



JONATHAN'S STORY

The amazing true story of the Maccabees
By Heidi Cooper

(To be read one part each day for each day of Chanukah.)

PART 1

My name is Jonathan. I have four brothers, Simeon, Eleazar, Joannan, and Judas. When I was young, terrible times came to our people. We were told we could no longer obey the precious Torah of our fathers. A strong and mighty, but desperately wicked king named Antiochus Epiphanies rose to power. I remember it like it was yesterday...

My brother Judas burst through the door.

“Father, have you heard the news? The beautiful lamp stand and all the wonderful things in the temple are gone!”

“Yes, Judas. I heard.” Mattithias, my father, looked up and I could see that he was weeping.

“I fear terrible times are about to visit our people. Many have not been faithful. YHVH promised to curse us if we do not obey. If only they could see that the precious commandments bring life and happiness. They teach us how to love each other and worship our Creator.”

I began to cry too, to see my father so upset.

As the days passed, news came that Antiochus had reversed all the laws of Torah and set up false gods, idols, and pagan practices throughout the land of Israel. The family down the street had a little baby boy named Caleb. They circumcised him on the eighth day, just as Torah commands. But soldiers came for them. My father did not hear in time to help them.

He gathered my brothers and I together and we did not eat. I was hungry, but I knew there were more important things than food. We prayed, and confessed, and pleaded with YHVH to save our people. When we finally got up from our fast and began to eat bread, I saw a look on my father's face. I shall never forget it. He was determined, his face in stone, and he simply said, “Boys, we will obey YHVH no matter what.”

The next day, I helped load food on the donkeys. Dried fruit and cakes and wine in a goatskin were loaded, along with blankets. We began our trip to Jerusalem. I was worried. Wouldn't there be trouble there? Hadn't they already sacrificed a pig on the altar? I shuddered at the thought. What was my father thinking?

As we saw Jerusalem rise up ahead of us on the horizon, my father began proudly singing the songs of ascent.

“Praise ye YHVH! Praise, oh ye servants of YHVH! Praise the name of YHVH! Blessed is the



name of YHVH from this time forth and forevermore.”

My brothers and I all lifted our voices together. It seemed as though the rocks sang out with us, relieved to hear a familiar song.

And then the gate loomed up ahead of us, and I wondered what lied ahead.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Read the Psalms of Ascent - Psalm 113-118. Use tambourines, drums, whistles etc. and pretend to march up to Jerusalem while reading the psalms. Even in troubled times, the Maccabees held their heads high, determined to obey YHVH.

The scriptures tell us that even the stones want to cry out and praise YHVH. Paint some rocks with pictures of YHVH's beautiful creation.



PART 2

The towers were strange and the large stone walls were defended by Greek soldiers. The beautiful city of David had been destroyed and rebuilt. It looked like a scary fortress, rather than the city of Elohim. A pagan altar at the end of the street and strange smells made me feel sick. I turned and ran back to the rocks outside the city. They were my welcome friends. They hadn't changed.

Jerusalem had been my friend. Many times I had come up with my father and my brothers to celebrate the feasts. I loved building a booth. Father always thought I was good at building things. Rather fitting, I guess, since Maccabee means "hammer." But now, I just wanted fresh air. I wanted everything to be the way it was. I knew I shouldn't feel this way. I was, after all, a man of fifteen, not a little girl. But my heart cried within me. Why did YHVH let this happen?

But my thoughts were interrupted when Eleazar put his hand on my arm.

"Jonathan, it's time to go. Father says there is nothing here for us. We will have to do what we can at home, where the soldiers haven't taken over."

So that was it! We just walk away with our heads down, while a strange king takes away everything holy, destroys our city, our temple, kills our people, and brings pagan services into every city! Something inside me changed at that moment. I didn't understand it then, but I didn't want the Greeks to get away with it all.

