

Grace & Truth Magazine

2020 EDITION

VOLUME 121

DECEMBER

A black and white photograph of a menorah with lit candles, set against a background of a woman's face. The menorah is in the foreground, and the woman's face is in the background, both slightly out of focus. The lighting is warm and soft, highlighting the flames of the candles and the contours of the woman's face.

**Happy
Hanukkah**

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*Happy
Hanukkah*



FROM ALL OF US HERE AT
GRACE & TRUTH MAGAZINE



FROM
THE EDITOR

HAPPY HANUKKAH, FRIENDS!

WE HAVE FINALLY MADE IT TO THAT AMAZING TIME OF YEAR WHERE WE LIGHT THE MENORAH, EAT FRIED FOODS WITHOUT A SIDE OF GUILT AND RELISH IN JELLY DONUTS! HANUKKAH IS SO MUCH MORE THAN CANDLES, LIGHTS, FOOD, FAMILY AND FUN! AND SINCE IT IS 2020, LET'S FACE IT... HANUKKAH MIGHT HAVE A DIFFERENT LOOK AND VIBE THIS YEAR! WHILE MANY JEWISH AND JUDEO-CHRISTIAN FAMILIES ARE COMING TOGETHER, I CANNOT SAY THAT I AM NOT NOTICING FEWER PARTIES AND GATHERINGS. VIRTUAL PARTIES HAVE BECOME THE NEW FASHION. ONLINE ORDERING AND FOOD DELIVERIES HAVE BECOME THE NORM AND MORE PEOPLE ARE LEARNING THE VALUE OF FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS LIKE IT IS 1920!

I CANNOT HELP TO LOOK AT OUR BIBLICAL HISTORY AND SEE THE VAST CORRELATIONS OF OUR CURRENT DAY EPITAPH IN COMPARISON TO THOSE DAYS OF THE MACCABEES AND THE STATE OF LIFE FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE DURING THE TIME OF THE GREEK-SYRIAN RULE DURING THE SECOND CENTURY B.C. WHILE WE ARE NOT HERE TO SUGGEST THAT 2020 IS IN NEED OF A MACCABEAN ARMY TO RISE UP, WE DO HOPE THAT THE WORDS AND ARTICLES FOUND WITHIN THESE PAGES WILL GIVE YOU HOPE. WE PRAY THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY FIND THE HOPE OF THE LIGHT OF OUR MESSIAH YESHUA DURING THIS HANUKKAH AND CHRISTMAS SEASON!

CHAG URIM SAMEACH!



HAPPY HANUKKAH!

Jessica Stern Foster

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PROTECTING YOURSELF

By: Matt Daniel

With crime on the rise and police departments being defunded, personal safety becomes key in everyday life. We will be discussing safety tips and a few products you can purchase that have added game-changing features. With today's headlines highlighting horrors from kidnapping to human trafficking, armed robbery to active shooters, police can't be everywhere all the time. It's up to us to protect ourselves, which we can do with technology like GPS Smart Jewelry by (Inviswear). When activated, this device sends a text message that communicates that you need help while sending your GPS location up to 5 contacts. For a more aggressive device, Smart Pepper Spray by (Sabre) offers a "smart" pepper spray that, when activated, also sends a distress message with GPS location, tracking information to selected contacts. Both require downloading an app on your smartphone device that works through Bluetooth. An upgraded subscription is also available that alerts authorities. Both products are a great way of ensuring you can protect yourself, as well as alerting authorities and loved ones where you are and that you need help. In addition, check the settings on your smartphone, many are equipped with a similar capability.

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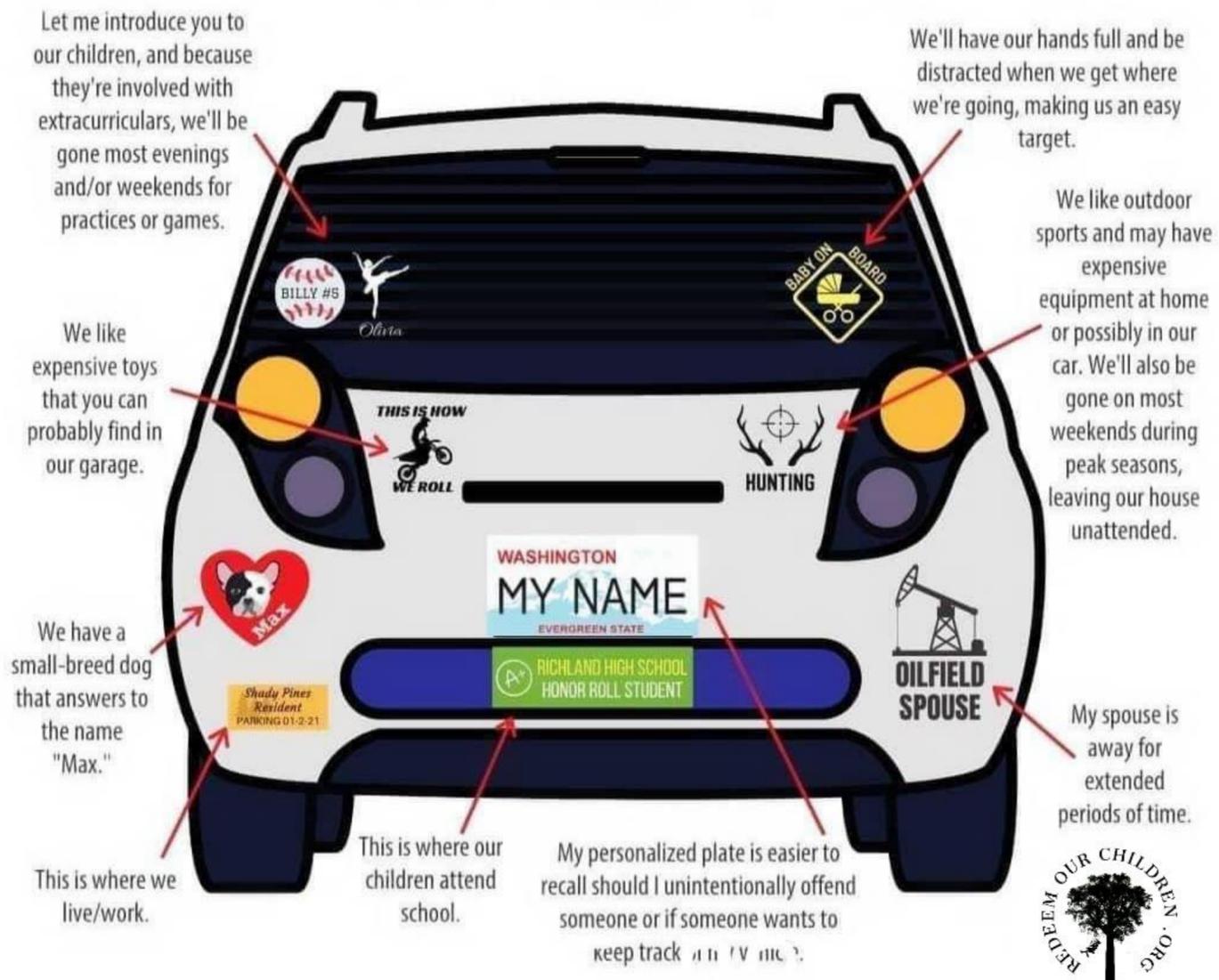
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BE THE PEOPLE

**DR. CAROL SWAIN
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What information are you DRIVING around?



1. Wait in a secure area until the app notifies you that your driver is there.
2. Check your ride, match the license plate, car make and model, and driver with the information provided on the app. Never get in a car if this info doesn't match.
3. Have the driver confirm your name. Ask them who they are there to pick up.
4. Follow your intuition; if something doesn't seem right, end the ride.
5. Be a back seat rider, sit on the rear passenger side if possible. This gives you a view of both the driver and of the road ahead. (Check if the child safety lock feature is turned off before shutting the door)
6. Always wear your seat belt.
7. Share a trip with a loved one. This shares license plate, driver's name, photo of the driver along with tracking information and ETA. (Uber app feature)
8. Let the driver know that the ride is being tracked and someone is waiting on you. If at any time during the ride,

- something seems off, there is a 911 feature in the Uber app that alerts authorities of your location, details, and that you need help.
9. Be aware of traffic when entering and exiting your ride.
10. Always give feedback. It's a good way to help the company weed out bad drivers, and keep the good ones.

As crime grows, we must find ways to protect ourselves and our loved ones. We must always stay vigilant and aware of our surroundings. Keep tabs on your loved ones to make sure they are safe. When traveling, take extra precautions, and have a loved one who knows your travel schedule check in with you. Time is crucial when an emergency arises. Last-known locations and times become very important if something were to happen to you. With new smart devices debuting every week, one simple device could take a bad story and give it a safe and happy ending.



Conversations with Kendra Nelson & Tamika Johnson
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What are the Most Important Elements of Prayer?

By: Dr. Roberts Liardon

In the last newsletter, we saw how prayer changes things, but what are the most important elements of our prayers? What ensures that our prayers will be answered?

- We pray God's Word and will. If it isn't in the Bible, we must have the peace of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and know from several witnesses that what we are praying agrees with the Word of God.
 - We pray in faith. Faith is a result of the Word of God made real in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. We know that we know that we know...He said it, we believe it, and it is a done deal. We are persuaded that God will perform His Word.
 - We pray from a heart of thanksgiving. We are so grateful our Father loves us and wants His best for us. We are so grateful our Lord Jesus Christ laid down His life for us and provides everything we need for life and godliness. And we are so grateful the Holy Spirit lives in us to teach, comfort, and guide us.
- Did you ever consider thanksgiving as a formidable war tactic? Well, it is!

In Psalm 100:4, we are commanded to "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his

courts with praise." Jehoshaphat saw the power of thanksgiving in battle:

Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying:

"Give thanks to the Lord,
for his love endures forever."

As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. 2 Chronicles 20:21-22

We can give thanks to the Lord at all times and in all situations because He is pouring out His love in our hearts at all times and in all situations. Because of His love for us, Jesus already won our battles – and Satan and every demon from Hell hate that truth! They hate it so much that when we lift our voices in praise and thanksgiving, they are filled with confusion and flee.

When you are in a fight, thank God continually, begin your prayers with thanksgiving, end your prayers with thanksgiving, and let the last words before you sleep be, "Thank You, Father!"

Dr. Roberts Liardon is an author of 86 books, public speaker, spiritual leader, church historian, and humanitarian. He has established many churches and accredited Bible schools. He is currently building Embassy International Church in Orlando, Florida, an apostolic center to serve his community and the nations. Dr. Liardon has ministered in over 127 nations and loves to pray, teach the Word of God, and prophesy to bless God's people. He speaks to a current generation of believers who want to draw closer to the heart and mind of God and impact their communities and the nations through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



Our IG community knows Pastor Roberts as the God's Generals guy! For more about him, visit his website at: www.RobertsLiardon.org.

KINGDOM TALK

with
Keaton



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Secret Meetings

by Amanda Bishop

Ever feel like you are in a whirlwind? Like you need a few minutes to catch your breath or your footing? Please, 2020, just give me a second to come up for air! That is sort of how this year is winding down, or up depending on how you look at it.

I would have never thought the day would come when we may need to consider Secret Meetings. Secret meetings for a church gathering.

Church leaders in the UK have been doing their best at “not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the Day approaching”. (Heb. 10:25 NIV)

Secret Meetings are spread by word of mouth with the time and place, much like when the Early Church met during Roman rule, the Separatists before escaping England, or in countries where Christianity is still illegal. That is how they are trying to continue to meet, although it is a risk with the threat of fines or even arrests. One pastor said, “It feels weird for us to act this way. People have said it feels more like an underground church in China. The fact that we have to sneak around to worship God in fear of criminal prosecution is alarming. But we do what we have to do.”

Police officers visited Mustard Seed Christian Bookshop and Tea Room in Gedling, Nottinghamshire, after a report that they were still doing business. A few hours after the first visit, the officers come back to find the doors locked and about 40-50 people inside. Chief Inspector Rob Shields told the BBC, “Two men refused to disperse and refused to give their details to be issued with fixed penalty notices, so they were arrested.” This is a Christian group meeting in a Christian bookstore, my friends.

Pastor Regan King publicly announced his baptism service. When the police heard about the baptism service at The Angel Church in London, they prevented worshipers from meeting by blocking the entrance. Metro reported Pastor King as saying, “This is an essential service that we provide. It’s about loving our neighbor, and you can talk with a number of people here who are extremely vulnerable, homeless, or on the verge of being very isolated.”

Here in America, many governors and mayors have also put tight restrictions on or shut down churches entirely. Sean Feucht, the founder of Hold the Line, has found his peaceful prayer rallies met with heavy resistance in cities where violent riots are allowed to continue without interference. Despite all this opposition, God has continued to make a way for the “Let Us Worship” rallies to continue. In March, Central, Louisiana Reverend Tony Spell was charged with six counts of disobeying the governor’s orders. Rev. Spell continued to follow his biblical convictions and hold services.

These are just a few examples; I assure you that the internet is packed full of more accounts of creative Christians making a way to continue to gather together, as Christ admonishes us to.

I want to encourage you to read and reread Daniel chapters 3 & 6. I believe you will find hope and strength in the Lord. We are not alone.

The Maccabean Revolt

was a result of:

By: Pastor Jim Carey



Alexander the Great defeated Darius, King of Persia to obtain the Middle East as part of his kingdom. Alexander approached Jerusalem with the intentions of destroying it. The temple priests came out in their full dress attire with the high priest at their head. They left the temple to greet the approaching Greek king.

The night before, Alexander had a vision from the Lord of the exact scene that was walking right at him. The high priest showed him from the book of Daniel, how he would conquer and rule the world. Thus saving the temple and Jerusalem.

Once again, the Most High God saved His temple and His people.

Upon the death of Alexander, his four generals became four kings of the four regions of the Greek Empire. His generals were his boyhood friends that helped conquer the known world. King Antiochus ruled in the areas of Syria and Jerusalem. In 175 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes replaced his father as king. (His dad died.) He attacked Egypt and defeated the Ptolemy Kingdom. In 169 BC, he marched against Jerusalem and Israel. His troops took all of the gold from the temple...including the gold off of the doors of the temple.

In 167 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes sent a revenue collector to the land of Judea. The tax collector sacked Jerusalem, killed many and made Jerusalem a fortress to hold his stolen goods for the Greeks.

The King issued an order that all in his kingdom would have to live according to Greek customs,

worship the Greek Gods and eat pork. He had a pig sacrificed to his Gods in the temple at Jerusalem. No other religions, local laws or traditions could stand before his Greek PC laws. Pagan alters were set up in Judea and all the lands of Antiochus Epiphanes. Torah scrolls were cut up and burned. Thousands of Jews refused to live like a Greek and lived/ hide in the mountains and caves. The Greek soldiers would locate them and attack them on the Sabbath.

