

HANUKKAH PART 3

The celebration of **Hanukkah** (the Feast of Dedication) does not originate in the Torah or explicitly as a commandment from Elohim, which sets it apart from biblically instituted feasts like Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot. Instead, it arose as a historical commemoration of the rededication of the Second Temple during the Maccabean period, as recorded in **1 Maccabees 4:36-59** and **2 Maccabees 10:1-8**. Whether it is seen as "the doctrine of men" depends on one's perspective regarding its purpose and significance.

Here's a closer examination of the context, implications, and possible concerns regarding Hanukkah:

1. The Origin of Hanukkah

Hanukkah commemorates the victory of the Maccabees over the Seleucid Greek forces and the rededication of the desecrated Temple in 164 BCE. This event included the restoration of proper worship and the lighting of the menorah, traditionally celebrated as an eight-day feast.

1 Maccabees 4:56-59

"And they kept the dedication of the altar eight days, and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed the sacrifice of deliverance and praise... And Judas and his brethren with the whole congregation of Israel ordained, that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Chislev, with mirth and gladness."

- **Key Point:** The institution of Hanukkah was made by human leaders (Judas Maccabeus and the assembly), not directly commanded by Elohim.

2 Maccabees 10:8

"And they ordained by a common statute and decree, that all the nation of the Jews should keep those days every year."

- **Key Point:** Hanukkah is a communal observance, rooted in historical deliverance, rather than divine commandment.
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2. Does Hanukkah Align with Elohim's Will?

Hanukkah reflects themes of deliverance, purification, and the restoration of worship. While it is not commanded in the Torah, the principles of rededicating the Temple and resisting idolatry align with Elohim's overarching will.

Examples of Similar Observances

- **Purim:** Like Hanukkah, Purim was instituted by human decree (Esther 9:20-28) and is not commanded in the Torah. It commemorates deliverance from Haman's plot in Persia.
 - **Key Point:** Both Purim and Hanukkah were instituted to remember significant moments of deliverance and covenant restoration.
 - **Unknown Feast: Joh 5:1 ¶** After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Yahoshua went up to Jerusalem. More than likely a man made feast not ordained by Elohim.
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3. Concerns About the "Doctrine of Men"

Critics may argue that Hanukkah, as a man-made feast, falls under the warning against adding to Elohim's commandments.

Deuteronomy 4:2

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your Elohim which I command you."

- **Key Point:** Instituting additional observances could be seen as an addition to Elohim's law, especially if they overshadow His commanded feasts.

Matthew 15:8-9

"This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

- **Key Point:** If Hanukkah is elevated to a level equal to or greater than Elohim's feasts, it risks becoming a "doctrine of men."
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4. Yahoshua and Hanukkah

The New Testament mentions Yahoshua's presence at the Temple during Hanukkah, referred to as the "Feast of Dedication."

John 10:22-23

"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Yahoshua walked in the temple in Solomon's porch."

- **Key Point:** Yahoshua's presence at the Temple during Hanukkah does not indicate explicit approval or command to observe the feast. However, His participation in the setting suggests He acknowledged the cultural and historical significance of the event.
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5. Theological Considerations

- **Historical Significance:** Hanukkah commemorates the preservation of Jewish identity and worship during a time of great persecution. This aligns with Elohim's desire to keep His people distinct and faithful to Him.
 - **Potential Issues:** If Hanukkah is observed without focusing on Elohim's deliverance and restoration of worship, it could become a purely cultural tradition, losing its spiritual significance.
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6. Balance and Perspective

While Hanukkah is not commanded by Elohim, it can serve as a meaningful observance when approached correctly:

1. **As a Reminder:** Hanukkah reminds people of Elohim's faithfulness and the need to resist idolatry.
2. **As a Celebration:** It celebrates the rededication of the Temple, an event that honored Elohim's holiness.

However, care must be taken to avoid elevating Hanukkah above Elohim's commandments or using it to replace the Torah's prescribed feasts.

Conclusion

Hanukkah can be seen as a "doctrine of men" in the sense that it was not commanded by Elohim but instituted by human leaders. However, its focus on the preservation of worship and faithfulness to Elohim aligns with biblical principles. Whether one chooses to observe Hanukkah should depend on whether it is done in a way that glorifies Elohim and upholds His commandments, without detracting from the feasts He explicitly instituted in the Torah.

