

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG180 – Rededicate to God

Welcome to the podcast, and thank you for joining me. I hope you are enjoying this time of Hanukkah, the celebration, the Feast of Dedication to the Lord. I want this podcast to be directed to us during this time of the Feast of Dedication in this current year we are in, 2023. We are preparing ourselves for a new year to come, and this is a great way to start into that time of preparation. When we talk about Hanukkah, we, of course, can give the history of it; and I would encourage you, if you are not familiar with the history of Hanukkah, or as it is called, the Feast of Dedication, please go to the website that we have, hargraveministries.org, and go to the podcast section. You can look up previous podcasts which deal with Hanukkah, or the Feast of Dedication; they give quite a thorough history of this time, why it is celebrated, and why Christians should celebrate it. I want to direct this podcast today specifically for us now; we are in the midst of these days of Hanukkah, and I feel like they are a very special time for us. I would like to direct some of what I am believing for in my personal celebration, and I am hoping it will be part of what you are reaching for also.

I want to start by reminding us all, by reading John the tenth chapter, that this is something that Yeshua participated in at the Temple. We will read John 10, verses 22-24. It says, "At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem." The Feast of Dedication is the name for Hanukkah. "It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, 'How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.'" So we see that this was the time of the celebration. In Hebrew, Hanukkah means dedication; it is celebrating the re-dedication of the Temple after it was taken by the Maccabees. We recognize that Yeshua was here as part of that celebration, and it gives us the impetus to also be a part of the celebration. What I want to focus upon in this podcast specifically is the fact that when we talk of the history of Hanukkah, or the rededication of the Temple, we are talking about those things that are outside of ourselves. But I feel the Lord tugging on my heart and speaking to my heart that we should also have a very aggressive focus about the rededication of ourselves as the temple of God, as the instruments that serve Him; and this is where I want to go.

I am going to read Scriptures to us, starting with Romans the twelfth chapter, verse 1. It says, "Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship." We understand that what the Feast of Dedication was all about was the fact that all the implements of dedication of worship in the Temple had been abused, used in unholy sacrifices; and therefore, everything was unclean. This time that is being celebrated looks back upon going into the Temple, rebuilding the altar, rebuilding the menorah and the other implements of worship that were used for the sacrificial offerings within the Temple; remaking them from scratch, and re-purifying them, and dedicating them to the Lord for their service of worship.

Here in Romans, Paul is talking to us about the fact that he urges us, personally, by the mercies of God, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service of worship. This time is all about getting the Temple ready and prepared and sanctified so that it can perform worship unto God; so that it can be used in worship unto God, it can be used in service unto God. And so, we are

taking this very personally, then, in our Hanukkah celebration – let’s rededicate ourselves. Let’s purify ourselves, rededicate our lives, sanctify our lives, back into the service of God. This is what we should be doing.

He goes on in verse 2 to say, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” See, we are perfecting that which concerns us in our lives, in our walk with God, our service to God; how we serve Him, walk with Him. They had to sanctify the implements. Well, we have to sanctify our hands, our mouths, our feet, our bodies physically, our bodies spiritually before the Lord, so that we are purified, fit for the Master’s use; ready for Him to come and dwell within us as He dwelt within the Temple; and ready for Him not just to indwell us, but also to use us then in serving and ministering to the world.

One of the things that was done always at the Temple was the washing of the hands. That was to purify, recognizing that the hands are used in blessing, the hands are used in performing. We are those who perform the service of worship unto God. And so, during this time in Hanukkah, I want to come back before the Lord; I want to follow what they did in the days following the Maccabean revolt. I want to rebuild my life before God. I want to re-sanctify myself in every way, spirit, soul, and body, for His use in ministry and service to Himself during these days that we are living in. We are now the temple of God for His use.

First Corinthians 6, verses 19-20, says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.” So, we come during this time, not just to bring spiritual worship to the Lord; we literally bring our bodies and present ourselves, spirit, soul, body, before Him. We believe to be purified, rededicated for His service and for His purposes, unto His glory. We want to see Him glorified in our physical body, as well as in our spirit, so that everything we say, everything we do, is worship and service to God.