The Jews would not fight on the Sabbath and were massacred or taken as slaves.

Emboldened by their success the Greek soldiers went through the towns of Judea requiring the local priest to sacrifice a pig to their Greek Gods. Matthias Maccabee was the local priest in Modin. He refused to do a sacrifice to the Greek Gods, however a lower priest offered to do it, to appease and avoid the impending attack of the Greeks. Matthias killed the sellout priest and turned his wrath on the Greeks. (Killing the Greek officer and running them out of town.) In 166 BC, Matthias died and set his son, Judas Maccabees as the commander and his son Simenon as head of the family.

Judas defeated Apollonius that came against Judea with a large gentile force that included many from Samaria. (This may have been one of the reasons that the Jews did not like the Samaritans.) An army from Syria, under Seron, came against Judea. It was defeated, even though it included renegade Jews fighting their brethren.

In 165 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes sent his main forces against Judea. 40,000 infantry and 7,000 Cavalry marched against 3,000 Jewish soldiers under Judas Maccabees. Syria and Philistia sent more soldiers, along with many merchants that waited for the promise of lots of Jewish slaves. They planned to depopulate Judea and resettle the land as the Syrians had done to Israel, many years before.

The Judean forces fasted and waited for the battle. Judas Maccabees was told of the plans of Gorgias to attack them by night with 5,000 soldiers and 1,000 Cavalry. Judas counter attacked the king's army that was camped in Emmaus. Gorgias arrived at the vacant camp of the Jews and figured that they had ran for the hills.

He pursued the Jews and could not find them hiding in caves or hollows.

In the meantime, Judas's 3,000 troops marched against the king's army; surrounded them, blew their trumpets and broke their lamps. The gentiles broke and ran for it. 3,000 casualties were suffered by the Greek army as they ran for the hills. Judas broke off the pursuit in Gazara and returned to the king's camp. Gorgias troops saw their camp burning and fled to Philistia for protection.

The Greeks, under Lysias, gathered 60,000 picked infantry and 5,000 Cavalry to make war on the Jews at Bethsura. Judas met them with 10,000 men. Judas cried out how the God of Abraham had saved King David, King Saul, and Israel in the past and He will do it this time, too. Lysias lost 5,000 men and departed for Antioch to hire more mercenaries.

But Judas and his men went to Jerusalem to cleanse and restore God's temple in Jerusalem. They saw the sad shape that the temple was in and put on sack cloth and ashes as well as sounding the ceremonial trumpets to mourn the situation. They fasted and cried out to the God of Heaven and Earth.

Judas sent troops against the citadel of Jerusalem, so as to free up time to cleanse the temple of God. (Remember the tax collector that had set the citadel as a fortress to guard the stolen loot/taxes) He selected unblemished priests for service in the temple. He had the polluted altar removed and restored the vessels of the temple. The ashes of the red heifer were used to cleanse the temple and in the process they found enough oil to burn the golden candlesticks for one day. They had to refine/ manufacture more oil to keep the lights burning. It took seven days for the process. The miracle of the dedication of the temple was that God blessed the oil to last eight days...while the holy oil was made. That is the reason for eight candles in the Hanukah menorah.





Jessica Stern Foster

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So on the 25th day of Kislev a sacrifice was offered on the temple alter. (One year to the day after the Greeks had offered their sacrifice to their gods in the temple.)

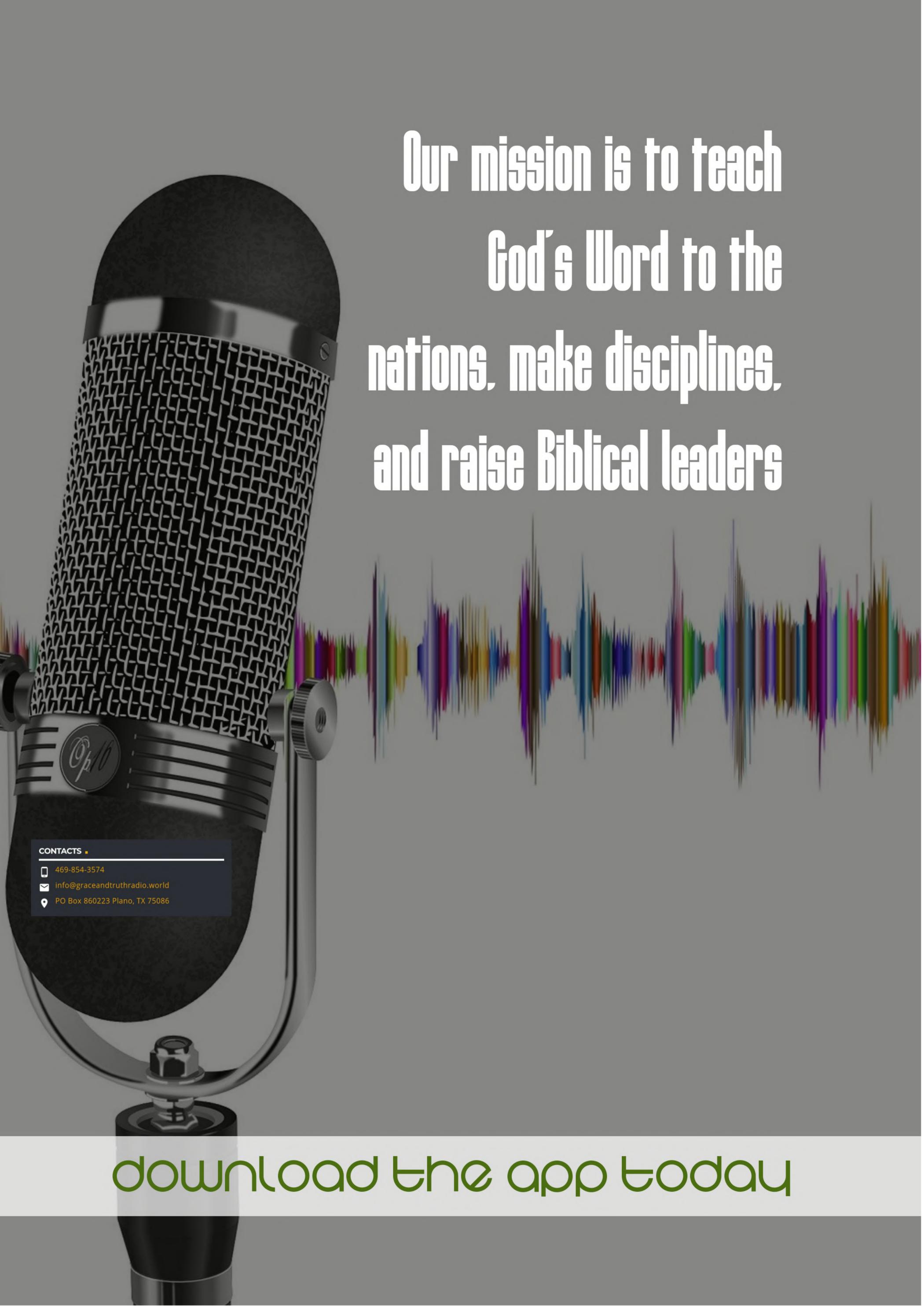
Judas and his forces defeated all their enemies in the land. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had saved His people, again.

In 162 BC, Antiochus Epiphanes died, but had appointed Phillip as regent until his young son Eupator could serve as king. Lysias installed Eupator as the Greek king and assembled 100,000 infantry, 20,000 Cavalry, and 32 war elephants to march against the Jews. The Jewish army held and the invaders left. The Maccabee family continued to serve as High Priest and leaders of the Jewish nation. They made treaties with the Romans and had self-rule under the Romans. The temple continued to sacrifice for the Jewish nation until 70 AD.

John 10 mentions the rededication of the temple, in the winter, as Jesus/ Yeshua teaches in the temple on Solomon's porch. Yeshua/ Jesus states that my sheep know my voice and that the sheepfold protects and holds the sheep in safety.

Then came Jews round about him and demanded that he say that he was the Messiah/ the Son of God. Jesus/ Yeshua responded "I told you once and you believed not" ... the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But you believe not because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. No man can pluck them out of my hand. The Father and I are one.

**“Look at how a single candle can both defy & define the darkness.”
Anne Frank**



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Then they took up stones to stone him. For which good works do you take up stones to stone me? They replied: Not for good works, but for the blasphemy of saying you are the Son of God. Jesus said, is it not written in your law; "I said ye are gods." (Psalms 82:6) and all of you are children of God. They sought to capture him, but he escaped and was seen teaching beyond the Jordan.

Jesus/ Yeshua said that his body was the temple of God. Destroy it and I will rebuild it in three days. The priests mocked him and re-stated his claim as he was on the cross. Our bodies are the temples of God, if we are born again from above.

Rededication of your own temple requires that we ask God for forgiveness of daily life

events such as: losing our temper, saying unkind things, speaking against others, unforgiveness and other short comings. We need to keep short accounts with the Lord and ask forgiveness of others and our Father in heaven.

At this time of celebrating the rededication of the temple miracle, let us rededicate our own temples/ selves to brightly burning as the children of God, our Heavenly Father. We need to burn brightly more than eight days. We need to burn brightly by daily being filled with the Holy Spirit and share the love of God. How do we get filled or refreshed? Praying in the Spirit, reading and standing in God's word, loving the Lord with all of your heart, mind and strength and loving our brethren / God's children. Let your light shine.

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Weekly OMUG: Peace Be With Us

BY: Maureen Maldonado

In John 14, Jesus is trying to explain to his disciples that He will be leaving. We, of course, know that Jesus was going to be crucified for our sins, suffer, die, be buried, and resurrected on the third day. He would then ascend into heaven. The disciples did not know the future, nor did they have scripture to study and learn what was going to happen.

What do you believe the disciples are thinking and how do you think it makes them feel when Jesus tells them He is leaving but is sending a helper? If it were me, I would be very confused...what is He talking about? Why would he be leaving us? Where is he going? Who is coming to be the “helper”?

Have you ever had the feeling that something was a little “off” and you were just unsettled? In the troubling times of the world today, it is easy to think, “I just need some peace”. Jesus understood the disciples must have been concerned about the same thing. In John 14:27, Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my piece I give you. I do not give as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” These words, “Peace be with you” or “Shalom” were common phrases people spoke to each other in greeting or in departure. Jesus was getting His disciples ready for His time to return to the Father and wanted them to know they were being given the ultimate, His peace. Remember, friends, we have all been given this gift. Call on Jesus in times of fear and His peace will descend on you! Praying you have a week of Peace!!! Shalom.



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Listen to Maureen Maldonado on her show, Under God with Marta and Maureen Every Monday at 1:30 PM PST & 2:30 PM MST & 3:30 PM CST & 4:30 PM EST on GraceAndTruthRadio.World

December is Governmental Alignment and Dedication of the Temple

By: Dr. Candice Smithyman



This month of December is the 12th month on the Gregorian calendar. The number 12 is the number of government. It is also the 9th month of the ecclesiastical calendar year and the 3rd month of the civil calendar year on the Hebrew calendar. The number 9 means finality. Number 3 means resurrection, wholeness, and completeness, and $9 + 3 = 12$. As you can see there is a finality to God's work in this month of December.

Prophetically, you are going to see some governmental shifting in both the Kingdom and in earth realms this month. The kingdom changes will come as we see new apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers and evangelists answering the call of God on their lives and beginning to step out in unprecedented faith to minister the gospel. You will see the new apostles and prophets God is raising up to be bold leaders with kingdom authority who will call for their congregations to be set in alignment with Kingdom mandates.

In Matthew 4:17 (KJV) the word says, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

What time was that? It was the time when John the Baptist was put in prison. That was a time of pending death for John, but Jesus arrives and says these very words.

I prophesy, though some have felt death the past few months, Jesus says that His Kingdom is at hand. We must remember we are the body of Christ called to be sent ones who bring the good news of Jesus in times of trials and pending death. It is only the gospel of the good news carried by those of us, who are His apostolic church, that will set into place the broken places of the kingdom.

Ephesians 4:10-16 (KJV) says, "(He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and

some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

He that died, buried, resurrected and ascended has given leaders a mandate to, "perfect the saints." This word perfecting is the Greek word *katartismos* which means to repair or adjust, to frame or mend, to prepare and restore.

The apostles, prophets and five-fold ministry leaders are called to get the body of Christ into a place of alignment with the Head of His church, Jesus Christ. We are called to speak to the dry bones that bring about the flesh and tendons and call for the breath of the Holy Spirit to come.

We are called to proclaim as Ezekiel 37 :10-14(KJV) says, "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel:

behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord."

The people had been saying in Ezekiel 37 :11 (NIV), “Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.” This was the mantra of the people. This sounds a bit like today. So, this means the apostolic and prophetic church leaders need to remind the body of Christ where they are out of alignment due to lack of faith, and have them prophesy to the dry bones of the church and say, “We are not dried up, we have not lost hope, and we are not cut off.”

God is on His throne and He has not left us. When the body is out of alignment or katartismos, the job of church leadership is to give it a good chiropractic realignment with the word of God, and say, “Our God has not abandoned us. He is with us. He loves us. He wants us to prophesy to these dry places AND begin to live.”

Yes, live this December! In this month of government your prayers are so very important. Your prayers are the four winds of north, south, east and west upon the USA and abroad.

God told prophet Ezekiel in 37:9-10 (NIV) , “Then he said to me, ‘Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.” So, I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.”

Let us the church of Jesus Christ be the vast army come to life – speaking only life!

Festival of Dedication

On December 10 at sundown through December 18 at sundown, we enter the season of Hanukkah or Festival of Dedication or Lights on the Hebrew calendar. Jesus Himself was in Solomon’s Colonnade during this time according to John 10:22-23 (NIV) which reads, “Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon’s Colonnade.”

This is a time where the Jewish people remember a family called the Maccabees who found one vial oil that was left after the defilement of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, a Syrian ruler who had tried to force the Jews to abandon their laws. He put pigs on the altar and turned it to the worship of Zeus. Then, the Maccabees, led

by Matthias and his five sons fought back and one of his sons Judas cleansed and rededicated the temple. The story goes that when the priests went into the light the menorah there was only enough oil for one day of burning, but when they used it, miraculously it burned for 8 days. Eight is a spiritual number for new beginnings.

This is a time remembered on the Hebrew Calendar where no matter what pain comes against the temple there is a miracle waiting to happen and a cleansing and rededication ready to abound. No

matter how the world may be trying to put out your light, do not let it! A new beginning is awaiting us.

For those who believe in Jesus and are part of His body, we have Jesus who is the miracle oil in the temple, making every day new. He is light of the world inside us, His temple, and inside His church body as a whole. We must only dedicate our worship to Him and our spirits will burn bright and we will come alive.