Hanukkah and other man-instituted observances, such as Purim, are not explicitly commanded by Elohim in the Torah and could be viewed as **additions to His Word**, which the Torah strictly forbids. This raises a serious concern regarding whether such observances, even when they seem to honor Elohim, align with His commands or violate the very instructions given in His Word.

Here is a deeper exploration of this perspective based on the **Torah** and biblical principles:

1. The Torah's Commandment Against Adding or Taking Away

Elohim explicitly forbids altering His commandments in any way.

Deuteronomy 4:2

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your Elohim which I command you."

Deuteronomy 12:32

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

- **Key Point:** The Torah is complete and perfect as given by Elohim. Adding feasts or observances, even with the intent to honor Elohim, risks violating this command.

2. Observances Without Elohim's Command

While Hanukkah and Purim commemorate important events in Jewish history, they lack Elohim's explicit instruction, which differentiates them from the feasts commanded in the Torah.

Commanded Feasts of YAH

- Passover (Pesach)
- Feast of Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot)
- Firstfruits (Bikkurim)
- Feast of Weeks (Shavuot)
- Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah)
- Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)
- Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)

Key Point: These feasts are explicitly commanded by Elohim and carry His divine authority. Hanukkah and Purim do not.

3. Adding to Elohim's Word Disrespects His Authority

Adding to Elohim's Word, even with good intentions, can result in substituting human traditions for divine instruction, which YAH strongly condemns.

Proverbs 30:5-6

"Every word of Elohim is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

- **Key Point:** Adding observances risks elevating human ideas above Elohim's perfect Word.

Isaiah 29:13

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."

- **Key Point:** Worship based on human precepts rather than Elohim's commands leads to vain worship.
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4. Hanukkah and Purim as Potential Violations

- **Hanukkah:** Instituted by the Maccabees to commemorate the rededication of the Temple. While it celebrates deliverance and restoration of worship, it was not commanded by Elohim.
- **Purim:** Instituted by Mordecai and Esther to commemorate deliverance from Haman's plot. While it acknowledges Elohim's providence, it was not a directive from YAH.

Danger of Human Authority

These observances, though well-meaning, demonstrate reliance on human authority to create religious practices, which undermines the Torah's authority.

5. Yeshua's (Yahoshua') Perspective

The mention of Yahoshua at the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) in John 10:22-23 does not necessarily indicate His endorsement of it as a divine institution.

- **John 10:22-23**

"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Yahoshua walked in the temple in Solomon's porch."

- **Key Point:** Yahoshua's presence at the Temple during Hanukkah may reflect His participation in cultural events or His ministry to those gathered, but it does not equate to divine approval of man-made observances.

Yahoshua's Condemnation of Human Traditions

- **Matthew 15:3**

"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of Elohim by your tradition?"

- **Mark 7:8**

"For laying aside the commandment of Elohim, ye hold the tradition of men."

- **Key Point:** Yahoshua consistently upheld the Torah and condemned traditions that replaced or added to Elohim's commands.
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6. The Danger of Elevating Traditions

When man-made traditions like Hanukkah or Purim are elevated to the level of Elohim's commanded feasts, they risk detracting from Elohim's instructions.

Galatians 1:8-9

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

- **Key Point:** Adding to or altering Elohim's message or commandments is a serious offense.
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7. A Cautionary Perspective

While Hanukkah and Purim may honor historical events where Elohim delivered His people, observing them must not:

1. **Replace or overshadow Elohim's commanded feasts.**
 2. **Be elevated to the same status as divine commandments.**
 3. **Be treated as obligatory for obedience to Elohim.**
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8. Conclusion

Hanukkah and Purim, while culturally significant and historically meaningful, are **not commanded by Elohim** and therefore fall under the category of human traditions. As such, they must be approached with caution to ensure they do not violate the Torah's prohibition against adding to or taking away from Elohim's Word. While these observances may honor Elohim in some ways, their man-made origins could lead to a reliance on human authority rather than divine instruction, making them potentially problematic for those committed to strict Torah observance.

Messiah (Yeshua/Yahoshua) explicitly taught against adding to or taking away from Elohim's commandments, and He upheld the Torah as the ultimate standard of obedience and worship. Given this, the justification for observing man-made traditions, like **Hanukkah** and **Purim**, becomes difficult to reconcile with His teachings and example.