Many months passed, and the soldiers took over even our town of Modin. It was a day like every other. We tried to keep to ourselves and out of the soldiers' way. I was making some repairs on a little hut we used for storage, when I saw the soldiers. They came right up to our door and banged so loud. They wouldn't stop until my Father appeared at the door.

"You will be first to use our altar. Your sons will be rich. You will have all the power in the city. You will do it now."

That same determined look returned to Father's face.

"I will NOT defile myself with your abominations. My sons and I will follow the living Elohim, YHVH, Creator of the Universe! Bring what you will. We will not yield!"

Suddenly, I saw a man run down the street. I knew him! He was the baker! He ran up to the altar and made a sacrifice. The smoke filled the air. The smell of burnt animal flesh hit my nose. But then my father ran down the street after him. The light caught something shiny peeking out under his tunic. It was his sword! I think I must have fainted then.

The next thing I remember was Simeon calling my name. I was cold and it was very dark around me. In a moment, I realized I was in a cave. Water was dripping in some distant corner. Simeon told me that we were hiding with many people that also wanted to serve YHVH. My Father had risen up as their leader.

"Jonathan, will you serve YHVH, no matter what? They may kill you. You may have to fight. Will you be faithful?"

I knew my answer right away. Somehow I had always known it. His precious Torah was too valuable to throw away. His kindness was too precious to forsake Him.

"Yes. I will be faithful."



“Then we need to teach you how to fight. But right now I think you need some bread and water.” A smile appeared on the corner of his mouth. I almost missed it. But there it was. I thought of the days when we would tackle each other out in the field, and Father would tell us to get back to work. I flashed a little smile back and suddenly realized how hungry I was. I made short work of the bread he gave me and tried to remember the good old days.

We had no woman in our household to help us prepare for Shabbat, so Eleazar made the extra bread and set aside some special dried fruit he had grabbed when we fled Modin. We were anxious to rest since it had been a very long week. We had no Torah to read or synagogue to meet in, but we each had memorized many sections of Torah, and Simeon would recite the portion for us. As the sun went down, we did our best to lay our cares aside and rest in YHVH’s wonderful love. The cave was damp and smelled funny, but I preferred it to Modin, where the soldiers had taken over every house.

As the sun appeared on the eastern horizon, Simeon awoke us all with beautiful Hebrew phrases. The story of Phineas rolled off his tongue as we rose from our slumber. Phineas was so brave and did what was right. I hoped I could be that brave.

As the sun rose the next day, a man came running toward the opening of our cave. He was a friend, a man that had been hiding several miles from our cave. He nearly tripped in his hurry to reach us. My Father met him outside and spoke quietly with him. He brought the man inside and gave him some bread and water. Then he looked up at us and said, “We will choose life. Our brothers have just been killed, one thousand of them, because they would not fight on the Sabbath. But YHVH wants us to live! We will fight and we will live and we will give Torah to our children’s children. Those wicked men will not wipe us off the face of the earth!”

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Build a cave in your living room out of blankets and sheets. Climb in and share a snack of dried fruit and bread. Are there bats in your cave?

Memorize Psalm 100 to recite as a family. For a bit of a challenge, try memorizing the crossing of the Red Sea. Start at Exodus 14:13 and see how far you can go.



PART 3

I began loading the donkeys again. I was getting good at that. But unlike our trip to Jerusalem, I was very excited about this trip. We were going to nearby Gophna. There was a smaller number of soldiers there. We had one goal. Remove the enemy, and help the people begin following torah again. Many people had joined with us. My Father, Mattithias, was so happy to see YHVH's people still wanting to please Him. I remember a few years ago when all this had begun. He thought the wickedness of the people would ruin us entirely.

But NO! We are Israel! And Israel overcomes!

Suddenly, Judas snuck up and whispered in my ear, "Don't be afraid, little brother. I'll protect you." I jabbed my elbow into his stomach, and with a sweep of my foot, he landed on the ground.

"Okay, okay! I guess you can defend yourself. Maybe I was a little too diligent in your training." I grinned as I offered him a hand. I was not afraid. Yes, I could defend myself, but Father's words rang louder in my head. He had said them every day for the past several weeks.