No matter what voices are trying to defile your temple or the church of Jesus Christ as a whole, we must stand up and let the light of the world be seen.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that the government is on Jesus’ shoulders: “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be on His shoulders; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

John 1:1-5 (NIV) says, “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. 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.”

During this time, we remember when His light shines, the darkness of the world will not overcome it.



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We remember the story of the Festival of Lights and how the small vial of oil that was found in the Temple after its destruction burned for 8 days. Keep your light burning bright and your temple pure and holy, undefiled before the Father. Confess your sins quickly, as this keeps the devil from getting a foothold in your life. The joy of the Lord is your strength and it's the season for you to experience this joy!

If you are in a place of desperation or discouragement, speak life and love over yourself. Prophecy to your dry bones as you have not lost hope, you are not cut off, and if you speak your bones will come alive. When you do this, you will begin to operate from the position of knowing the power of the Father of Lights Himself.

Proverbs 17:22 (KJV) says, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."

This is my challenge for you today: live your life to the fullest! Laugh this holiday season- be merry. Then your light will shine so bright that demonic forces will flee. Angelic hosts will come and join you. Amazing! If the church is to be strong and healthy for 2021, we must get our bones in alignment and strong with a merry heart.

Keep your spirit uplifted. God is doing mighty things in the earth right now. Do not let your faith wane. Press forward. You are the one God is calling to change your environment. He wants you to have joy. He wants you to obtain an overwhelming sense of His love for you. Seek Him and receive who He is. No matter what you are going through, take an action step of faith. Get that tree up; get those lights and garland out! Decorate your house! Light candles, and don't let anything stop you from bringing forth this Christmas season! When you act in faith and do these things, then your light will shine so bright that the Holy Spirit will rule and reign in your home and you will have angelic visitations. Angels are drawn to the light because they live around the throne of God which is full of light, so when you light your home, they will come and fellowship with you. They will surround you with the joy of the Lord! Speak life and the Word of God and the angels will respond to the Word. It's going to be a great December! Start celebrating Jesus, then you will attract everything that you really want to see happen in your life. God is full of joy and full of light. He is on His throne with a colored rainbow and lapis lazuli above Him. His eyes are flames of fire, His feet are bronze, and glory-fire is all around Him.



God is the light and lives in the light. You can have this in your temple too, and the angels will come and join you! Live by faith and all fear will flee! Let me pray for you: Father, pour out the oil from heaven upon my friend today. Help them to feel Your love and connection with You. Uplift their spirit. Help them to learn to light their own flame and speak in tongues. Lord, strengthen them to speak life to themselves, their family, home, city, state, and nation. Father, I thank You that they will speak global glory, and the glory of the Lord will fill their heart and home. Thank You for leading them to rededicate their temple. May they be a huge light in the darkness that attracts others to You. Help them to lead others to know You Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Open their eyes to see all kinds of angels – seraphim, cherubim- the angels of fire. Help us create an environment where the Holy Spirit can rule and reign in Jesus' name, amen.

Blessings from heaven are yours. Go and rejoice. It's a season of rejoicing! Share this with a friend and get happy!

Dr. Candice Smithyman is an international prophetic revivalist & healing minister who is Executive Pastor of Freedom Destiny Church, and Vice President of Dream Mentors International. She is also Host of the Glory Road Television broadcast on Faith Networks, CBN News Facebook and Youtube, Jesus Daily, King TV and other outlets. She has appeared on Sid Roth's "Its Supernatural", among other shows, and is the author of "Releasing Heaven: Creating a Supernatural Environment through Heavenly Encounters", among other books and publications. For a full bio you may visit: www.candicesmithyman.com



The Mordechai Key

By: Jessica Stern Foster

The story of Esther is a powerful prophecy to women of every culture and every generation that God does not look at women as second-class citizens or subservient people. While there are Religions and select countries that may feel women and girls are inferior, the female population is not inferior in the eyes of God.

In the Book of Esther, God took a simple orphan Jewish girl who was a virtual unknown in both Jewish society and the Persian kingdom and gave her favor and promotion until she was selected from the parade of virgins who were all kidnapped from their homes to be the next queen of Persia (modern-day Iran).

After Esther was selected Queen, Haman came to power and secretly hatched a plan that would soon become law. This law stated that on a certain day, all the Jewish people--men and women, boys and girls--would be massacred in Persia's 127 provinces. Mordechai then confronted Esther with a reality check in these words: "don't think you will escape just because you are in the palace! Who knows? Maybe you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

While we celebrate Esther's bravery, her purity, her perseverance; there is someone in this story we do not hear much about--Mordecai. I am convinced that the man



Mordechai's job was to raise and prepare Esther for life in turbulent times! Mordecai raised Esther as his own daughter and instilled in her the knowledge that he would also teach a son. Esther was a very well rounded and educated Jewish girl.

behind Esther's success was not merely circumstantial but placed by God. It was 'The Mordechai Key' and the anointing of the remnant that went before Esther!

Mordechai was the cousin of a young girl named Hadassah. Hadassah's parents were killed in raids on the Jewish people, and Hadassah was then hidden from the Persian Army that killed her family. A remnant that would someday save an even bigger remnant. Her one remaining relative was her cousin Mordechai. He adopted the young girl, raising her as his own daughter. To keep her safe, he renamed her Esther, a Persian name that in Hebrew means: Hidden.

Esther would have forever remained Hadassah had there not been a Mordechai to take her in after her parents' death. Mordechai raised her, instructed her in character, integrity, and purity of heart, and educated her.

Ironically, Esther is the ONLY book in the Bible that does not directly mention God's name, and you can see throughout the narrative that Mordechai poured the scriptures and a healthy measure of qavah into the life of Esther. Qavah is a Hope-like faith that is lived out to the very essence and is rooted within the fiber of a person's being.

Mordechai's job was to raise and prepare Esther for life in turbulent times! Mordecai raised Esther as his own daughter and instilled in her the knowledge that he would also teach a son, which speaks volumes to us since women were not often educated well in those times. Esther was a very well-rounded and educated Jewish girl.

While we have dug into The Esther Key in previous writings, we now need to gain the knowledge of how Esther was truly prepared for "such a time as this"! Many will tell you that it was the cleansing time of 12 months or the additional 6 months of oils, perfumes, and refinement. But it is so much more than time and essential oils, friends!

We need to dig a little deeper into the remnant of the Holy Spirit of God that goes before us to prepare the way of the Lord! This isn't just a song or a poem written by King David and penned in the Psalms. We need to fully understand from Rabbinical aspects the fullness of what took place so that we may truly see and know.

While Queen Esther is the central character in the Biblical book named after her, she is extensively and sympathetically portrayed in Rabbinic sources and historical text. In the commentary on the Book of Esther, the Rabbinical Library expands upon and adds details to the Biblical narrative, which relate to Esther's lineage and history and her relations with the other persons mentioned within the Book of Esther: Ahasuerus, Mordechai, and Haman.

Within these texts, we find that Esther's mother died in childbirth, and her father was killed during the mother's pregnancy. We learn that Mordechai had to take Esther as his Megillah to keep her from being taken into the royal court as a slave or servant. What this means is that Mordechai took Esther as his wife in infancy to keep her safe and raise her as his daughter. While raids were not supposed to take or confiscate wives, upon examination of Esther, she was found to be a virgin. Her cousin kept her as a daughter, loved her as his child, and nothing more. In documents, we find a different story, yet we know this was all done to keep Esther hidden and safe.

So, not only was Esther kidnapped from her home, she was violated and subjected to intimate review by perfect strangers. Mordechai had done so much to hide her and prepare her for life, but nothing could have prepared her for this kind of violation. These are the things we find in the Rabbinical library. Additionally, we find that Esther was from the tent of Rachel, from the seed of Benjamin.





Further, we find In Jacob's blessing to his sons that he blesses Benjamin in this way (Genesis 49:27): "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he consumes the foe, and in the evening he divides the spoil," which the Rabbis applied to Mordecai and Esther. Just as a wolf seizes its spoils, so did Esther seize the throne; similarly, Mordecai and Esther divided Haman's spoils among them (Gen. Rabbah [ed. Theodor-Albeck], MS. Vatican, para. 100).

In further documentation, we find that Esther hid from Ahasuerus's agents who sought women for the king. She succeeded in remaining concealed for four years but was eventually found and brought to the royal palace. Unlike the other women who wanted to be chosen, Esther tried to evade the king, but she was the one picked to be queen. This shows that her selection was part of the divine plan; Esther was meant to rule to bring deliverance to all Israel and the Jewish people.

As you read the Book of Esther, you will see that Mordechai was very instrumental in ensuring the safety of not only Esther and the Jewish people. His actions, sacrifice, and life characterize attributes that should be embraced in life. King David was a man after God's own heart, but I would say that so was Mordechai! He possessed wisdom, intellect, compassion, grace, and courage to do what is right even when it was against the law. He was tactical and well planned, loving deeply, and putting God first. But most of all, he acquired qavah, that hope like faith, to overcome the obstacles and odds stacked against him and the Jewish people.

It takes special characteristics within a person who is placed in extreme situations to come out alive and still honoring God! Mordechai had to stand up for the rights of others instead of hiding in the shadows. He became a man who not only raised a little girl by himself but saw in her an inner strength and anointing from God and raised her, equipping her to complete her high calling.

The Key of Mordechai is found within the very fabric of the man he was, laid within his character and innermost being. Looking at his life through the Book of Esther, we find 5 key characteristics of his life that proceed as the remnant that goes before Esther the Queen.

1. Mordechai had compassion! Compassion for a little girl, for the Jewish people, and even the lives of the people committing acts against him. Compassion is a character trait that we can show in our daily life and walk.

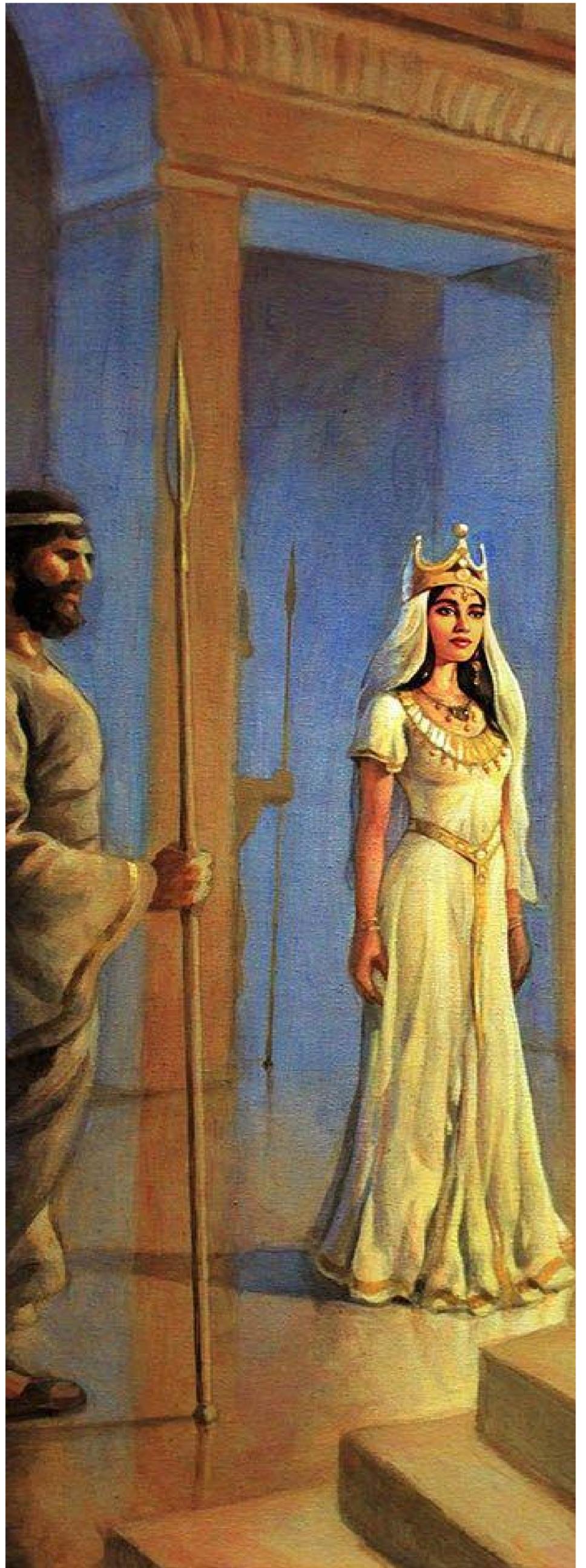
2. Mordechai used wisdom to make choices and decisions! While we can still see the flaw of Esther being kidnapped and Human Trafficked into the king's harem but ultimately being made queen, we know that it was the hand of God for Esther to be taken to save the Jewish people. Mordechai raised Esther with much wisdom and imparted into her intelligence, which ultimately helped to grasp the heart of a king and give her favor.

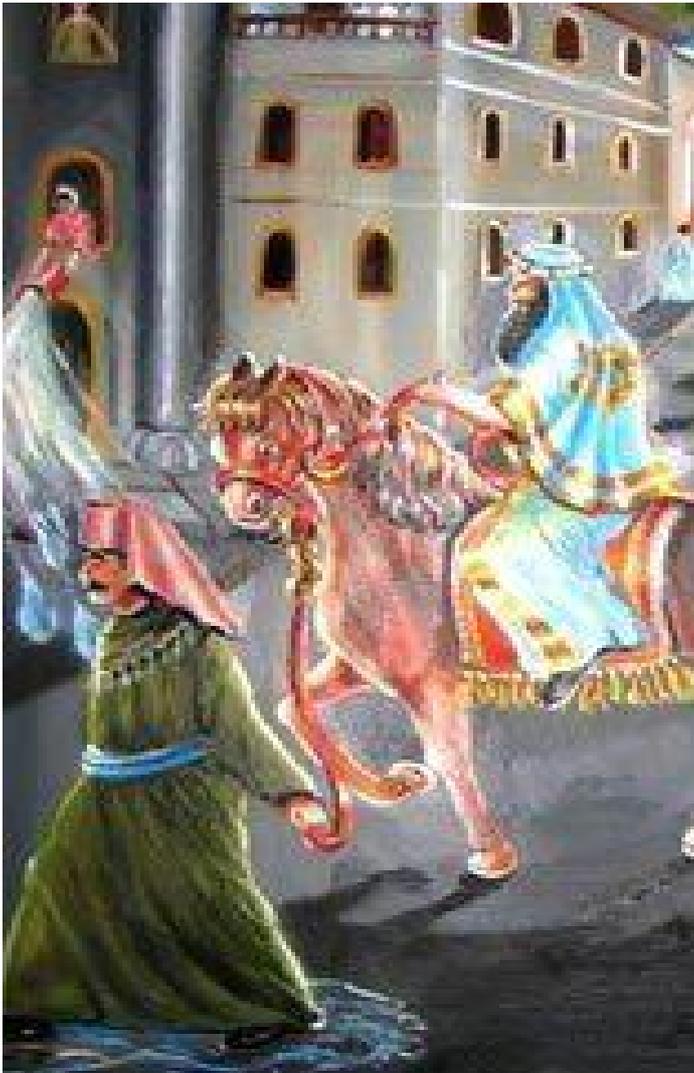
3. Mordechai had courage! When the laws were commanding him to act against the Word of God, he took a stand and kept the Biblical precepts and commandments of the One True God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As we see our world shift and change, will you have the courage to be like Mordechai?

