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Bulletin:

Hanukkah's Winning Strategy For End-Time Believers ^[1]

December 18, 2014 | [LEO HOHMANN](#)

The story of Hanukkah is a story of defiance.

Defiance by a people refusing to conform under immense pressure from a popular culture that had become hostile to the God of the Bible.

Antiochus IV issued a decree in 167 B.C. that was pretty cut and dry. If you were an observant Jew, it was game over. You could no longer read the Torah, couldn't observe the Sabbath, couldn't circumcise your male offspring, and couldn't practice your faith.

Antiochus, leader of the Seleucid Greek empire based in Syria, declared Zeus the new god throughout his empire, as Jonathan Cahn explains in his documentary film, "The Hanukkah Endtime Mysteries," produced by WND Films.

The penalty for disobeying this decree was death. Most Jews quickly conformed, trading their biblical culture for that of the pagan Greeks. They bowed to Zeus.

But a small band of Judean "hillbillies" led by Mathathias Maccabee, who had seven sons, took umbrage at the king's edict.

"He refused," Cahn said. "He said, 'I am not going to abandon my God.' He said, 'If anyone wants to follow God, follow us.' He said, 'We have to fight,' so he set up an army of his sons and said, 'Anyone who wants to fight, come with us.'"

They formed a ragtag army and waged a seven-year guerrilla war against Hellenistic oppression (167-160 B.D.), winning battle after battle that they were supposed to lose.

By the end of 167 B.C., Antiochus had a pig slaughtered on the altar in the most sacred space of the Jewish Temple. He erected a statue of Zeus. This was desecration with a capital D, as predicted by Daniel 11:31.

The Maccabees, after their final victory, cleansed and rededicated the temple and restored biblical Judaism. One day's worth of oil burned miraculously for eight days, hence the name "festival of lights," which begins this year at sundown on Dec. 16 with the lighting of the first candle.

But what does this story, recorded in the apocryphal book of I Maccabees, have to do with the end-times prophesies in Daniel and Revelation?

Cahn believes the story of Hanukkah is no less than a foreshadowing of things to come and that it holds the "blueprint" for today's believers who wish to not only survive but thrive in the midst of end-times chaos and increasing persecution.

“Most people think of Hanukkah as this nice little holiday,” Cahn says, referring to the quaint traditions of spinning dreidels, lighting menorahs and eating fried potato pancakes. “It’s really not. It actually holds a big, prophetic end-time revelation. It’s a heavy holiday.”

And it’s time Christians started paying attention to it. Hanukkah was, after all, celebrated by Jesus, as described in John 10:22-23, when He “walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch” during the “Feast of Dedication.”

The word Hanukkah means “dedication.” The Maccabean revolt was predicted by Daniel more than 300 years before it occurred, and the success of that revolt was still being celebrated during the time of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

Daniel 12 speaks of a period when “there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, and at that time your people shall be delivered. ... But you Daniel close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end.”

“How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?” Daniel asks.

The angel tells Daniel that his prophecies would be sealed until the end of the age, but when the time comes, “the wise will understand.”

Cahn believes Hanukkah and the Maccabees are best understood in light of prophecies by Daniel and the apostle John in Revelation.

“You could not know salvation. You could not have Christmas. You would not have the New Testament, without Hanukkah,” Cahn explains, because if Antiochus had gotten his way all practicing, observant Jews would have been wiped out or absorbed into Greek culture. Without Hanukkah, there would have been no Mary and Joseph to hear and obey the voice of God.

Daniel prophesied about Antiochus Epiphanes or “God manifest” arising from the north and invading the Holy Land.

“There’s this one country that is a thorn in the flesh of his plans, so he declares the Bible illegal,” Cahn said.

“Circumcision, death. Observing the Sabbath, death. And he comes into the temple with a mission to defile it, slaughters a pig, sets up an idol in the temple, and launches an all-out war on the Bible.”

“You had a choice now. Either offer sacrifices to the idols or die.”

In today’s Western culture, the god of choice is no longer Zeus. It’s secularism. Every perverse teaching is tolerated, even blessed by the state. All the world’s major religions are taught to children in public schools as being equal. Those who stand firm for biblical values are demonized.

And while the penalty for those who hold onto their Judeo-Christian heritage has stopped well short of death, the pressure is building on them to conform. Many have lost businesses that failed to conform to the new normal of same-sex marriage. Others have been forced out of jobs at corporations or government agencies.

The Hanukkah story mirrors Daniel’s prophecies, Cahn says, and carries a dual meaning for the period of Antiochus in 167 B.C. and the period when the antichrist will arise in the end times.