"We fight for YHVH, and YHVH fights for us. He will defend us and restore Israel to what it once was. We must stay faithful to Him."

Everyone in camp was beginning to move out. I offered my donkey to an elderly woman on foot. We would keep the women and children in a protected area outside Gophna while we took the city. In less than an hour, we were in position.

Several short loud blasts from the shofar rang through the crowd. Then our voices all rose together and the words of David from long ago could be heard for miles, "You come to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the Name of YHVH of Hosts, the Elohim of the armies of Yisra'el, whom you have reproached."

Then, in a few moments, it was all over, and families came out of their homes, cheering! Joannan and I ran to the center of the town and heaved with all our might. The pagan altar tipped and then crumbled to the ground. The strange smelling incense was gathered and thrown in a huge fire, along with anything else pagan we could get our hands on.

Simeon met a young man in the street, and I went over to see what was going on.

"My wife just had her first baby a few days ago. It's a little boy and we feared the worst until you came. We want him circumcised, but we need help. Can you help us?" the man asked.

Simeon gave him some instructions, and promised to be back on the following day, the little boy's eighth day.

A small crowd gathered in their home the next day. Momma handed her little baby to her husband and then he handed the baby to Simeon. He stripped the baby down on a pillow.

"A little wine, please." Simeon took a little wine on his finger and put it in the baby's mouth.



“Okay, aaannnd. There! All done.” Simeon put a loose bandage and wrapped the baby up in a blankie. “Here you go, mommy. Nurse him and cuddle him and keep it clean and dry. So, daddy, what is the boy’s name?”

“Ephraim.”

“What a fitting name! Yes, Israel will be fruitful again. Teach him to love the Torah.”

I smiled to see this family with the freedom to obey YHVH. They didn’t have to hide or fear the soldiers. We helped several other families in the city, and spent a real Shabbat with them before we moved on to another town. How exciting to gather with other Hebrews openly in town and listen to the torah portion! But soon I was loading those donkeys again as we headed out to Ber-zetha.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Go on a search through your house looking for anything pagan, just as Jonathan and his brothers did. We want to have a clean home before YHVH.

Design and make a positive and cheerful poster that would encourage people to obey Torah. Perhaps you will want to include the blessings of obedience.



PART 4

We took several more cities, and knocked down the pagan altars. Israel was beginning to follow the Torah again. My Father walked with his head high, proud to lead the people back to righteousness. I remember one day he was planning an advance on a city with Judas, and a sudden coughing fit caught hold of him. I fetched some water for him, and it helped a little. But the next day, it happened again. He had to sit down.

We each asked, “Father, are you all right? Can we do anything to help?” His answer was always that he was fine. But something in his eyes told me he was not. He was tired, and the spring in his steps had been missing for a few weeks.

We were staying with a family not far from our hometown of Modin. Father finally had to take to bed.

“It’s only for a few days. I’ll be fine.” We gave him broth, and bread. The few days became several days, and one day he called us all in.

“Boys, I’m old. I’m tired. This fight has finally caught up with me. You are all young and strong. You will continue the fight until it’s done.”

“But, Father...” Eleazar tried to argue with him, but it was no use. We all knew the truth. Our duty now was to listen.

“You are not called to an easy task. There is still great wickedness that you must fight against. You must love the Torah with all your hearts.” A cough interrupted his words, and Simeon gave him a glass of water.

“You must be like those that came before you. Abraham, who was faithful even to the brink of sacrificing his own son.” We all nodded as we knew the story well.

“Joseph, who did right and got promoted in Egypt.”

“Phineas, who destroyed the evil in the camp and was given the Priesthood.” He looked at me and smiled. Many years later I would understand why, but at that moment I just wanted to sob.

“Joshua, who led the people in victory and took Jericho first and then the Land.” His glance swayed over to Judas then. It was as though he was seeing things we could not see. He understood what lay ahead but couldn’t explain it to us.