Let's explore why this is inconsistent with Messiah's teachings and how it challenges efforts to justify these practices:

1. Messiah's Teachings Against Man-Made Traditions

Yeshua directly addressed the issue of man-made traditions, particularly when they conflicted with or overshadowed Elohim's commandments.

Matthew 15:3, 6-9

"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of Elohim by your tradition?... Thus have ye made the commandment of Elohim of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

- **Key Point:** Yeshua condemns traditions that nullify Elohim's commandments, regardless of how well-meaning they appear.

Mark 7:8-9

"For laying aside the commandment of Elohim, ye hold the tradition of men... Full well ye reject the commandment of Elohim, that ye may keep your own tradition."

- **Key Point:** Yeshua is clear that traditions must never take precedence over or rival Elohim's instructions.

2. Messiah's Fulfillment of the Law

Yeshua did not come to replace or modify Elohim's commandments but to fulfill them perfectly.

Matthew 5:17-19

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

- **Key Point:** Yeshua upheld every detail of the Torah and warned against altering or adding to it. This includes the institution of new observances without divine authorization.
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3. The Danger of Elevating Human Traditions

By observing traditions like Hanukkah or Purim, there is a risk of elevating them to the same level as Elohim's commanded feasts, or even replacing them in practice.

Colossians 2:8

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

- **Key Point:** Paul warns against being led astray by human traditions, especially those that detract from Messiah's teachings and the Torah.

Deuteronomy 4:2

"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your Elohim which I command you."

- **Key Point:** Elohim's Word is complete and sufficient; any addition undermines its perfection.
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4. Messiah's Example: Faithful to the Torah

Yeshua's life demonstrated perfect obedience to Elohim's commandments as given in the Torah. He observed the feasts commanded by YAH but did not institute or elevate new ones.

John 10:22-23 (Hanukkah Mentioned)

"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Yahoshua walked in the temple in Solomon's porch."

- **Key Point:** While Yeshua was present at the Temple during Hanukkah, there is no indication that He participated in or endorsed it as a divine commandment. His presence was likely related to His teaching ministry, not an affirmation of the tradition.
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5. The Inconsistency of Justifying Man-Made Traditions

To justify man-made traditions like Hanukkah while claiming to follow Messiah raises several inconsistencies:

1. **Adding to Elohim's Word:** The Torah explicitly forbids adding to or taking away from Elohim's commandments.
 2. **Nullifying Messiah's Example:** Yeshua's teachings and example uphold only Elohim's commands as authoritative.
 3. **Replacing Elohim's Feasts:** Elevating human traditions risks overshadowing or replacing Elohim's commanded feasts, which He ordained for specific purposes.
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6. What Messiah Calls Us to Do

Rather than following man-made traditions, Messiah calls His followers to:

1. **Adhere Strictly to Elohim's Commandments**
 - **John 14:15:** "If ye love me, keep my commandments."
 - **Key Point:** Love for Messiah is expressed through obedience to Elohim's commandments, not human traditions.
 2. **Focus on the Kingdom and Elohim's Will**
 - **Matthew 6:33:** "But seek ye first the kingdom of Elohim, and his righteousness."
 - **Key Point:** Messiah emphasizes aligning with Elohim's righteousness, which is revealed in His commandments.
 3. **Avoid Hypocrisy**
 - **Luke 6:46:** "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
 - **Key Point:** Claiming to follow Messiah while practicing traditions He did not command is inconsistent.
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7. Conclusion

Messiah explicitly taught against adding to Elohim's commandments or elevating man-made traditions above divine instruction. While Hanukkah and Purim commemorate significant historical events, they are not commanded by Elohim and thus risk violating the Torah's prohibition against adding to His Word.

To remain faithful to Messiah and the Torah, believers must focus on observing the commandments explicitly given by Elohim and avoid justifying practices that stem from human authority. Observing the **appointed feasts of YAH** and living in obedience to His Word is the clearest expression of love for Elohim and alignment with Messiah's teachings.