4. Mordechai had hope in the calling of God and God's provision! Here we show that qavah is a hope like faith that is needed to complete the high calling of your life! This would explain why Mordechai told Esther not to reveal her Jewish heritage from the start; that he knew well before she did that this would be an important factor that would not only save the lives of her people, but also that of herself, Mordechai, and even the king. Just as Mordechai did, we can discover God's calling and direction in a situation if we seek to see the situation through His perspective.

5. Mordechai had Qavah! While this mirrors the last characteristic, hope and faith go hand in hand, and here the glue that hopes faith and hope together is the root word, qavah! Throughout the Book of Esther, Mordechai's faith in God shined through to be a beacon of hope to those around him and a source of strength for Esther. His words and actions reflected a man that was not into prestige or following the crowd but of standing up (at times alone) on what he believed of God and His will. He also had a remnant of people to were filling in the gaps with prayer and fasting. Ultimately preparing the way of the Lord!

The blessings from God were not meant to elevate Mordechai; rather, they meant for him to continue God's missions for peace in the kingdom and continued reliance on God. By doing what he knew to be God's calling on him, Mordechai was blessed by God and was placed in a position to continue God's mission on a greater scale.





Mordecai did not do what he did for Esther, the king, and the Jewish people. He did not do what he did for position, power, or authority. Mordechai took action in life because it was right in the eyes of God! Mordechai knew this was his high calling and was obedient to the call that God placed on his life. Additionally, Mordechai embodied several attributes we can find in ourselves, such as compassion for others, standing up for our beliefs, using wisdom in our lives, hope, faith, and least we forget- love!

The Mordechai Key is a special leadership anointing. It is not specific to just men, as we see that Mordechai raised Esther to walk in this same anointing! The Key of Mordechai and the Key of Esther are similar in characteristics and share the same DNA.

As we press ahead and into the horizon of the new year ahead, are you developing the leader within you that God has called you to become? What are you doing to cultivate your Holy Spirit gifts, talents, and character? How are you preparing your life to walk in your high calling sent by God for the completion of Building God's Kingdom? Want to know more? Check out more about Jessica Stern Foster at www.RedeemOurChildren.org or email: Jessica@RedeemOurChildren.org

Jessica Stern Foster is the Editor and founder of Grace & Truth Magazine, Redeem Our Children Foundation, and known for her Radio Show The Jewess Believer. She grew up in a Jewish family, who came to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Jessica's Bubbie (who was thrown from the train to Auschwitz) along with her parents who raised her in an old school Jewish manner. With over 20 years ministry experience, Hebrew and Greek Studies, with over 12 years of college studies, a 3 time cancer survivor and writer. Jessica shares her journey of being kidnapped, sold at auction and supernatural rescued by God! She is an activist to stop human trafficking! Ezekiel 36:26 - Isaiah 53 - John 3:16



Jessica lives on the Chesapeake Shores of Maryland with her big Jewish family!

www.RedeemOurChildren.org

The Mordechai Key - 31

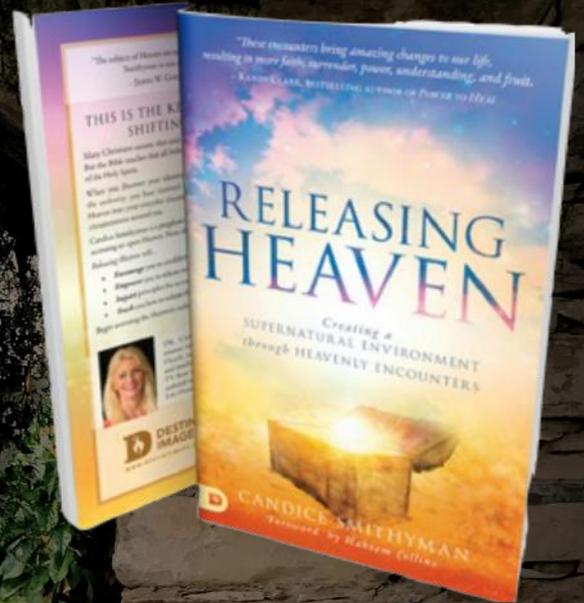
Many Christians assume that only a few gifted individuals can move in the miraculous, but the Bible teaches that all believers have unlimited access to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

When you discover your identity in Jesus, cultivate a heavenly mindset, and access the authority you have received in Jesus, you can immediately release the power of Heaven into your everyday circumstances. This is the key to changing atmospheres and circumstances around you.

Candice Smithyman is a prophetic voice who has learned to move in the supernatural by accessing an open Heaven. Now, she wants to mentor you to do the same. *Releasing Heaven* will...

- Encourage you to confidently enter the supernatural realm as a citizen of Heaven.
- Empower you to release miracles by praying from a heavenly dimension.
- Impart principles for accessing your heavenly riches every day.
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“I appreciate the encouragement and inspiration Pastor Candice Smithyman brings through her book, *Releasing Heaven*. Learning how to host the presence of God and recognize His ways is extremely important to being able to flow in His power and experience His supernatural presence.”



Dr. Randy Clark
Founder, Global Awakening



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“The subject of Heaven on earth is one of those strategic themes and Candice Smithyman is one of those anointed chosen messengers.”

– James W. Goll,
God Encounters Ministries

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Weekly OMUG: FearLess

BY: Marta Greenman

Because we live in uncertain times fear is prevalent. There are days fear can surround and engulf us. It can manifest and disguise itself as uncertainty, anger, insomnia, or anxiety, just to name a few. Psalm 34 teaches, "I sought the LORD, and He answered me. He delivered me from all my fears." Did you notice before the Lord delivers us from our fears, we must seek Him? In Hebrew, the word pursue can be used for sought. A simile for pursuing is running after or chasing. This is a very clear picture of our responsibility.



If we want to "Fear Less" we must run after God. Chase Him with all our heart, mind, and soul. In our heart we must make up our mind, as Daniel did to not defile ourselves. In our mind, we must meditate on the Word of God day and night as in Psalm 1:2. Finally, in our soul, the seat of our emotions. Therefore we will not get tossed two and fro, as Ephesians 4:14, "We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men."

Once we become men and women who chase after the Lord, we will be men and women who fear the Lord. When we fear God and not man, we will view the world through a different lens, God's lens. Our perspective will change. We will be more concerned about God's opinion rather than men. Our earthly fears diminish as we turn our trust and reliance to Him.

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Listen to Marta Greenman on her show, Under God with Marta and Maureen Every Monday at 1:30 PM PST & 2:30 PM MST & 3:30 PM CST & 4:30 PM EST on GraceAndTruthRadio.World



Hope in the Darkness

By: Jocelyn LaFavers



Most people, myself included, associate hope with a state of anticipation. A child hoping that they will receive the items on their wish list for the coming holidays or hoping that they wake up the next morning to a blanket of fresh snow on the ground. Yet, hope is not always realistic. Hope it is not always far-fetched, either. Ask a child for their definition, and you'll find that "hope is just...hope!"

Or is it really?

When we look at the Hebrew definitions and translations, there are about 106 variables. Yet, two simplistic Hebrew words resonate with me this season, in the wildest year in which we have ever lived. The meaning that hope can give people for further understanding the heart of the concept of hope, I see in these two simplistic translations.

The first of these two words is "yakhal". It is a word that is defined as more literal and translates to "to wait for." You yakhal for 5 pm on Friday after a long work week, or for the glowing lights of the menorah after the grueling year that 2020 has been. Or, if you

were me as a teenager, I (yahkal) hoped for our family's annual "Bethlehem Supper" so I could give my best Scarlett O'Hara version of the 2,000-year-old Jewish Lady... decked out in full-body bronzer, ending up looking more like I belonged on a street corner than at my parents' Shabbat dinner table. What can I say? I tried.

But hope to a kid, a teen, and an adult are viewed differently. While looking at the very core of a word, we also must take into account the person perceiving the word. This is observed more so with verbs and general tone. The end of a work week, the holidays, the changing of the seasons--these are things that you know you can expect. There is comfort in the anticipation of a "hope to wait for" because these things are dependable. And let's just be candid, 2020 has felt like 40 years lost in the Wilderness going around the mountain like it is Groundhog Day! So, HOPE is something that we all desperately need right now: The comfortable dependability of waiting and knowing that our Messiah, Jesus Christ, has a greater plan.

The second word for Hope that sticks out to me is "qavah". Qavah is not just one of those cool words you can sneak into your Scrabble or Words with Friends game to wow your friends! The "hope for" in the variation of qavah literally translates to "to wait." While this word may seem to read the same as the first variation, I assure you that it is very different! Qavah kind of hope carries with it all the tension of something that you believe will happen, but you do not have an assurance of it happening. This type of hope requires a measure of faith and likely a lot of patience, depending on what you are hoping to happen, have, do, see, or become!

We know that Friday comes every single week, without fail. We know that mothers all around the world will pull out the family menorahs every year, in good times and in bad. But we do not know that things will get better in 2021. I pray for the qavah-like hope of the Lord to bring all of us a new year of abundance without turmoil and chaos!



In the Book of Hebrews, Paul writes, "faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen." Hebrews 11:1 shows us this qavah-like hope!

Which leads me to ask, what are you holding out hope for this holiday season?

Is it an end to the emotional turmoil that we have been dragged through this year? Or could it be a healthy end to a long illness? Or even a long-awaited, much prayed for pregnancy?

While there is a myriad of things that we may be holding out a qavah kind of hope for, our God is the one in Whom we should place that hope! Just remember, you will need a measure of faith and a side of patience to enjoy this level of premium hope!

If 2020 hasn't already brought us enough, I have seen for some that hope seems to have been translated into hopelessness. What we need is to be hopeful! Paul wrote in Hebrews 12 that we should look away from the natural realm and we fasten our gaze onto our Messiah, Jesus, Who birthed faith within us and Who leads us forward into faith's perfection. The example of Jesus is this: Because His heart was focused on the joy of knowing that you would be His, He endured the agony of the cross and conquered its humiliation, and now sits exalted at the right hand of the throne of God! So consider carefully how our Messiah, Jesus, faced such intense opposition from sinners who opposed their own souls so that you wouldn't become worn down and cave in under life's pressures.

This is the ultimate use of the action word "Hope"! Four hundred years is a long time to wait for the Savior, much longer still if you count those who still haven't realized that Jesus is the Messiah that fulfilled those prophecies.

Just like those many long years that seemed to stretch on and on without end, so has this year seemed to many of us. It feels like every single day we wake up to new and terrible news. More lockdowns. More loved ones ill. More loved ones dying alone instead of surrounded by their families. More businesses closing in your hometown—perhaps your own.



The list of terrible things seems to stretch on and on, but I know this one thing for certain: Our God is still good. He still loves us. His hand of blessing is still upon us. When we are lonely and haven't seen other people in weeks or months, depression can come in like a welcome friend, but I assure you that it certainly is not. Slam the door in the face of that false "friend", telling it that it is NOT welcome in the home of your heart! Despondence wants to tell us that the world is crumbling at our feet, but the Lord wants to rebuild us stronger than before. He wants us to find the weak places so that we can strengthen them and fortify them with His might.

Growing up in a Judeo-Christian home gives hope meaning on many levels. Move over, working with the Redeem Our Children Foundation and having a close sisterhood with its founder, Jessica Stern Foster, gives me an even deeper and more unique perspective on that qavah type of hope! While most of my own family was already here in America at the turn of the century, Jessica's great-grandmother, affectionately known as Bubbie, much later made her journey to America--the land of freedom, of promise, and the land of Hope! While the story of Jessica's Bubbie is unique and riveting, if we have learned one thing from the life of this amazing woman, it would be how to live a life filled with a qavah-like hope!

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Seventy-five years ago, we celebrated the end of a deep soul wound for our country, the world, and the Jewish people. On May 8th, 1945, WWII ended in Europe, and on September 2nd of that same year, formal documents were signed on the USS Missouri, designating the official victory and the beginning of a Hope Deferred!

For the Jewish people, this meant liberation for all those held in concentration camps. Unfortunately, this was not the case for Bubbie's beloved sister, Hannah, who was sent to the gas chamber with a claim of tuberculosis only one month before liberation. The Nazi Army knew that their defeat was probably only two weeks away and sent a great many to the gas chambers in a last-ditch effort to get rid of "evidence" in the precious form of human life. Sadly, liberation came a full two weeks after the day they had expected, and a large number of innocent lives were snuffed out only days from freedom.

You may be wondering what happened to Bubbie and how she survived the horrors of war. I can assure you that her story is miraculous and full of the Lord's wondrous preservation! But that is a marvelous tale of qavah for another day.

During the war, many, many people, both Jewish and Gentile, political activist and outcast, spent holidays cooped up in ghettos and camps, fearing for their lives as they watched those around them lose their battle with an enemy that seemed too strong to beat. A few brave and courageous ones dared to remember the promises of God while trapped in the miseries that felt like the very pit of darkness at the bottom of the Abyss. Amidst the horrors of beatings, killings, starvation, work camps, medical experiments, and more, the Lord was present.

While I, myself, have only read countless testimonies of survivors who spoke of the Lord's goodness and favor while they were imprisoned, each of these testimonies speaks of faith in dark times.





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Faith that is shaky and knock-kneed. Faith that is strong. Faith that is nearly snuffed out. But that faith is like a candle in the darkness. No matter how small, it still dispels the shadows around it, and just like the shamash candle, they give light to others. When we keep our faith, no matter how small and shaky in the wind, we burn for all to see. It is that faith that is found with the hope deferred in a qavah-like hope!

After seventy-five years, the Jewish people have never forgotten that it is a qavah of hope deferred, a mustard seed of faith, and a side of patience that is the recipe to feed the soul as we petition the courts of Heaven in prayer and praise! If 2020 were 1945, would you be able to have qavah? Would you be able to keep your faith? After all, you only need a small mustard seed amount! Would you be able to patiently wait on the Lord, especially during this holiday season?

The Lord longs to kindle our flames as we celebrate the Hope that He gives during the holidays and beyond. He longs to show you how ardently He loves you. How deep, wide, and full are His thoughts of you. How big and beautiful His plans are for you. As you struggle with the times this Hanukkah, I pray that you light your candles with a renewed sense of qavah. I know I will be.