“Caleb...” Another cough prevented him from speaking, and another sip of water was offered.

“Caleb, who even in his old age, wanted that mountain, and fought to the end like a young man.”

“David, who with great discernment and wisdom, showed mercy and great love. He was a man after Elohim’s heart. Be like him, my sons.”



“Elijah, wow, my precious boys, Elijah! He took on the wicked prophets of Baal. YHVH sent down fire from heaven, and He will do the same for you. Never forget that. He will fight for you.”

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego went through the fire and came out whole. You have fires ahead of you, but you must walk. Walk knowing you have done everything to obey Torah, and trust in YHVH with all your heart.”

“Don’t fear the lions. Daniel didn’t.” His voice got very weak then, and he called Simeon to him.

In a whisper he said, “Simeon will be your father now. Listen to him. He will give you wisdom.” He kissed Simeon and called Judas.

“Judas will be your captain. He can beat you all up, so you better follow him.” We all snickered at Father’s attempt to lighten the mood. Yes, it was true. Judas could take us all at once. Father’s eyes twinkled to see us laugh just a little.

Then Father began to sing, barely above a whisper, “Yevarekhekha YHVH veyishmerkha. Yaer YHVH panav eleykha vichunekha. Yisa YHVH panav eleykha veyasem lekha shalom.” (May YHVH bless you and keep you. May YHVH shine his face on you and be gracious to you. May YHVH turn his face to you and give you peace.)

He kissed our foreheads, and then he closed his eyes. We could be brave no longer. We each began to sob and then we made excuses to leave and get some air. I headed for the donkeys. They would need loaded anyway. Why not start now? I wrapped my arms around the donkey’s neck. I called him gammal, because he was my poor man’s camel. He muffled my tears and patiently waited as I wept.

Soon I heard bustling around me, and realized that the donkeys did need to be loaded because everyone was preparing for a journey. Eleazar told me that we would take Father to Modin.

Many people followed the procession as we headed into town. Their wailing could be heard for miles. We made our way to the place where Mother was buried. This would be where Father would wait until the final resurrection. Here each of us openly cried with everyone around us. We did not want to go on without Father, but we knew we must.

As we walked away, each in their own thoughts, I wondered why Father had looked at me when he talked of Phineas. His eyes told me that he knew something I was yet to find out. But Judas called out, and I let the thought sit idle where it would stay for a long time.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Fathers, bless each of your children, drawing attention to their talents and how they might possibly serve YHVH in the future.

Pick one of the famous heroes in the story today, and make puppets or use stuffed animals, etc. to act out their story. You could also draw illustrations and hold them up as someone narrates the story.



PART 5

Judas took over as our captain, just as Father told him to. We fought many battles, so valiantly and fiercely that the enemy began to fear us. So Judas played the part. He put on armor and flashed a huge sword, so that he looked like a giant! And the enemy believed it. We began calling him “The Lion.”

We always knelt in prayer before heading to battle, and we always cheered and smiled on our way back. YHVH was with us and no one could stop us.

Apollonius, a great wicked leader, thought he could take us, so he brought a huge army to meet us. Judas led us in prayer on our knees as usual.

“Behold our affliction, take up our grievance and redeem us speedily for Your name’s sake with love. For You are a powerful Redeemer. Blessed are You, YHVH, the Redeemer of Israel.”

The shofar sounded and we began to run right at the enemy army. We managed to kill some of them, but most of them ran away like little chickens! We chased them till we got tired of it, and then came back to help Judas collect items left by the enemy.

“Look! Apollonius’s sword! YHVH gives the victory!” Judas shouted as he raised the sword above his head. He felt like David when Goliath fell. It was a handsome sword with beautiful detailing in gold on the scabbard, and the leaf shaped blade was made from carefully forged steel. Needless to say, he fought with that sword for the rest of his days.

I was helping Simeon collect armor from a fallen enemy soldier, when someone called out, “One of the men is injured! Could we get some help here?” One of our men, injured? Simeon and I went over to help.