Let's draw a parallel between **Judas Maccabeus and his companions' actions in rededicating the Temple** without prophetic guidance and the severe consequences in the Torah for engaging with sacred things (like the Ark of the Covenant) without divine authorization. Both scenarios touch on a

critical principle in the Torah: that approaching or handling holy things must be done strictly according to Elohim's instructions.

1. The Sacredness of the Holy Things

The Torah establishes that sacred objects, such as the Ark of the Covenant, the altar, and the Temple vessels, are to be treated with the utmost reverence and handled only as Elohim explicitly commands. Unauthorized actions, even with good intentions, often led to severe consequences.

Touching the Ark: Uzzah's Death

- **2 Samuel 6:6-7**

"And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of Elohim, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and Elohim smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of Elohim."

- **Key Point:** Uzzah's action was well-intentioned—he sought to stabilize the Ark—but it violated Elohim's explicit instructions. Only the Levites were authorized to handle the Ark, and even they were required to follow strict protocols.

The Priests and the Holy Fire

- **Leviticus 10:1-2**

"And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."

- **Key Point:** Nadab and Abihu, though priests, acted presumptuously in offering unauthorized fire. Their disobedience to Elohim's specific instructions resulted in immediate judgment.

Handling the Holy Things Requires Authorization

- **Numbers 4:15**

"And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die."

- **Key Point:** Only authorized individuals (in this case, the sons of Kohath) could handle the holy items, and even they had to follow strict guidelines.

2. Judas' Actions in 1 Maccabees 4

Judas Maccabeus and the priests acted without a direct command from Elohim or guidance from a prophet when they:

1. **Rebuilt the altar with new stones** (1 Maccabees 4:47).
2. **Set aside the defiled stones, awaiting prophetic instruction** (1 Maccabees 4:46).

Potential Problems with Judas' Actions

- **No Divine Authorization:** Unlike Moses, David, or Solomon, who acted under Elohim's explicit direction, Judas and his companions made decisions based on their own reasoning.
 - **Handling Sacred Items:** The altar, vessels, and Temple were sacred and meant to be handled only according to Elohim's instructions. Their actions risked violating the principle established in Numbers 4:15.
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3. The Torah's Standard: Elohim's Commands, Not Human Initiative

The Torah repeatedly emphasizes that human initiative is not sufficient to determine how sacred things are handled. Worship and service to Elohim must align with His explicit commands.

Deuteronomy 12:32

"What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

- **Key Point:** Any addition to Elohim's commandments, even if intended to honor Him, is a violation of His Word.

Exodus 25:40

"And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount."

- **Key Point:** Elohim provided exact instructions for the construction and use of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. No deviation was allowed.
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4. Lessons from Uzzah, Nadab, and Abihu

The examples of Uzzah, Nadab, and Abihu show that good intentions are not sufficient to justify actions concerning holy things:

1. **Sincerity Doesn't Excuse Presumption:** Uzzah likely thought he was honoring Elohim by steadying the Ark, but he violated Elohim's command and paid with his life.
 2. **Sacredness Requires Obedience:** The holiness of Elohim's commands takes precedence over human reasoning or initiative.
 3. **Waiting on Elohim's Instruction:** The priests in 1 Maccabees acknowledged the need for a prophet (1 Maccabees 4:46), but their actions in rebuilding the altar still lacked direct divine guidance.
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5. Parallels to Modern Practices

The actions in **1 Maccabees 4** can be likened to modern traditions or religious observances instituted without clear biblical authorization. If worship practices, like Hanukkah or Purim, are added without explicit command from Elohim, they may fall into the same category of presumption.

Isaiah 29:13

"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."

- **Key Point:** Elohim desires obedience to His Word over human traditions, even if those traditions seem to honor Him.
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6. Conclusion: Reverence for Elohim's Holiness

Judas Maccabeus and his companions acted out of zeal for Elohim, but their actions highlight the dangers of handling sacred things without divine authorization. The Torah consistently teaches that:

1. **Only Elohim Determines How He Is Worshiped:** Sacred items and worship practices must align with His commands.
2. **Good Intentions Are Not Enough:** Presuming to act on Elohim's behalf without His direction leads to serious consequences.
3. **Obedience Is Better Than Sacrifice:** Faithfulness to Elohim's commands is the highest form of worship (1 Samuel 15:22).