“Let us hope that history will be written one day by true historians, capable of (showing the) insight into human mass-motives.” – Elizabeth Stern (The Maccabean, Published Archive: A Magazine of Jewish Life & Letters, Volume 32)



A large graphic for Redeem Our Children. On the left is a circular logo with a tree and the text "REDEEM OUR CHILDREN .ORG". In the center is contact information: "REDEEM OUR CHILDREN", "Rescue • Redeem • Restore", "Connect@RedeemOurChildren.org", "Prayer@RedeemOurChildren.org", "Report@RedeemOurChildren.org", "D.C. Office: (202) 774-9090", "Dallas Office: (469) 923-0770", "GTRW ROC; P.O. Box 860223", "Plano, Texas 75086", and "www.RedeemOurChildren.org". On the right is a large, colorful, abstract painting of a lion's head, surrounded by the text "REDEEM OUR CHILDREN .ORG" and "RESCUE • REDEEM • RESTORE". Below the lion's head is the text "Ezekiel 36:26 Trade your stoney heart for a Yeshua DNA heart!".



WARRIORS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

By Fay Arbaugh

During this time of year, many Jewish families and Judeo-Christian homes are preparing for Hanukkah.

We tend to read and think about the mighty battle that took place during the time of the Maccabees and how God helped them to overthrow the Syrians and restore true worship. But what I would like to focus more on today were the warriors themselves. Just how did these men through such difficult circumstances prevail, and how can we do the same in the day and time we live in now?

So when I think of a hero or someone I admire or look up to, it is never about how they look, or how much work they do, they are never weak, dainty, helpless complainers...they are strong, powerful, diligent...They might be leaders and examples in their community, in the work place and or even in the home. He or she is of Yehovah's power and not of their own, they do not entice by emotion or use their own abilities to receive favor. So how does one acquire these qualities? How do we become the mighty warrior we desire to be? Simply, we must have FAITH, without it, the warrior is useless and will only tear down and seek to destroy of their own will and abilities.

So what would you think if I told you all you needed to do to become warrior was to get dressed?

No, I'm not talking about having a Vera Wang dress or a Gucci suit...I'm talking about real clothing...the Armor of God!!! It is the Armor in Ephesians chapter 6 that we put on that empowers us because this Armor is YESHUA...that's right Jesus!

So as you read about each of these pieces, I want you to visualize putting them on, and what each piece means.

Helmet of Salvation—Psalms 140:7 O Yehovah the Elohim, the strength of my salvation, Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

Without the blood of Jesus Christ/ Yeshua shed for us as our Savior we have nothing to put our trust in.

Breastplate of Righteousness—Mathew 5:6 Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Yeshua is what enters into and covers our hearts with his laws to make our paths straight.

Loins gird with Truth--John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me. He is the seed of truth that was brought forth only through Him can we dispel the lies of our enemies.

Feet shod with the Gospel--Mathew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. We are His mouthpiece and we must proclaim to all, His gospel of salvation.

Shield of Faith--Matthew 21:22 And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith." We know that without faith, it is impossible to please Him, and it is only through believing we can be saved and all things become possible.

Sword of the spirit--John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. The spirit of Yeshua is what moves us and motivates us, it is the total fullness of who we are.

Did you see how each piece of armor directly embodies Yeshua, He is what fortifies us to be able to stand against our enemies, which, after we have put it all on that is what He tells us to do...STAND.

When we accept Him as our savior, that is the clothing we must put on each day. Just as we dress ourselves physically everyday, even more so should we dress ourselves spiritually with the armor of God, because it is a gift from our Heavenly Father...the gift of His Son.

So just as no soldier or warrior would ever think about going to battle without their armor and weapons we would not be any different.

We want to be the example to those around us just like those who have fought the good fight of faith before us, let us be the mighty warriors of our Faith!

Fay Arbaugh

Warrior Women of Faith

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WARRIOR WOMEN OF FAITH



MARRIED TO THE JEWISH GIRL

By: Ryan LaFavers

Hanukkah...Chanukah... how do you even say that? I'm not Jewish.

Why do you only have two of those candles lit, and why are there nine candles? Isn't that a bit much for a candle holder?

Oh, it's called a menorah? I'm so confused. But these fried potato things are good.

I was raised in a Christian home, reading my Bible and learning all about Jesus. I knew that He was Jewish and I read all about the festivals and dinners that they had but it wasn't until I got married that I had a real introduction to Hanukkah...or is it Chanukah...I'm fourteen years in to my journey and I still don't know... anyway. I'm sure I asked all of those questions at some point. If I didn't, I know that I was thinking it.

From an "outsider's" perspective, the whole thing is just a bit strange. In the Christian home, we're usually taught, in a round-about way, that we no longer need to celebrate these holidays. We celebrate Christmas and the birth of Christ, so there's no need for any of the rest of that stuff that they did way back then. Right? But does the New Testament tell us not to celebrate them? The short answer is, no.

My wife actually likes to joke that I have to sit outside during Passover because I'm a gentile and gentiles aren't usually permitted to observe. But that's a different holiday that I'm sure I'll be asked to write about later. Back to... Hanukkah?

Why would the Lord do all of these mighty things for us, tell the Israelites to celebrate the works of His hand and the many times that He had saved them, only to tell those who received His Son..."Never mind!"

The modern church as we know it has done ourselves a great disservice by setting aside the celebrations of old. We are missing out on a deep understanding of our Father when we decide to separate ourselves even further from the origins of our faith--not to mention the food. Oh man, if I have learned one thing for sure, it's that the Jewish people love to eat, and they are darn good cooks...usually!

If you have already read any of my wife Jocelyn's articles, you may recall that her parents, while of Jewish heritage, were not raised to observe that part of their faith. They knew who they were, but had to learn many details in their adult lives, which meant some pretty amusing stumbles along the way. As a matter of fact, you can read about some of my wife's hilarious mishaps in her article on the next page. We are all still finding our way in this journey, really.

Let me share with you one of our family's favorite stories... It starts back in the 80's with one of my father-in-law's best friends, we call him "Uncle Steve." At dinner, Uncle Steve was seated next to an older Jewish man and they struck up a conversation. When dinner was served, Steve noticed that they'd been served...ham. Yep. Ham. If you know anything at all about how the Jewish people eat, you know that pork is a no-no. It's not kosher.

They bowed their heads, and the older gentlemen dug right in, to Steve's surprise. While not Jewish himself, he was familiar with many of their customs and dietary limitations, so he gently inquired, making sure that the gentleman knew he was eating pork. The older man got a mischievous look on his face and responded, "What? It's whale steak." Steve later shared the story with my father-in-law, and thus, a running family joke was born.

Fast forward to my very first "Bethlehem Supper", the first year of our marriage. In those days, my in-laws always invited lots of friends to a Hanukkah celebration, and my mother-in-law asked people to bring some potluck dishes made with kosher recipes. It was always a fun time...and LOUD.

Oh, sweet baby Jesus, is it loud. A very dear friend showed up with a huge tray of food covered with aluminum foil. When she took off the foil and we saw what was underneath, my father-in-law took one quick sniff and loudly declared: "Mmmm! Whale steak!" You guessed it: this sweet lady brought ham to a Jewish holiday party.

Now, I'll remind you, I'm not Jewish. I'm from Kentucky and I love ham. This was my first Jewish celebration, also, so, I saw no problem here. No one was rude, of course, and my in-laws don't generally keep kosher outside of the holidays. So, this brought on Uncle Steve's story and everyone had a good laugh. We blessed our meal and began eating. Our friend Jessica Stern Foster tells us that this is called a Mitzvah. Now, I have no clue as to what that means but I can assure you that she does and if that's what she says it is, I'm sure she's right.

Jewish people are nothing if not hospitable. It doesn't matter if they are born and raised in a strictly Jewish home or if they are simply of Jewish heritage—it is woven into their DNA. They love to laugh with you, to pray with you, and good grief if they offer to feed you, DO NOT TURN IT DOWN. Having become a part of this amazing set of people and their traditions, I can tell you that they make sure no one feels like an outsider. Isn't that the heart of our Father? While they may joke with me about gentiles sitting outside, I've never actually had to.

No matter who you celebrate with this Hanukkah, remember that, from the beginning, God has been showing us over and over that we are not outsiders. That we are welcome and longed for in His home. That we are family to Him. So from our Bethlehem Supper to yours, Happy Hanukkah...Chanukah. Eat up, y'all.

A BETHLEHEM NIGHT TO REMEMBER

By: Jocelyn LaFavers

The Gregorian calendar year is drawing to a close and with that come some of our most highly anticipated holidays!

I have always known that I had Jewish heritage, but my grandparents were caught in the lost generation that put away their traditions out of fear and grief in the wake of the Holocaust. So my parents were raised with almost no Jewish tradition at all. We are very blessed that those grandparents found the saving grace of Yeshua Jesus, even while putting away and nearly forgetting their Jewish heritage.

When I was a teenager, my parents decided that it was up to them to reignite the flames of family heritage and to learn about rich lineage of Jewish culture. Since we are very much believers in Christ as our Messiah, my parents had to decide how exactly we would weave those two beliefs together. For our family, that started with what my homeschooling mom called “Bethlehem Supper”.

My mom found ways to tie it into our education and told each of us that we would be celebrating Hanukkah as if we had traveled to Bethlehem to be counted in the census, per Caesar Augustus’s orders. We were charged with choosing a character to portray and learning something about who that person might have been. My little brothers all chose to be shepherds, while I decided that I was a visiting dignitary. Full disclosure: I was a literary-obsessed redheaded thirteen-year-old with a love and admiration for Lucille Ball and stage theatrics. I’m sure you can imagine the ridiculous lengths that I went to. I spent days on the family computer researching how a wealthy Jewish woman may have dressed at that time and I came to our little family dinner bedecked in fancy fabrics, with bangle bracelets all up my arms, and with my face practically coated in



bronzer. My mom managed to mostly hold her composure and compliment me on my efforts, while my dad sputtered in the corner, covering his laughter with a coughing fit. I'm sure you can imagine the ridiculous lengths that I went to accomplish the perfect Scarlett O'Hara moment, but Jewish style... 2000 years ago! Bless my heart.

No matter how ridiculous or inaccurate our "Bethlehem supper" may have been, the Lord knew that our hearts were in the right place. My mom lit the first candle on our newly-purchased menorah and my father did his best to read the traditional prayer in Hebrew before reading the English translation. We sat on the living room floor, blankets haphazardly laid out by the young "shepherds", and a spread of Mediterranean recipes set before us. Together our family talked about the Jewish traditions of Hanukkah that we were learning about and how Jesus may

have celebrated them when He lived on Earth as a man. We read from my grandfather's Jerusalem Bible about how Judah Maccabee and his sons held the faith after a long fight with the Greeks and how the Lord miraculously extended the life of their oil to last not one, not two, but a full eight days while they prepared the new batch of holy oil.

Maybe you were raised in a Jewish home where you observed all of the holidays and went to Hebrew school, maybe you were brought up like me and are still learning what your heritage is, maybe you are not Jewish at all, but you want to embrace the holidays that God asked His people to remember and you are doing all that you can to learn about them. I hope that my silly memory of our first family Hanukkah brings a smile to your face and perhaps you will even have a "Bethlehem Supper" of your own this year!

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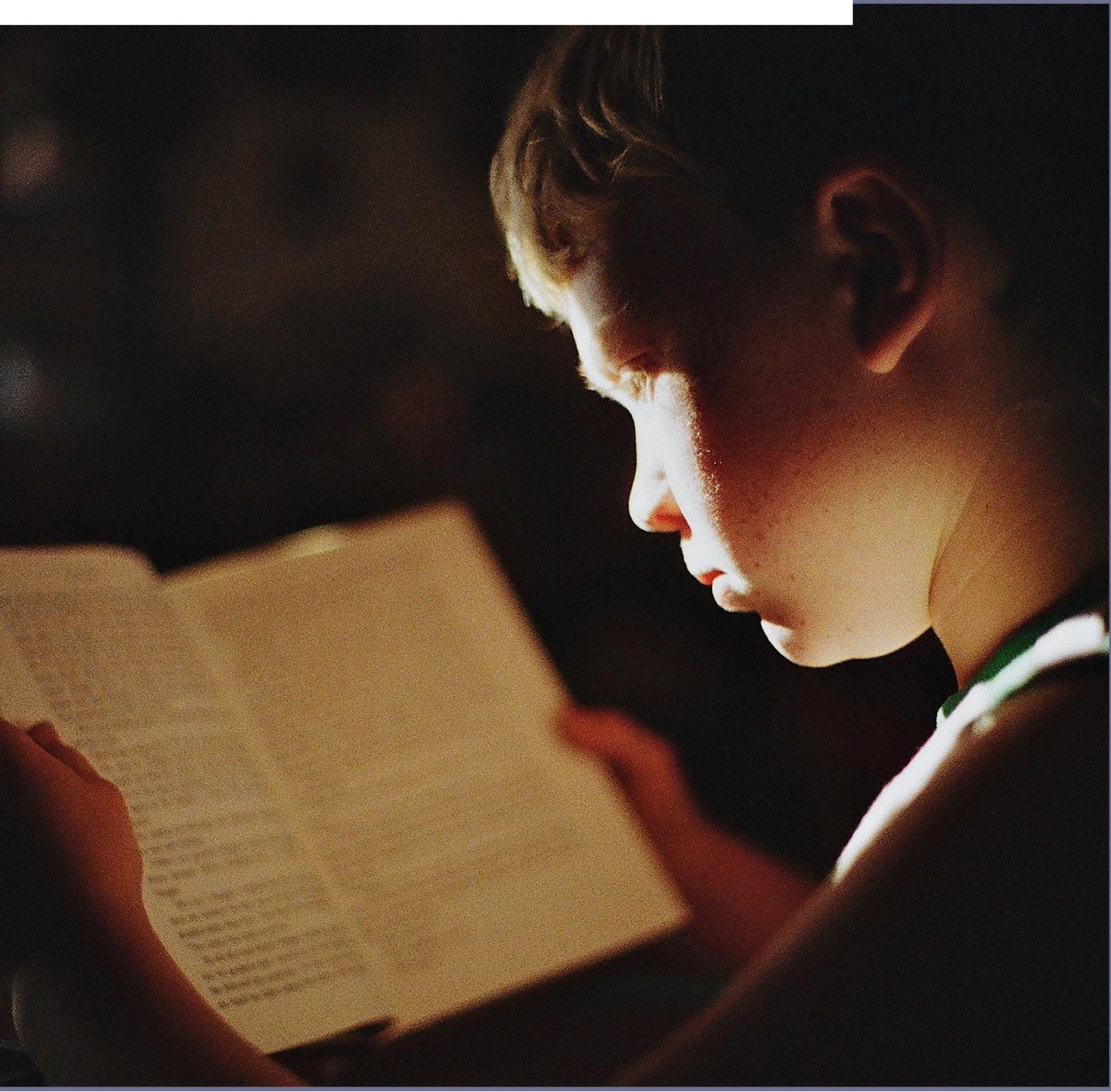
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HOMESCHOOL FAMILIES

Parents - Kids - Grandparents
NOT just a job for Moms in 2020



Tips for read-aloud time: Are they listening?

