



The Light of the World

Toddy Littman, Tuesday 24 December 2013 - 17:49:30

If there was a "dark age" in man's past, the period of relative quiet between the writing of the last great biblical prophecies concerning Christ and the end of the age is probably the best candidate to retain the title, despite the fact that secular historians apply that appellation to the medieval period. In most translations of the Bible this interval of about 400 years, where the Jews awaited the messiah, lacks written accounts. There are, however, books that were penned during that time when Persia lost its empire to Alexander the Great, and then his divided conquests were swallowed up by Rome. Only a few of these books hold a place among Canon, whereas most have been allocated to a grouping of writings called Apocrypha. Among them are the chronicles of the Maccabean revolt against the Seleucid Empire, one of the remaining thirds of Alexander's realm. During this period prophets were few if not completely absent from Judea (1 Maccabees 9:27). And there was a great tribulation in Israel, such as was not since the day, that there was no prophet seen in Israel. The books of the Maccabees tell of the rebellion led by the priestly Hasmonean family against the abominations forced upon the Jews by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, including atrocities against the populace and profane sacrifices on the altar in the temple in Jerusalem. 1 Maccabees 1:57. On the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred and forty-fifth year, king Antiochus set up the abominable idol of desolation upon the altar of God, and they built altars throughout all the cities of Juda round about: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Maccabees+1&version=DRA> The battles won (only by God's grace when you read about the overwhelming odds confronting Simon and Judas Maccabee, the "hammer") led to their wresting the sacred places out of the hands of defilers and the subsequent cleansing, sanctification and rededication of the temple. The lamps were then lit for eight days to dedicate the sanctuary and the newly rebuilt altar, thenceforth becoming an annual winter festival that commenced on the 25th day of the month Chisleu to celebrate the victory of light (God) over darkness (unbelief, paganism). The His-story of Jesus' birth is one of universal knowledge, where most all are aware who have lived within hearing of the publishing of this plain fact that occurred more than 2000 years ago. The light of the world (John 8:12) Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world:** he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. (John 8:12) was foretold (2 Samuel 23:3) The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. 4 And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. and a festival of the Jews pointed to that coming light - the feast of dedication, Hanukkah. This is considered a minor festival that is not given the weight of those feasts instated by God, the details supplied to Moses, nor is it deemed a type to be fulfilled in Christ. Yet, in its way, it was a foreshadow of Christ that occurred during those dark years between the time of the prophets and the New Testament. The wise men traveling from the East had been following the portents laid out in scripture, adding up the years told by the prophets and watching the heavens for the sign they knew was imminent. When the unmistakable star was seen in the sky they knew the time had arrived and they set forth to follow the instruction from Micah 5:2 (But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting, pointing them toward Bethlehem. Along the way they paid homage to Herod who was also aware of the nearness of the prophecy's fulfillment. Matthew 2:9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Then was seen the brilliance of God's glory revealed to the shepherds nearby. Luke 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and **the glory of the Lord shone round about them:** and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Where the type becomes evident is in the words of the Gospel of John, which makes known that Jesus (who had already told many that He is the light of the world, John 8:12) arrives at the temple's porch on the very celebration of the Maccabean cleansing of the holy place from the desecrations 200 years before. John 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. 24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the



Christ, tell us plainly. 25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. The pointing of the heavenly light to Jesus's birth, by both a star and angelic hosts, was the first part of His fulfillment of the promise to bring light to the world. The dedication of the rebuilt altar in Solomon's temple (Hannukah) holds forth as a type for the dedication (raising) of the new temple, which is Christ's resurrection on the third day. Mark 9:9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. 31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. The fabric of prophecy, even in a time where prophets were scarce, comes full circle as Christ reminded the Pharisees that they denied even what their eyes had seen, the giving of sight to a man who was blind from birth (John 9). And He did so on the very feast of lights, shedding light that opens blind eyes to recognize who stood before them if only they would see: John 10: 30 I and my Father are one. The Light of the World is revealed by light: light of dedication of a cleansed temple; light of the star shining upon where Christ lay; light of the heavenly host proclaiming His coming; the words of Christ Jesus witnessing who He is. John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. On Christmas day, recall how light heralded the coming of Light to a world filled with darkness; darkness that can only be overcome by the clarity of God's spirit among us a babe who is Emmanuel. Have a blessed Christmas!

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