In First Corinthians 3, verses 16-17, it says, “Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.” Wow, that is powerful! Can we really take these words at face value? that we are the temple of God, that the Spirit of God dwells in us, and we are not our own? We are not free to act in our own ways. We are not free to just speak our own thoughts and ideas. We are to perfect ourselves until we have the full will of God, that which is perfect before Him. And we cannot be involved in any way through allowing sin, through serving the world, or giving ourselves to other things rather than to our life in God. You cannot serve two masters. We cannot be obedient to sin. We cannot be obedient to the world. We cannot be obedient to that which is around us, and not recognize that we are destroying what is His temple. And what is His temple, it said, is holy to Him.

Wow, these things really become confronting, and I am thankful for that. I want to be confronted by the Holy Spirit, in a way that brings me to a thorough repentance which brings about a rededication of my life in every way unto Him. That is what I want this time of Hanukkah to be and to represent to us.

I am going to read out of Second Corinthians 6, verses 14-18.

Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of

God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me," says the Lord Almighty.

This is so reflective of what the days of the Feast of Rededication of the Temple were all about. "Come out of their midst. Be separate." They had to separate themselves from the Gentile worship which had polluted the Temple. It had polluted the city of Jerusalem, and it had polluted many people, who found themselves living according to a culture that God was not in favor of, because it was not sanctified unto Him.

"Do not touch what is unclean." We need to realize that everything surrounding us that is unclean, we put it away. We do not give ourselves to it. We do not welcome it in our hearts and in our lives. We want to be welcomed by the Father. We want Him to call us sons and daughters. We want to live our lives unto Him, recognizing that we are, in fact, His temple; and there is no agreement between the temple of God and idols. Get rid of your idols; get rid of them. There are so many idols in this age that people are serving. There are so many idols that are wooing the youth of this time to serve what is not God, and what is not from God. There is no agreement. Get rid of every agreement in your heart with the idolatry of the age that we live in, and sanctify yourself once again unto God. It is the Feast of Dedication.

I am going to Ephesians the second chapter, verses 18-22.

For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

When we talk about this age of the Church, I always defer to the fact that it really is the age of the Spirit. That is how this age began. At the Feast of Pentecost, God poured out His Spirit, and brought together this miracle of the fellow citizens, the saints, all becoming part of God's household.

As we come down through the days of what grew into and through the Church of the apostles and prophets, Yeshua Himself being the cornerstone, what was the purpose of all of this? The purpose of the Church was not the purpose of this age. The issue was not the Church; the focus was not the Church; the focus was that God was building for Himself a dwelling. Verse 21 says, "In whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord." We are not about Church. We are about individuals who are the temple of God, cleansed and dedicated, so that He may dwell in us; and when He dwells in all of us individually, then we will be the body of Christ. As the prophecy says, "They will no longer teach each man his neighbor, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for you shall all know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest." We are all to know the Lord. We are all to be filled with His Spirit. We are all individually to be the housing of God in this age that makes us together a holy temple unto the Lord, which is being built together, the oneness of His body being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. This, to me, is what Hanukkah is all about for us, as we are believers in Christ. It is a Feast of Dedication. It is a time of rededication – not a rededication of something outward; but instead, a rededication of our own hearts and lives, spirit, soul, and body, before the Lord, making a place on earth for Him to dwell; becoming sanctified, so that He might dwell in us, and sanctified so that He might use us according to His will.

I believe there is a great job and expression that the body of Christ is to have in this age and this generation. God has always worked through His people; and I believe that in this age, He wants to work through us to accomplish His will and His purpose. Therefore, we come to this time of Hanukkah, this time of dedication, and we dedicate our lives back to Him. Wherever we have gotten away from the sanctification that we need in our hearts, in our lives, spirit, soul, or body, get back to it. Seek Him. Rebuild it. That is what they had to do. They had to rebuild the altar; they had to throw away the old stones that had been polluted, and they had to bring in new stones. Come on, bring the new stones into your life. Bring in the new elements, the parts, the pieces of the Word of God, and rebuild this sanctuary for Him to dwell in. They had to rebuild the menorah, and we should rebuild that which makes us the light of this age in this world; so that we, once again, can shine brightly. We should be the city on the hill that is able to shine before the nations.

Let it be a very important time for us, in which we give ourselves to this rededication. We have these eight days of Hanukkah in which to celebrate, but also to sanctify ourselves before Him. I believe that we will do this. We call upon You, Lord, by the Holy Spirit, to sanctify Your people during these days of dedication.

Amen.