Let's talk reading with your kids. Sometimes getting them to all sit still and listen is hard--or even impossible, depending on the day you've had! Some simple tips and tricks for getting your kids to engage in read-aloud time are to give them something to do with their hands. If you are reading a book about Abraham Lincoln, give them Lincoln Logs or pretzel sticks and ask them to build a log cabin. Print out coloring pages that go with the theme of the day. If you are really brave, pull out paints or play-doh. Even when you don't think they are listening, I promise that they are.



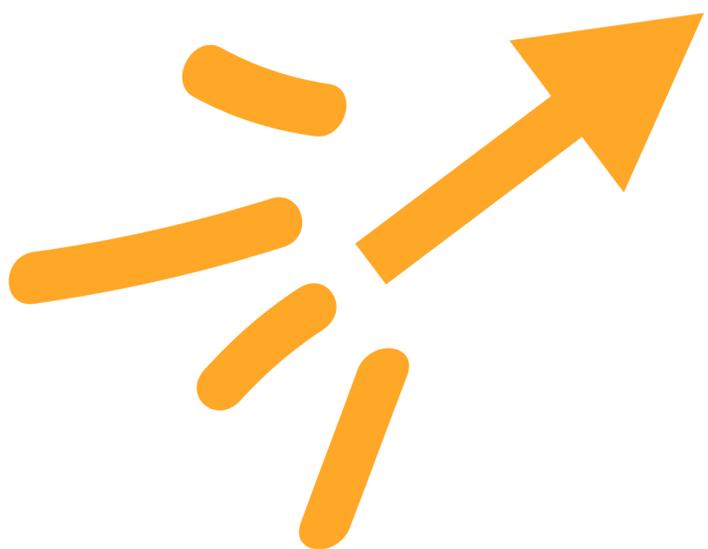
God's Generals, Vol 3: John Alexander Dowie by Roberts Liardon and Olly Goldenberg

This third volume in the God's Generals for Kids series looks at the life of John Alexander Dowie. Thousands of people were saved and healed through his ministry, but his life was one long battle from the moment he chose to follow Jesus. The harder the battle, though, the greater the victory God gave him!

"An Old Fashioned Thanksgiving" By Louisa May Alcott

In this poignant Thanksgiving tale, the author takes us back to a forgotten time of beauty and simplicity. Follow along with the Bassett children as their family Thanksgiving unfolds and they learn what really matters.

It's no secret that we love books and reading! Check out are this month's staff personal picks!



Hanukkah Homeschool Crafts That Any Child Can Do

By Laekyn Causey

Hanukkah, a Jewish festival celebrated for eight nights at the end of November to December, is typically recognized by most because it is when the menorah is present. Even if your family is not Jewish, it does not mean that you cannot learn about other cultures' holidays and traditions!

The menorah consists of 9 candles. The center candle, called the shamash, is the one that lights the rest of the candles. One candle is lit each night until you have a total of eight burning candles, plus the shamash, on the final night of Hanukkah. The candles are usually lit at sundown and burn 30 minutes after it gets dark. Prayers and blessings are said over the lighting ceremony, and other activities are done in the night - playing the dreidel game and eating foods such as latkes. While your whole family learns about this Jewish festival, your children can participate in a craft that is simple enough that children of all levels can take part in the fun.

As a future educator in special education, my goal is to help you learn simple things that are geared towards children within the special education realm. It is so important that they are included in activities "typical" children can do! No need for them to miss out because it is assumed they cannot do things! That is just preposterous thinking, and anyone who has loved a special needs child knows that they have amazing abilities! Most children in special education receive services within public education that focus on motor movement, social skills, speech, as well as standard educational skills (reading and writing, among others).

In the last issue, I illustrated how cooking can boost speaking, social, math, reading, and motor movement skills. Doing crafts can accomplish the same things! Some of my fondest memories with children I've worked with are the times spent making crafts and drawing together. It makes learning effortless--almost unknown to them! Crafts include a great amount of skill in motor movement, can improve executive functioning (required for planning, self-monitoring, and starting and completing tasks), mathematical skill, and reading. Crafts not only improve their skill set, but it is a way to make learning fun and can create bonds between parent and child.

I would like to introduce our craft for this issue: a DIY menorah; made with only a few items and a few steps! Most of these supplies can likely be found in your house already. If you happen to need to buy anything, your local craft store will have what you need.

DIY Menorah

Supplies:

Wooden spools

Number stickers

Acrylic paints (in different shades of blue)

Paintbrushes

Pencils (in different colors)

Yellow pencil top erasers

Instructions:

Gather 8 spools of the same size and 1 spool taller than the rest.

Label the sides of the 8 same-sized spools 1-8 with the number stickers. Make sure the sticker is stuck to the spool really well!

Paint all of the spools in the different colors of blue.

Once the paint dries, remove the number stickers.

Line up the spools in number order from right to left (the bigger spool in the middle).

Insert a pencil with the eraser top for each night, working from right to left.

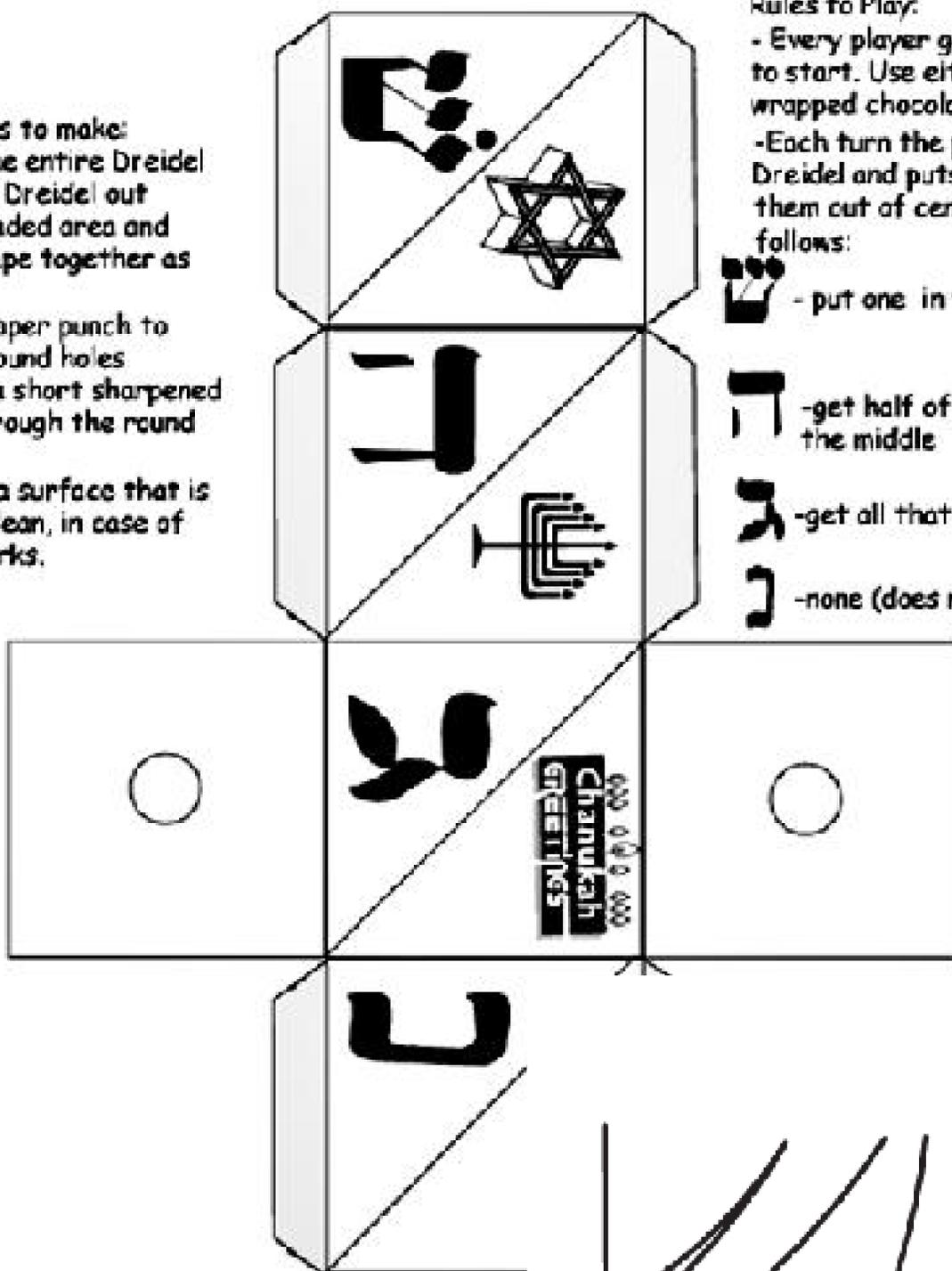
If you want to up to the increase the creativity level of this project for those children who have large imaginations and well-honed fine motor skills, you can challenge them to build a menorah out of Legos. See what they can do when you let their creativity have zero limits!



Happy Chanukah

Directions to make:

- Color the entire Dreidel
- Cut the Dreidel out
- Fold shaded area and glue or tape together as a cube.
- Use a paper punch to cut out round holes
- Insert a short sharpened pencil through the round holes
- Play on a surface that is easy to clean, in case of pencil marks.



Rules to Play:

- Every player gets an equal amount to start. Use either coins or gold wrapped chocolate candy.

- Each turn the player spins the Dreidel and puts coins in or takes them out of central collection as follows:



- put one in the middle



- get half of the amount in the middle



- get all that is in the middle



- none (does nothing)



TORAH TOWN



Walking out our Faith - by

Lesson 1 Commitment

This lesson is a 4 part series of lessons designed for parents and children to work through together to help keep children engaged as well as to give them a better understanding of the importance of faith and pleasing our Heavenly Father.

What is Faith?

Let's look at what the Bible tells us about Faith...

Heb 11:6 No one can please God without faith, for whoever comes to God must have faith that God exists and rewards those who seek him. So we know that faith is:

- something we can not see with our eyes.
- That we can not please God without faith
- We have to have faith to talk to Him.
- He will reward us for having faith



FEATHER GAME

Can you keep a feather floating in the air? Try blowing it to keep it up. What was keeping the feather up? How do you know? Could you see your breath?

Can we take a step without God leading us? NO, we have to have him showing us every step we should be taking. So in order to do that we have to commit ourselves to HIM! What is a Commitment?

It means that when we say that we are going to do something we make sure that we do exactly what we said we would. Kind of like a promise.

The greatest commitment we can make is to commit to serving Yehovah and Yeshua for the rest of our life. But how do we do that?

1. First we recognize that YHVH is the creator of the universe. He made ALL things including you!
2. Second we learn that Yeshua YHVH's Son, helped create all things with God, and He came to earth to show us the example of how to live and He died for our sins.
3. Third we say we are sorry for our sins and ask Yehovha to forgive us and ask Yeshua to come into our heart to live forever.
4. Fourth we read our Bibles every day as our instructions in keeping Gods laws and commandments as He told us to and to walk out our Faith.



****Memory Verse****

Hebrews 11:1 Faith is "being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see"

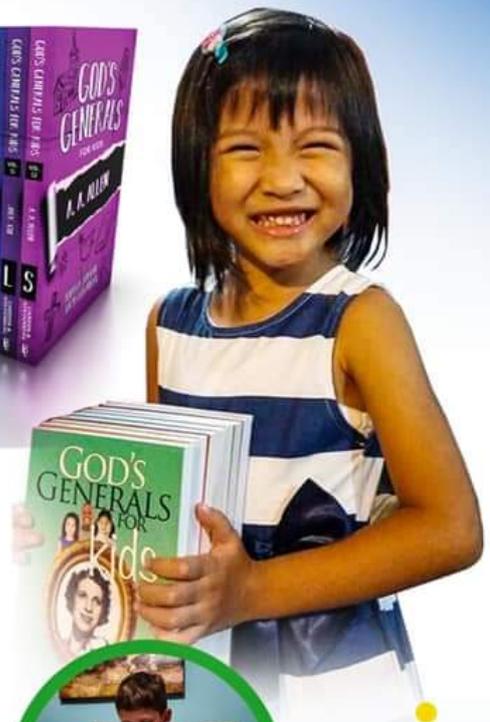
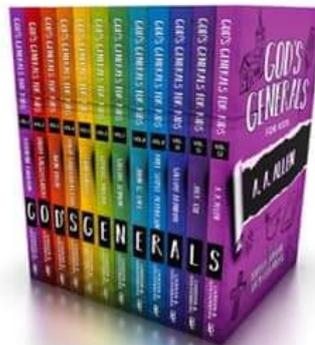
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Homeschooling During Hanukkah

By Jocelyn LaFavers

Here we are in the fifth month of the school year and you probably are about halfway through your curriculum. Hurrah! If you are already planning to incorporate the December holidays into your studies or if that sounds like something that might break up the monotony of your calendar, then keep reading!

The story of Hanukkah took place around 200 BC when the Greeks ruled over Judea. Their leader, Antiochus IV Epiphanies, wanted to “civilize” the Jews and impose their own religious beliefs upon the people of the land, rather than allowing the Jewish customs to remain the practice of the day. Eventually, Antiochus banned Jewish religion altogether, making their worship of the one true God illegal. A family of brave men, whom we now know as the Maccabees, decided that they had had enough and began a three-year

campaign for their religious freedom. Let’s be real. You know these fierce warriors were a bunch of homeschooled brothers. While 2150 years ago men were taught their Yeshiva (schooling for Jewish people) in the Temple, we all know that in times of crisis the Jewish people hide out in homes and in the wilderness. So basically, in modern terms...the Maccabee Brothers were Homeschooled! When they had emerged victorious, they went home to rebuild the Temple. Upon their triumphant return, they found that all of the holy oil that was used to light the eternal flames had been destroyed, leaving only enough to last a single day. Unfortunately, the oil used in those flames was special, and it took eight days to prepare and bless. While the Maccabee men worked hard at this—remember 2150 years ago, and even 100 years ago, that men were usually the educators to teach the masses. We know from the Word of God and historical text that women were still educated, often times secretly or privately!

So, since they lived in oppressive times of war, the Maccabee sons were probably homeschooled, which meant that they could pretty much do anything because their Proverbs-31-mama had taught them all they needed to know—the Lord blessed their efforts and caused that remaining oil to last for a full eight days instead of just one. This is the short version of the story that inspired the tradition of the menorah and the celebration of Hanukkah as we now know it.

So how can we incorporate this holiday into our homeschool days, you may ask? Here are a few of the ways in which you can do that with ease:

1. Find some videos online about the holiday and watch them with your kids. You can find a wide range of educational things available, from documentaries to cartoons!