The story of Judas' actions in rededicating the Temple is a powerful reminder to approach Elohim and His instructions with humility, reverence, and complete reliance on His Word

If **Judas Maccabeus** was not of the house of Aaron, his involvement in matters concerning the **Temple**, particularly handling or overseeing the holy things, would indeed violate the Torah. The Torah explicitly restricts who can handle or even look upon the sacred objects within the Temple, emphasizing that only the descendants of Aaron (the priesthood) and, in some cases, the Levites, were authorized for such tasks.

1. The Torah's Commandments on the Holy Things

The Torah sets strict boundaries on who may enter the sanctuary, approach the holy items, or perform tasks related to the Tabernacle or Temple.

Only the House of Aaron Could Minister Before the Altar

- **Exodus 28:1**

"And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons."

- **Key Point:** Only Aaron's descendants could serve as priests, offering sacrifices and performing duties at the altar.

Prohibition for Non-Priests to Approach the Holy Things

- **Numbers 3:10**

"And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death."

- **Key Point:** "Stranger" here refers to anyone not of the priestly lineage. Death was the penalty for unauthorized access to priestly duties.
- **Numbers 4:15**

"And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die."

- **Key Point:** Even the Levites (non-priestly members of the tribe of Levi) could not touch or view the holy items directly.

2. Judas Maccabeus' Lineage

- Judas Maccabeus was of the tribe of **Judah**, not Levi or Aaron. As a descendant of Mattathias, a Hasmonean leader, his lineage was political and military, not priestly.

1 Maccabees 2:1

"In those days arose Mattathias the son of John, the son of Simeon, a priest of the sons of Joarib, from Jerusalem."

- **Key Point:** While Mattathias, Judas' father, was a priest of the sons of Joarib (a priestly division), Judas was not acting in a priestly role. His leadership was military and not necessarily tied to priestly duties.

3. Judas' Actions: Overstepping Boundaries?

In **1 Maccabees 4**, Judas Maccabeus:

1. **Chose priests to cleanse the sanctuary** (1 Maccabees 4:42).
2. Oversaw the rededication of the altar and Temple, including decisions about the defiled stones (1 Maccabees 4:44-47).

Violation of Torah Standards

- **Decision-Making Role:** Judas, as a military leader, made decisions regarding the altar and the vessels. This appears to exceed the authority given to non-priestly individuals in the Torah.
 - **Oversight of Priests:** While Judas appointed priests to cleanse the sanctuary, he himself was not qualified to look upon or interact with the holy things.
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4. The Torah's Strict Prohibitions

The Torah makes clear the consequences for unauthorized handling of the holy things:

Korah's Rebellion as an Example

- **Numbers 16:40**

"To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the Lord said to him by the hand of Moses."

- **Key Point:** Korah and his followers were Levites but were struck down for trying to take on priestly duties. This reinforces the seriousness of attempting to approach sacred things without divine authorization.
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5. Why Did Judas Take These Actions?

Historical Context

- During the Maccabean revolt, the Temple had been desecrated by the Greeks, and proper priestly leadership may have been compromised.
- Judas may have felt compelled to act to restore worship, even if it meant overstepping boundaries.

Absence of Prophetic Guidance

- **1 Maccabees 4:46** acknowledges that a prophet was needed to provide direction on what to do with the defiled altar stones, yet no prophet was present.
 - This suggests that Judas acted without clear divine guidance, relying on his judgment instead.
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6. Theological Implications

Judas' actions, while zealous and aimed at restoring proper worship, raise several concerns:

1. **Unauthorized Access:** Judas' involvement in Temple decisions and actions likely violated the Torah's prohibition against non-priests handling or overseeing sacred matters.
 2. **Human Initiative:** Without prophetic guidance, Judas and his companions acted on human reasoning, which risks violating Elohim's commandments.
 3. **Precedent for Future Violations:** This event set a precedent for the Hasmonean dynasty, where rulers combined political and priestly roles, often leading to further corruption and deviation from the Torah.
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7. Lessons from the Torah

The Torah emphasizes that even noble intentions do not justify disobedience to Elohim's commands:

- **Leviticus 10:1-2 (Nadab and Abihu):** Good intentions are no excuse for violating Elohim's instructions.
 - **2 Samuel 6:6-7 (Uzzah):** Sincerity does not negate the requirement for strict obedience.
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8. Conclusion

If Judas Maccabeus was not of the house of Aaron, his involvement in Temple matters, particularly decisions about the altar and vessels, would have violated the Torah's explicit commands. While his zeal to restore proper worship may be commendable, it demonstrates a dangerous presumption and reliance on human reasoning rather than divine instruction. This highlights the importance of adhering strictly to Elohim's commands and recognizing the boundaries He has set for sacred duties.