“It looks like Antiochus is going to wipe out the faith of (the one true) God in the world and it looked like it would be the end of this biblical faith,” Cahn said. “If he had succeeded, you would not have the New Testament. God had other plans, though.”

Maccabee means the “hammer” of God.

“It’s not about how many numbers you have, it’s about God. They prayed. They fasted. They won. They removed the idol from the temple, they smashed it, took out all the pagan objects and purified it and rededicated it to God,” Cahn said. “The idols were driven out, and this is Hanukkah. This is a heavy holiday, a powerful holiday. And in this you find the blueprint for the end times.”

Daniel’s parallel prophecies

Christians in the last days will be overcomers, like the Maccabees, he said.

And in the Maccabees, they find a winning strategy already laid out in the Hanukkah story.

“You have God’s people but then you have apostasy breaking out all around them. You see evil overtaking the land, you see a new morality that seeks to eradicate faith in God. It’s imposed but also many are going along with it freely,” Cahn said. “Antiochus makes this law that everyone is to abandon their faith. He proclaims himself god. Man proclaiming himself God; does that sound familiar? He is a foreshadow of the antichrist.”

Just as Revelation speaks of a temple in Jerusalem being defiled, so there is an idol set up in the temple in the Hanukkah story. In each story a man proclaims himself as god, sitting in the temple.

All the people of the empire were to become one people culturally, replacing the God of the Bible for Zeus. Inspectors were appointed to ensure compliance with the law.

“The gentiles immediately said OK and even some in Israel said yes we must go along with this. Not the Maccabees,” Cahn said.

Likewise, in Revelation, the antichrist begins to oppress the saints of God and tries to change the set times and laws, just like Antiochus, and everyone will forget God.

“We are living in such times,” Cahn said. “Believers, if you are a true believer, you’re going to be a thorn in the side of the world. We are already witnessing it. There is a spirit of antichrist in the world.”

Suddenly Christmas becomes taboo. It gets changed to a winter recess. Manger scenes spark lawsuits by atheists, and courts rule in favor of the atheists.

“Did anyone think years ago a manger scene would be controversial?” Cahn asks. “And things that were considered abominations are no longer controversial.”

The birth of the Messiah becomes “just a celebration of happy holidays,” Cahn says. “Who celebrates winter? It’s all a lie.”

There has also been a global effort to change the tracking of “time,” from B.C. or “Before Christ” to B.C.E. or “Before Common Era,” a designation which Cahn and other religious teachers see as meaningless.

“So there’s a war going on against anything that’s linked to God, particularly Messiah. There’s a spirit of antichrist that wars against anything, any tradition of the natural order,” Cahn said. “Amazing really.”

“What has been recognized for thousands of years, as long as man’s recorded history, all of a sudden in the last few years man is changing it,” he continued. “Like marriage, like male and female, of course. This is the spirit of antichrist.”

Entering post-Christian America

He sees America as morphing into a replica of Europe, which is a post-Christian society.

“What happened in Europe is happening here, that a nation that existed only because of God is now changing and trying to eradicate God,” Cahn said.

The New York Times used to post the summation of all the major Sunday sermons in the city, said Cahn, who leads a Messianic Jewish congregation in New Jersey and grew up reading the Times.

“Now, when it speaks of Christianity, it’s almost as if it’s a foreign thing. Because it’s a pagan culture now,” he said. “Hanukkah occurred during pre-Christian times. Now we’re dealing with post Christian. Of the two, post-Christian culture is far worse. It’s the difference between someone who has never heard the gospel and someone who has turned against the gospel.

“A pre-Christian society will produce someone like an Alexander the Great or a Caesar,” Cahn said. “A post-Christian society will produce a Hitler or a Stalin, and the antichrist.”

The spirit of antichrist seeks to remove God from every corner of the culture. The Bible and prayer were removed from

schools in 1960s. The Ten Commandments were later removed from courthouses, a process that continues. “Hate laws” have been passed in many cities making it a crime to say anything that paints homosexuality in a negative light.

“What that means is that the Bible then becomes a criminal offense,” Cahn said. “They’re not daring to enforce the implications of these laws but it’s there, it’s just the beginning, but they will.”

To demonstrate how far popular culture has deviated from biblical values, Cahn gives as an example “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” which first aired on network television in 1965. The show featured Linus, one of the main characters, walking on stage in a Christmas play and giving a dramatic retelling of the Christmas story straight from the pages of Luke’s gospel.

Fifty years later “A Charlie Brown Christmas” remains so popular among American TV viewers that the networks keep showing it.