2. Go back in time and research in the second century BC together. Learn about what came after the reign of Alexander the Great and what that meant for Judea. Learn about the customs and ways of the Greeks and what they may have commanded the Jews to do in place of worshipping God. If you are actually successful in traveling back in time instead of just checking out books at your local library...hit me up.

3. When you have learned a bit about the story of Hanukkah and the time in which it took place, help your children make costumes and reenact the amazing history of the Maccabees and their fight for religious freedom. Your kids will love this creative part of learning history, and they will always remember it. Just do yourself a favor and give them swords made from cardboard boxes or craft foam. They hurt less when one is stabbed in the abdomen by their own Maccabean-brother.

4. There are so many wonderful recipes on the internet, including ones that we will share here in the magazine, that you can make with your children.

5. Learn about the history of the menorah and how it was created. Read picture books with younger children.

6. Hold your own “Bethlehem Supper”!

In a time when many of our religious freedoms are being tamped down and limited, find hope in the story of Hanukkah and the provision of the Lord. There is a coziness that comes with lighting the candles each night and saying the blessings as you stand in the darkening room, your heads covered as you huddle together. The Lord longs to draw each of us close and remind us that He will win our battles for us when we take up the sword He asks us to bear. His light surrounds us like a warm blanket that keeps out the cold, that flame burning brighter and brighter in our souls until we cannot help but be warmed by His promises.

As you spin the dreidel with your little ones or learn how to fry latkes this season, remember that the customs of old were designed to bring thanks to a good and great God who provides our every need.

“Look at how a single candle can both defy and define the darkness.” —Anne Frank



Jocelyn is the Magazine's Senior Editor. She is a writer, blogger, and ministry leader. She has spent many years writing, her work spanning from articles and short stories to a fiction novella and several stage plays. Jocelyn grew up as a Ministry kid. She is ministry and church as the director of the drama department, where she writes all original material for their productions. Her passions and hobbies include reading, writing fiction, sewing her own wardrobe, watching documentaries, cooking, and DIY projects around her 1960s ranch home where she lives with her husband, Ryan, and their big family as a homeschool parent! Her favorite time of day is any time stolen away with Jesus and a cup of coffee!



WHILE EVERYBODY IS AT HOME

- by Melody Bentfield

With all of the stay-at-home orders across our nation and our world, I have often wondered how everybody is doing being together. All the time. Without relief.

So how are you? Do you feel smothered? Anxious? Overwhelmed? Loving every minute of it?

Whether you have your children at home for remote learning or homeschooling, or it's just you within your four walls, or you and your partner and/or pets (or a combination of some of these), as much as you have heard it plenty of times – or even none at all – you're not alone.

Here at Redeem Our Children and Grace and Truth Magazine, we offer a digital community where you can connect, be heard, be prayed for, pray with somebody, and more. The Lord has impressed it upon our hearts – and possibly yours – that there is a necessity to the community that all of this pandemic stuff has ripped away.

Maybe you didn't notice before that you needed people.

I think I can safely say that for the majority of persons, we now feel that pull, that longing to be with others. To look into the eyes of our loved ones, laugh and smile in person together, and break bread with one another. Especially during the Holiday season. Especially right now. So, please lean in with me, if you will, as we briefly glean more about this.

When the Lord created men and women in His image in Genesis 1:26, He said "...Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..." [emphasis added]. Did you catch that? God refers to Himself in the plural, referring to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. From the very beginning of time, the Lord shows us that part of His image inherently involves being in a community. There are many passages that point to this very part of His nature, but the biggest part that I see is that throughout the love story that is the Bible, God demonstrates His heart toward His creation, saying

"I made you. I see you. I love you. I need you."

And because our sin nature separated us from Him, He deemed us worthy enough of paying the ultimate price to create the space and opportunity for us to be in a relationship with Him. Catch that – God sent His only son (John 3:16) to die and rise again for you, for me, for my noisy neighbor across the street, and everybody else – so that we can have a relationship together--so that we can be in community with Him.

With Hanukkah just beginning, we righteously celebrate our right to practice our faith, understanding that in this practice of worship and community, the Lord provides even the simplest of things such as unending oil to light our lamps and light our way. With the Judeo-Christian right to worship in the United States under attack, it is more important than ever to resist the powers which would attempt to silence those of us who would otherwise be freely permitted to worship in the manner we choose – together and apart. With the upcoming Christmas holiday and the Advent season in full-swing, we celebrate the fulfilled promise of God sending His Son, Jesus Christ as our Yeshua Messiah. As we solemnly reflect on the realities of God becoming a vulnerable human child, to grow up in this broken world, and to experience community with His own creation, stand united with us, your brothers and sisters as we continue to connect in this digital space with one another.

In Hebrews 10:25 (amp), we read that we are not to give up “...our meeting together [as believers for worship and instruction], as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day [of Christ’s return] approaching.” Whether you feel safe to be with others in person, or you prefer to be a bit more isolated during this time, remember that you are made to be with others.

Reach out and stay connected, in every way possible, and double up during this time where normally we spend it with others in celebration. We at ROC and GRT Magazine cherish each and every one of you and pray for abundant joy and peace over you during this holiday season. Love you bunches!

--Melody



Welcome to our ...
a thrill of *hope*



Home & Hearth



During this season of Hanukkah, we, like all good Jews, love a good feast! Here you will find many of our favorites, both old and new, and each one a tasty edition to your family table.

Heat up your oil and let's cook together!

--The Grace and Truth Team

ROSEMARY FIG MARSALA ROUND CHALLAH



BY: JESSICA STERN FOSTER



Ingredients:

- 3 cups dried Turkish figs, stems removed
- 1 orange, zested and juiced
- 1½ cups Marsala wine
- 6 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved
- ½ recipe Challah Dough
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

Instructions:

- In a medium saucepan, heat figs, orange zest and juice, Marsala, rosemary, and vanilla bean and reserved seeds over medium heat. Bring to a simmer, and reduce heat to low. Cook until figs are softened, about 10 minutes. Discard vanilla bean pod and rosemary; transfer mixture to the work bowl of a food processor. Process until mixture forms a thick paste. Let cool to room temperature before using.
- Divide dough in half. Roll one-half into an 18x12-inch rectangle. Spread half of cooled fig paste onto rectangle, leaving a ½-inch border on all sides. Starting at one long side, roll up dough, jelly-roll style, and press edge to seal. Roll dough into a rope about 16 inches long. Cut rope in half lengthwise. Repeat with remaining dough and fig paste. You should have 4 (16-inch) ropes.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Place the four strands in a hashtag pattern (over, under, over, under) with cut sides facing up. Begin with any “under” strand, and moving clockwise, cross it over the adjacent strand. Repeat with the next strand until you get back to the beginning. Repeat this process moving counterclockwise. Continue repeating, clockwise and counterclockwise, until all dough has been used. Tuck ends under, and place on prepared pan. Brush with egg wash. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let rise for 30 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 350°.
- Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 45 minutes to 1 hour, covering with foil halfway through baking to prevent excess browning, if necessary

The Dreidel Game

What Is a Dreidel?

A dreidel is a four-sided top made of wood, plastic, or the ever-classic clay, which you may recognize. On each side of the dreidel you will find one of four letters from the Hebrew alphabet—nun (נ), gimel/gimmel (ג), hey (ה), and shin (ש). These four letters are an acronym for "nes gadol hayah sham"—"a great miracle happened there."

What do I need?

In addition to a dreidel, which you can even find an app for on your phone, you'll need something to serve as currency! Nuts, chocolate coins, pennies, etc!

All players sit around the playing area and each player receives an equal amount of the chosen currency.

Choose who will play first, many families will let the youngest child spin the first turn and continue in a clockwise direction. Everyone puts one unit of the currency (penny, nut, etc.) into the pot.



If the dreidel lands on a...

Nun: Absolutely nothing happens. Nun stands for the Yiddish word nul, which means zero. It's time for the player to your left to take a spin.

Gimel: You get to take the whole pot! Gimel stands for gantz, which means whole. Everyone, including you, now puts another unit into the pot, and the person to your left tries his luck at spinning.

Hey: You get to take half of the pot. Hey stands for halb, half. If the pot has an odd amount of units, don't try to split that penny, nut, or piece of chocolate in half. Leave the odd item there.

Shin: You put a unit into the pot. Shin is for shenk; yes, that means "give."

You can speed up the game by upping the ante, raising shin and post-gimmel contributions to two, three or even four units.

Any player that cannot contribute after landing on a shin or after a fellow player lands on a gimmel, is out of the game. The game ends when there is one player left.





Peapa's Sweet & Smoky Brisket

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds brisket
- 1 dash kosher salt
- 1 dash freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 large onions, halved through the root and thinly sliced
- 6 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 (15-ounce) can Muir Glen tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons Muir Glen tomato paste
- 1 1/4 cups beef stock
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 3 large carrots, peeled, halved if thick, and cut into 2-inch pieces



Keep reading
for some of our
Grace & Truth
Family Favorites...

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 325° F and generously season both sides of the brisket with salt and pepper.
- Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large Dutch oven or other ovenproof saucepan set over medium-high heat. Add the brisket and sear, turning once, until browned on both sides, about 8 to 10 minutes total. (If the brisket does not fit all at once, cut it in half and sear it in two batches.) Remove seared meat from the pan and set aside.
- Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the pan, followed by the onions, garlic, and bay leaves and cook, stirring often, until onions soften, about 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, whisk together the tomato sauce, tomato paste, beef stock, vinegar, brown sugar, onion powder, smoked paprika, and 1 teaspoon salt in a bowl. Nestle the seared meat on top of the onions and pour the tomato sauce mixture over top. Bring liquid to a boil on the stovetop, then cover the saucepan and transfer to the oven.
- Cook, undisturbed, for 2 hours. Remove from oven, uncover, and carefully flip meat to the other side. Add the carrots, tucking them into the sauce. Cover the Dutch oven and continue cooking until vegetables are soft and meat is fork tender, 1 to 1 1/2 hours more.
- Remove from oven and transfer meat to a cutting board; cover loosely with aluminum foil and let rest 10 to 15 minutes before slicing against the grain. Arrange sliced meat on a serving platter. Remove and discard bay leaves from the sauce. Using a slotted spoon, remove onions and carrots and arrange around the brisket. Spoon desired amount of pan juices over the brisket before serving.

Bubbie's Latkes

By: Jessica Stern Foster

INGREDIENTS:

- 3½ pounds baking potatoes
(peeled & halved)**
- 1 large yellow onion
(cut into 8 wedges)**
- ½ cup Stone Ground Flour**
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley**
- 2 tablespoons Hungarian Paprika**
- 1 ½ teaspoons Himalayan salt**
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder**
- EVOO for frying**
- Applesauce and sour cream, for serving**



DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Set a large strainer over a bowl. In a food processor fitted with the shredding disk, shred the potatoes and onion in batches. Add each batch to the strainer and let stand for 5 minutes, then squeeze dry. Pour off all of the liquid in the bowl and add the shredded potatoes. Stir in the flour, eggs, parsley, Hungarian Paprika, salt and baking powder. Scrape the mixture back into the strainer and set it over a bowl; let stand for 5 minutes.**
- 2. In a very large skillet, heat ¼ inch of canola oil until shimmering. Spoon 2 tablespoons of the potato mixture into the canola oil for each latke, pressing slightly to flatten. Fry over moderate heat, turning once, until the latkes are golden and crisp on both sides, about 7 minutes. Drain the latkes on a paper towel-lined baking sheet. Serve the latkes hot with Applesauce and sour cream.**

Sourdough Donuts with Eggnog Filling

By: Jocelyn LaFavers

INGREDIENTS:

Donuts

3/4 C milk
1/2 C sourdough discard
1/2 C granulated sugar
2 1/2 tsp (1 packet) active dry yeast
2 large eggs
8 Tbsp (1 stick) melted butter
1 tsp salt
3 1/3 C all-purpose flour

Eggnog Filling

8 oz (1 bar) cream cheese, softened
8 oz (1 stick) butter, softened
3 C confectioner's sugar
vanilla, nutmeg, and cinnamon to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Heat the milk until just warm. If the milk has begun to bubble, do not add the yeast until the bubbling has stopped. It will be too hot and kill the yeast. Add the yeast and sugar and let prove for 5-10 minutes. Stir in the remaining ingredients and knead until smooth. The dough should be soft, but not overly sticky. If it is too sticky, you may sprinkle on a small amount of flour while you knead. Place in a bowl and refrigerate overnight.



Roll out on a floured surface until your dough is 1/2" in thickness. Cut into circles with a cookie cutter or a canning jar lid and let rise for 45-60 minutes. Fry in oil at 350-375* F, about one minute per side. When you remove them from the oil, coat immediately in confectioner's or granulated sugar, whichever you prefer, and place on a cooling rack.

While your donuts are cooling, prepare your filling.

Cream together the cream cheese and butter, then slowly add the confectioner's sugar until fully combined. Mix in the vanilla and spices, then pipe into cooled donuts using a frosting bag or a sandwich bag with a corner snipped off.

Instant Pot Applesauce

INGREDIENTS

- 3 lb apples approx. 6 medium apples, peeled, cored, quartered and chopped into
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup coconut sugar (optional)
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/4 tsp pink Himalayan salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Place the peeled, cored, quartered and chopped apples in a large pot. Stir in the 1/2 cup of water, lemon juice, coconut sugar (if using), 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon & cardamom, and salt. Bring to a boil over high heat. Once simmering, reduce heat to low and cover pot with a tight-fitting lid. Maintain a low simmer for 30 minutes or until the apples are completely soft and cooked through.
2. Once fully cooked, remove from heat. For chunky applesauce, mash the apples directly in the pot using a potato masher. For smooth applesauce, add the apples to a food processor or blender and blend until smooth (if using a blender, work in batches and allow time to cool), or use a hand-held immersion blender and blend directly in the pot.
3. This applesauce is delicious served warm or cold.

NOTES

I used Pink Lady apples for this recipe because that is what I had laying around. Other recommended apples are Granny Smith, McIntosh, Fuji, Gravenstein, Jonagold, and Golden Delicious. Or, even better, you can always mix and match!

Easily turn this easy recipe into unsweetened applesauce by adjusting the sugar amount according to personal preference. As I don't usually love lots of added sugar (unless we're talking cookies or cake), I will probably cut the sugar in half next time I make this recipe. Of course, Pink Lady apples are known for being tart and sweet, so perhaps my opinion will change with a different apple.

Feel free to add additional cinnamon or even a pinch of nutmeg, if desired.

Makes approx. 1.5 quarts



Scalloped Carrots

By: Alex Perkins

INGREDIENTS

8 medium carrots or package of baby carrots
Partially boil carrots in salted water or microwave with water until almost tender
Save 2 tablespoons of the water
½ cup Mayonnaise
2 tablespoons grated onion
2 tablespoons horseradish
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper

DIRECTIONS

Stir (Mayo, grated onion, horseradish, saved water, salt and pepper) slightly and pour over cooked carrots. Top with breadcrumbs with paprika and bake in buttered casserole dish for 15 minutes at 350 degrees.