Here is a list of feasts or commemorations mentioned in Scripture that appear to be established by mankind in response to Elohim's deliverance or intervention, but were **not explicitly commanded by Elohim** as part of the Torah's appointed feasts:

1. Purim (Esther 9:20-28)

- **Origin:** Instituted by Mordecai and Queen Esther after the deliverance of the Jewish people from Haman's plot.
- **Commemoration:** Celebrates the reversal of the decree for the destruction of the Jews in Persia.
- **Key Observance:** Reading the Book of Esther, festive meals, giving gifts, and charity.
- **Elohim's Role:** While Elohim's name is not mentioned in the Book of Esther, His providential hand is evident in the events.

2. Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) – John 10:22

- **Origin:** Instituted during the Maccabean period (2nd century BCE) after the rededication of the Temple following its desecration by Antiochus IV Epiphanes.
- **Commemoration:** Celebrates the restoration of the Temple and the miracle of the oil that lasted eight days.
- **Key Observance:** Lighting the menorah, prayers, and festive meals.
- **Elohim's Role:** The victory is attributed to Elohim's deliverance through the Maccabees, but this feast is not commanded in Scripture.

3. Jephthah's Daughter's Annual Commemoration (Judges 11:29-40)

- **Origin:** After Jephthah's rash vow, he sacrifices his daughter. The daughters of Israel commemorate her annually for four days.
- **Commemoration:** Mourning and remembering Jephthah's daughter.
- **Key Observance:** The daughters of Israel would go out to lament her.
- **Elohim's Role:** Elohim is not explicitly stated to endorse this act, and it stems from Jephthah's vow rather than divine command.

4. Commemoration of the Fall of Jerusalem (Zechariah 7:1-7; 8:19)

- **Origin:** Fasts instituted by the Jewish people during the Babylonian exile to mourn the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem.
- **Commemoration:** Included fasts on specific days tied to significant events of the exile.
- **Key Observance:** Fasting and mourning.
- **Elohim's Role:** Elohim later speaks through Zechariah, questioning whether these fasts were truly for Him and promising they would become occasions for joy upon restoration.

5. National Thanksgiving Under Samuel (1 Samuel 7:5-12)

- **Origin:** After Elohim delivered Israel from the Philistines, Samuel set up a stone called Ebenezer as a memorial.
- **Commemoration:** While not an ongoing feast, it marked Elohim's help and deliverance.
- **Key Observance:** Public acknowledgment and thanksgiving to Elohim.
- **Elohim's Role:** This was a direct act of Elohim's deliverance.

6. Passover Extensions by Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chronicles 30:1-27; 2 Chronicles 35:1-19)

- **Origin:** Hezekiah and Josiah held extended or extraordinary Passover celebrations beyond the regular prescription.
- **Commemoration:** Revived and intensified national worship and repentance.
- **Key Observance:** These were enhanced Passover observances rather than completely new feasts.
- **Elohim's Role:** Elohim's blessings and approval are evident in the revivals.

7. Victory Songs and Celebrations

While not formalized into annual feasts, many biblical leaders and prophets instituted songs, celebrations, or gatherings after deliverance:

- **Moses and Miriam** (Exodus 15:1-21): Sang a song of victory after crossing the Red Sea.
- **Deborah and Barak** (Judges 5): Sang a song after defeating Sisera.
- **David** (2 Samuel 6:12-19): Celebrated the ark's return with dancing and offerings.

Key Considerations for These Feasts

1. **Human Initiative:** Many of these feasts were initiated by humans in response to significant events, typically acts of Elohim's deliverance.
 2. **Elohim's Command vs. Approval:** While some of these events reflect gratitude and acknowledgment of Elohim, they are not explicitly commanded by Him in the Torah.
 3. **Potential Pitfalls:** Adding traditions or feasts without divine mandate can lead to practices that stray from Elohim's instructions (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32).
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