“You have Linus at the end reading about the true meaning of Christmas. It’s so popular, they can’t take it off the air, but what are the chances that something like this would be allowed today? It wouldn’t happen,” Cahn said. “If they didn’t have to show it, they wouldn’t. In fact, it’s embarrassing for them.”

More recent Hollywood productions targeting young people are likely to feature blatantly unbiblical themes.

“What is the biggest thing in youth movies? It’s ‘Harry Potter.’ There are many youth who have gone into the occult because of ‘Harry Potter,’” Cahn said. “But the other thing about it, there is no God there. It’s a godless universe filled with witchcraft and man nullifying God.”

This is the kind of cultural rot that the Maccabees resisted.

“You cannot uphold the Word of God if you are not in the Word of God. Entertainment, the web. You have to realize there is a force to take you away,” Cahn says. “Get your life solid into the word and the word solid into your life. The enemy is threatened by it.”

From Europe to America: A spirit of seduction

In Greek mythology, the goddess Europa was seduced by Zeus. And the continent of Europe took its name from Europa.

Just as European Christianity was seduced and fell away from God after World War II, America is following that same path.

“Europe is the same civilization from which much of Christianity went to America. But now it is turned away from that,” Cahn said. “More and more it’s turning away from that. So what happens? Another spirit comes. It’s the same seduction.”

So Hanukkah unlocks a mystery here because it gives the end time picture of a spirit behind the age, links it to Zeus, which is the same god or spirit behind the origin of Europe, the same god that was behind the war against Israel in Hanukkah, the war against the saints in Revelation, the same god that desecrated the temple – Zeus.

“Of course it’s not Zeus, he doesn’t exist,” Cahn said. “It’s a deeper spirit of another god the bible says the god of this world, who appears in many forms, whose name is Satan.”

It’s this same satanic spirit that will war against the saints in the end times.

Perversions of truth creep in

The culture of the Greeks at the time of the Maccabees was a culture filled with sexual perversity, Cahn said.

This crept into Israel. The culture of the end times will be no different, with the same sins creeping into the church.

He said studies of men and the Internet show that pornography has never been more popular in America.

“They say something like 60 percent of men are watching pornography at least once a month,” Cahn said. “They say 40 percent of pastors do. The saints of God, they were called to keep themselves pure. Keep their eyes pure, their minds

pure, and their habits pure. That is your call as well. You have the power of God to live pure. You have the power to live as a pure believer in God by the Holy Spirit of God. Choose it. He'll bless you."

But don't expect to be loved for your efforts.

Matthew 24:9 says you'll be "hated by all nations on account of me," and Revelation 7:13 describes a host of believers martyred for their faith, "who loved their life not unto death and so overcame the world."

The Maccabees fought with that same spirit.

"They said, 'You know what, we don't care about protecting ourselves anymore. We care about God's way, and we're going to live or die nobly. We're going to go for it no matter what happens. We're not going to compromise,'" Cahn said. "If it costs us our life, fine. We're going to be free now. No fear! That's the way you have to live.

"As Esther said, 'If I perish, I perish.' Then she was free, and the whole thing turned around. Only then can you fulfill your calling and overcome the world. We're going to do what's right. If you get to that point, if you live with that spirit of God, the enemy can't really do much with you. You can't be intimidated anymore. You can't bribe me, you can't threaten me, you can't buy me out. I'm already sold out. If I perish, I perish, so I can live. They overcame him by the word of their testimony and by not loving their lives unto death."

This is how the Maccabees fought. They were fearless, knowing they were the winners no matter how the battles turned out.

"What if they kill us? OK, so you're in heaven. Not bad. That's the worst. What happened with the Maccabees? They were the underdogs who looked like they were going to be crushed. The Maccabees reigned with God over God's people in Jerusalem. So remember that. If you're in God's will and you keep going. Remember you're on the winning side. Don't ever give in to the enemy's lies that you're on the losing side because that's what he wants. If you think you're on the losing side you're going to act like it. You're going to mess up."

And what happens at the very end?

"At the end of the age, Revelation speaks of the saints, those who separated themselves for God. Those are the saints," Cahn said.

There will be a war against them, some will be killed, but that's not how it ends.

"Saint means holy. Choose the way of righteousness, and you'll have the power and the victory of God. The way of the righteous is the way of prevailing and victory, always.

"Keep your torch burning, fight the fight. If you fall down, get up, because you've come too far to turn back now and because it's all, all worth it," Cahn says. "At the end of your good course is blessing; at the end of our race is a prize. And when the saints come marching in, you will be there in that number."

[1] Retrieved with permission 12/18/2014, from <http://www.prophecynewswatch.com/2014/December18/183.html> for informational and ministerial use by Dr. Pierre J. Samaan; www.newhorizonscounseling.com