BAKED MACARONI

By: Kendra Nelson

INGREDIENTS

16oz Macaroni Shells, cooked
2 cups Almond Milk
2tbsp Egg Replacer or 2 eggs
Earth Balnce Butter Spread
8oz Sargento Sharp Cheese
8oz Sargento 4 State Cheese
8oz Sargento Mexican Blend Cheese
Ground White Pepper
Salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. . Adding salt
4. Cook rinsed macaroni shells according to pkg directions until tender.
5. Prepare egg replacer according to the directions and place aside.
6. Spray nonstick spray in your 9x12 dish.
7. Drain shells and transfer cooked pasta into a mixing bowl.
8. 2 bags of Sargento cheese, 2 tablespoons of butter and mix into the shells.
9. Add almond milk & Egg Replacer. Mix well. Add salt & pepper to taste.
10. Transfer to your dish. Pour remaining cheese on top of macaroni mixture.
11. Take 3-4 tablespoons of butter and place in different areas on top of cheese.
12. Cook for 45 minutes uncovered.

NOTE: The ingredients above can be substituted. Because of allergies this recipe contains plant-based egg, butter, and milk. The cheese used in this recipe is lactose free.

To make completely vegan choose plant-based cheese & ENJOY!!!



BROCCOLI CHEESE RICE CASSEROLE

By: Tamika Johnson

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 small onion, chopped
- Salt & Pepper (season to taste)
- 16 oz American Shredded Cheese
- 16 oz Cheddar Shredded Cheese
- 1 can condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 2 bags Success White Rice
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 heads fresh broccoli

DIRECTIONS

Preheat Oven to 350 degrees and grease a casserole dish

1. Place water in pot on stove and season water with salt. Place rice in water. Bring to boil.

DO NOT COOK RICE COMPLETELY. REMEMBER YOU WILL PUT RICE IN OVEN AND YOU DO NOT WANT IT MUSHY

2. Wash broccoli and cut in pieces. Place in 9x13 pan

3. Melt butter on top of stove and add onion. Cook for 5 minutes.

4. Mix cream of mushroom and cream of chicken soup in bowl

5. Add American Cheese and Milk and Whisk (season with salt and pepper)

6. Pour rice on broccoli

7. Pour the of cream of mushroom, cream of chicken soup, American Cheese and Milk mix on Rice and broccoli

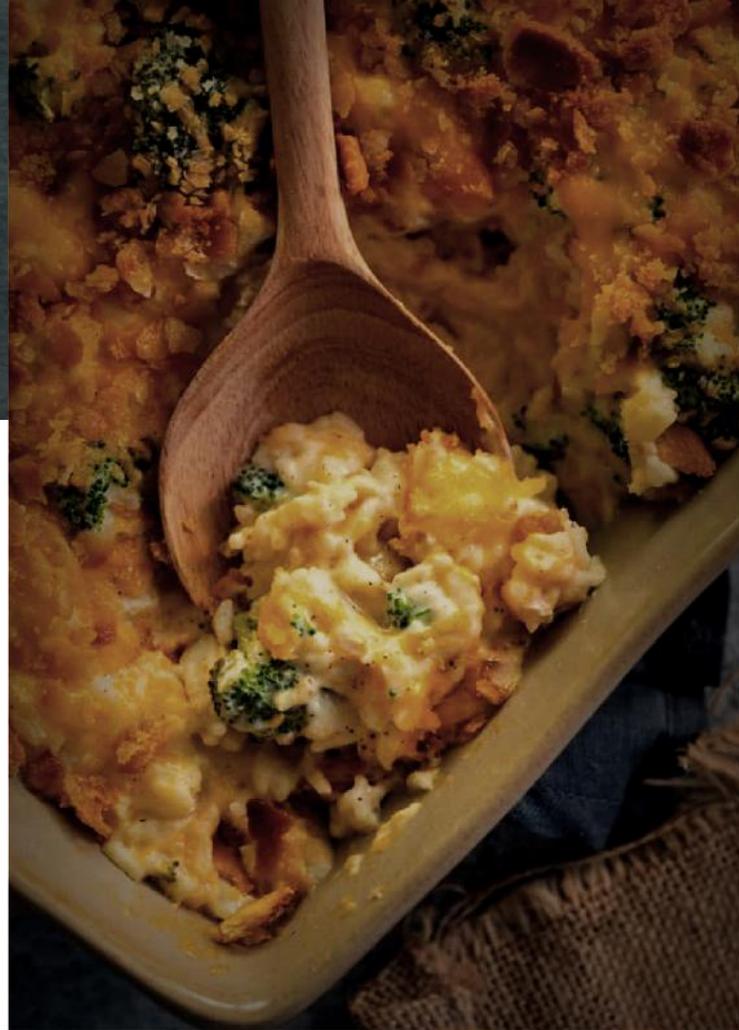
8. Mix Well

9. Cover with aluminum foil

10. Place in oven for 30 minutes

11. Remove foil sprinkle shredded cheese on top and place in oven for 10 minutes

ENJOY THIS DELICIOUS DISH!!!



INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CRUST

- 3/4 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 4 tablespoons melted butter

FOR THE FILLING

- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 8 ounces cream cheese softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla

FOR THE GANACHE TOPPING

- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips



DIRECTIONS

- To prepare the crust, blend graham cracker crumbs, granulated sugar, brown sugar and melted butter in a bowl until fully combined. Press mixture into a 9" pie plate, covering bottom completely and pushing the crumbs about 1-2 inches up the side of the pie plate. Put the pie crust into the freezer while preparing the filling.
- Whip the 1 1/2 cups heavy cream until it holds peaks. Set aside in refrigerator while preparing the rest of the filling.
- In a large bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add sugar and mix until blended. Add peanut butter and vanilla, mixing well. (Scrape the sides of the bowl as needed to ensure that the ingredients are fully blended.)
- Fold whipped cream into the peanut butter mixture, blending well. Pour filling into the prepared pie crust. Place filled pie into the freezer.
- To prepare the ganache, in a small saucepan (use one with a lid), slowly bring the remaining 1/2 cup of heavy cream to a boil (be careful not to scald the cream). Turn off the heat and add chocolate chips, pushing the chips into the cream until almost completely covered. Put the lid on the pan and let sit on the stove.
- After 10 minutes, stir until the chocolate chips are melted and fully blended into the cream. Cool to room temperature, then pour sauce over pie. Place in freezer for 30 minutes before serving.
- Note: If serving pie more than 1/2 an hour after final preparation, store in the freezer. Thaw for 20 minutes before serving for a frozen, ice cream-like consistency. (If you are having difficulty cleanly removing the pie crust from your pie plate, submerge the very bottom of the dish in some hot tap water - about 1/2 inch water in your kitchen sink - to loosen the crust being careful not to get water in the pie itself.) Or thaw for longer in the refrigerator for a gooey, soft pie.

PEANUT BUTTER PIE

By: Melanie Carey





Bread Pudding

By Amanda Bishop via
Brenda Krohe

INGREDIENTS

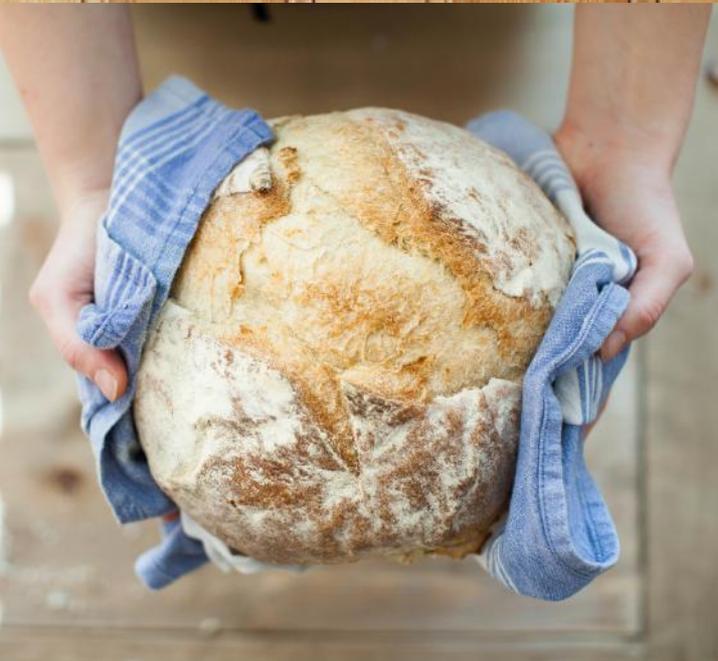
Pudding Sauce

1 pound of loaf of white
bread 1 C packed brown
sugar
1 1/4 C
sugar
2 T corn starch
4 C
milk
1 stick oleo (margarine)
2 tsp
vanilla
2T vanilla
4
eggs

DIRECTIONS 1 C boiling water
cinnamon & sugar
butter

Grease 9x13 pan with butter. 1 pound loaf of white bread cut or torn into small pieces (1 in) lay on bottom of pan. Beat eggs well then add sugar, milk, and vanilla (I add lots of cinnamon). Pour over bread and press down. Cut butter chunks up on top. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Bake @ 350* 45 mins or until brown
Mix in sauce pan sugar and corn starch slowly add boiling water. Remove from heat add oleo and vanilla pour over baked bread.





INSTANT POT PICADILLO

By Melody Bentfield

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb 93% lean ground beef
- 1/2 large chopped onion
- 3 large cloves garlic, minced OR 2-3 tsp granulated garlic
- 1.5 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 red bell pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp cilantro (fresh or dried)
- 1.5 tsp ground cumin
- 1-2 tsp adobo seasoning (Goya brand makes a lovely one)
- .5 tsp smoked paprika
- 2-3 bay leaf
- 2 tbsp green olives (pimento stuffed ok)
- 2 Tbsp brine juice of green olives
- 1 16oz can of fire roasted diced tomatoes, including liquid
- ½ cup water

INSTRUCTIONS

- Set Instant Pot to saute normal and add meat. Brown the meat thoroughly with no more pink, breaking up with a wooden spoon into small crumbles.
- Add everything else except for the canned tomatoes and water. Stir for 1-2 minutes and add canned tomatoes and extra water.
- Cook 15 minutes manual on high pressure. Quick release.

This can be enjoyed within homemade empanadas (drain the extra juices first), on top of rice or another grain, or as a filling to homemade meat pies. Delicious!



BREAKFAST EGG BAKE

By Melody Benthfield

INGREDIENTS

Serves 6 - 8

Ingredients:

1 dozen large eggs

1/3 cup buttermilk

16 oz shredded cheese

4 oz goat cheese OR cream cheese, softened

1 bell pepper, finely diced

1-2 cups baby spinach

12-15 ritz crackers (or savory crackers of your choice, or pretzels)

2-3 Tbsp butter softened

Optional – diced cooked meat of your choosing

Optional – seasoning salt to make crust more savory

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
 - In a plastic bag, crush crackers into a rough crumbly mixture. Add the butter and mash together so that it's fairly uniform in texture and size.
 - Line an 8x8 or 9x9 brownie pan with parchment paper. Press the cracker/butter mixture into the bottom. If you are using seasoning salt, sprinkle a very light layer on top. Bake this for 5-10 minutes, just until you begin to smell it cooking, or until the crust is slightly golden, remove promptly to slightly cool.
 - Whisk eggs and buttermilk in medium mixing bowl until everything is incorporated.
 - Eyeball about 1/3 of each ingredient, and layer 1/3 of the egg mixture, shredded cheese, bell pepper, spinach, and meat. This is not a perfect science, just do your best!
 - Evenly crumble remaining goat cheese or cream cheese on top.
 - Bake for 35-45 minutes, until a knife comes out clean from the center.
 - Let cool for 5-10 minutes, then use the parchment paper to lift out the egg bake. Cut into 6 - 8 generous portions and enjoy!
- If you want to be fancy, add fresh guacamole, avocado or salsa or hot sauce on top of the egg bake. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Enjoy!

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS & INFORMATION

INFORMATION FROM THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT



Everyone has the potential to discover a human trafficking situation. While the victims may sometimes be kept behind locked doors, they are often hidden right in front of us at, for example, construction sites, restaurants, elder care centers, nail salons, agricultural fields, and hotels. Traffickers' use of coercion – such as threats of deportation and harm to the victim or their family members – is so powerful that even if you reach out to victims, they may be too fearful to accept your help. Knowing indicators of human trafficking and some follow up questions will help you act on your gut feeling that something is wrong and report it.

Human Trafficking Indicators

While not an exhaustive list, these are some key red flags that could alert you to a potential trafficking situation that should be reported:

- Living with employer
- Poor living conditions
- Multiple people in cramped space
- Inability to speak to individual alone
- Answers appear to be scripted and rehearsed
- Employer is holding identity documents
- Signs of physical abuse
- Submissive or fearful
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Under 18 and in prostitution



Where to Get Help

If you believe you have identified someone still in the trafficking situation, alert law enforcement immediately at the numbers provided below. It may be unsafe to attempt to rescue a trafficking victim. You have no way of knowing how the trafficker may react and retaliate against the victim and you. If, however, you identify a victim who has escaped the trafficking situation, there are a number of organizations to whom the victim could be referred for help with shelter, medical care, legal assistance, and other critical services. In this case, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline.

911 Emergency

We at ROC do realize that there are good police officers and bad police officers. We know that there are many amazing police officers that go above and beyond. For urgent situations, notify local law enforcement immediately by calling 911. You may also want to alert the National Human Trafficking Hotline described below so that they can ensure response by law enforcement officials knowledgeable about human trafficking.

1-888-373-7888 National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call the National Human Trafficking Hotline, a national 24-hour, toll-free, multilingual anti-trafficking hotline. Call 1-888-373-7888 to report a tip; connect with anti-trafficking services in your area; or request training and technical assistance, general information, or specific anti-trafficking resources. The Hotline is equipped to handle calls from all regions of the United States from a wide range of callers including, but not limited to: potential trafficking victims, community members, law enforcement, medical professionals, legal professionals, service providers, researchers, students, and policymakers.

ROC Assistance

IF you do not feel as if the situation is being addressed, you can email Report@RedeemOurChildren.org and we will further assist in working to help resolve any situations. While we do work with Rescue Teams and have active members of ROC working on the Frontlines to combat Human Trafficking Globally, our primary focus is the aftercare, healing, and restoration of people through Biblical precepts and Redemption so Survivors can live a life worth living!

**Help Trafficking Survivors
Rescue, Redeem and Restore
by giving today... [click here](http://www.RedeemOurChildren.org)
www.RedeemOurChildren.org**



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STAY HEALTHY
STAY INFORMED
STAY PRAYED UP

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