The Gospel of John tells us that Yeshua went up to Jerusalem in winter to celebrate the Feast of Dedication (*Hanukkah* in Hebrew).

As you may know, Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 165 B.C.E., after nearly 200 years of Temple defilement by pagans. Jewish warriors led by Judas Maccabeus drove out the Syrians, restored the Temple, and rebuilt the altar completely.

They needed to light a lamp that would burn perpetually. In Exodus, Adonai had given Israel strict, detailed instructions for keeping His House holy. They were to produce a special oil exclusively for anointing the priest Aaron and his sons, as well as the altar and all the implements around it. Anointing with this special fragrant oil marked the object or person as holy and set apart—consecrated and dedicated.

The Maccabees saw that all the special oil had been defiled, apart from one small container, which they took and used to light the lamp. According to apocryphal writings and rabbinic literature, though the oil was enough for only one day, the lamp burned miraculously in the Temple for eight days, enough time for more special oil to be produced.

Oil. Consecration. Dedication. Holiness. Light.

It is in this context that Yeshua speaks in John 10 with the religious leaders, who are horrified by his claims that he is God. He challenges them with a reference to Psalm 82:6, while referring to himself as the one set apart, dedicated, and sanctified by His Father.

For people celebrating the rededication of the Second Temple, the nuances of Yeshua's words weren't lost on them!

At the beginning of his Gospel, John writes, "In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

Yeshua is the perpetual light, set apart, and filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit. Like the *shamash*—the "servant candle" used to light the other candles of the menorah—Yeshua is the one who lights all others. He is both High Priest and King of Kings, who came as a servant to free Israel and all peoples from darkness.

Like Yeshua, each of his followers is called to be set apart for Adonai's purposes. May we all fulfill that calling and purpose until Yeshua's return.

Happy Hanukkah! / Chag Hanukkah Sameach!

2025 Giving Opportunity

Thank you to all who have supported us throughout this year, financially and in prayer.

We're planning new programs in 2026 to grow our ministry and impact.

As the tax year comes to a close, please consider an additional gift as Adonai leads you.

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Chosen People Ministries Canada
Dufferin-Lawrence Post Office, Box 58103
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Come celebrate with us



Join us at one of our Messianic congregations in Toronto, Hamilton, and Winnipeg for Shabbat services throughout the month of December.

- 10:30 am at Kehillat Eytz Chaim
225 Bridgeland Avenue, North York, ON
- 10:30 am at Kehilat Kumi Ori
10 Tom St., Hamilton, ON
- 10:30 am at Kehilat HaTikvah
450 Lilac Street, Winnipeg, MB

Hebrew word of the month

This month, let's take a closer look at one of the Hebrew names for Messiah, **Immanuel**.

In Isaiah 7:14, the Lord gives a sign with a double prophetic meaning—one part is a promise to King Ahaz that was fulfilled historically, and the other part is a promise about the virgin birth of Messiah, who would be called *Immanuel* (God-with-us).

The Hebrew preposition *im* ("eem") meaning "with" combines with the suffix *anu* ("ah-noo"), meaning "us" and together *immanu* means "with us". Add the Hebrew word *el* ("ell") – one of the names of Adonai – and it means, "with-us-is-God".

Gospel writer Matthew tells us that the events surrounding the birth of Jesus took place to fulfill the words of the prophet, "The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and they will call him *Immanuel*..."

This name conveys the comfort of Adonai's presence with His people, and His promise to deliver them from their enemies.

Meditating on the word *Immanuel* reminds us that when Messiah took human form, it was the King of Kings who was humbling himself for our sakes, to be with us in our suffering, and to deliver us from darkness. Amazing!



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Dufferin-Lawrence Post Office, Box 58103
Toronto, ON M6A 3C8

416.250.0177
1.888.442.5535

www.chosenpeople.ca
info@chosenpeople.ca