Sure enough, one of our men was sitting against a rock, with a fair amount of blood coming out of his leg.

“What’s your name, young man?”

“Samuel.”

“What happened, Samuel?”

“It’s embarrassing, really. I tripped on some sticks while we were chasing the enemy, and I gashed my leg on a branch.” The last part was barely above a whisper.

Simeon let out a long hearty laugh, and I couldn’t help but join him.

Simeon put his hand gently on Samuel’s leg, looked up to heaven, and began to pray.

“Heal us, YHVH, and we will be healed. Save us, and we will be saved, for you are our praise. Restore Samuel’s leg to wholeness, and remove his clumsiness with the pain. Blessed are you, YHVH, who heals Israel.”

I instructed him to keep it clean, and Simeon and I chuckled again as we walked away. Poor guy, getting injured out of pure excitement!



We then traveled near Bethhoron, where another leader, Seron, thought it in his best interest to fight us. He got together a huge army. We got a bit nervous, because many of our men had stayed behind to stock supplies and rest for a short time. We only had a very small group ready to fight. The men went to Judas, fearful and worried.

“How can we take on such a huge army? We are so few!”

Judas raised his voice so everyone could hear.

“With YHVH, it doesn’t matter if we are a lot or a few. He still gives us the strength and victory. The enemy is proud and wicked and ready to destroy us and our families. But we fight for the Torah! We fight for our lives! YHVH will destroy them. Do not be afraid!”

Suddenly he sprung up like a cat ready to pounce, and ran at the enemy. We all followed and, within ten minutes, the victory was ours! Shouts of praise rose up to heaven.

But before long, news that another army, greater than the last, was headed our way. This time, Antiochus Epiphanies himself was sending half his army, with horses and elephants and a huge number of soldiers.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Play hide and seek, or tag, as a family. Mom, Dad, that means you, too.

Design a crest for your family that represents what you believe. Make a cardboard, or other material, shield and put your crest on it.



PART 6

We all gathered at Maspha, along with any like minded believers we could find. We had often gathered there to pray in the past, and we knew we'd be doing plenty of it now. Odds had been against us in the past, but this time I thought it seemed much worse. Half the Greek army had been sent with strict orders to utterly destroy us, and Syria and the Philistines had joined them. In my heart, I did not understand why it was so hard. Hadn't we done everything we knew to obey? We had destroyed the pagan altars, circumcised every believer we found, and given the people the courage to obey Torah once again. Why did YHVH send us even harder fights than before?

Judas called the people together, and declared a fast. Emotions were high as we dressed in sackcloth and ashes. We all felt as though our hearts were breaking. We wanted to cry out and sob and yell, all at the same time. Many did just that.

I could not believe my eyes when Simeon brought out one of the few scrolls of the Law. As he unrolled it, everyone could see a painted image of Alexander the Great! A fresh wave of heart cry rose from each of us. They had taken everything, stomped all over the temple, and now, they filled the holy Torah with images of Greek leaders. Had justice left our land?

"YHVH, we kneel humbly before you." Simeon prayed for all the people to hear. "The heathen are gathered to wipe us off the face of the earth. The intentions of their hearts are only evil. How can we stand against them? You must fight for us if we are to win and restore your ways to the land."

Blasts from many shofars at once filled the air. We lifted our hands in praise and thanksgiving, knowing YHVH would fight for us.

"Praise be YHVH, who gives the victory!"

Judas assembled the people and then called for anyone betrothed, or building a house. He sent them home, just like Torah commands. Then we set up camp just south of Emmaus. We were only 15 miles from Jerusalem. That is where I really wanted to go. I wanted to see Jerusalem in all its glory again, not like the last time I had been there.

A shout was heard from the back, "They are ready to attack! They are coming here!"

"Not if I can help it." Judas led everyone out of camp so we could attack the troops at Emmaus. We all hid along the plain, among the trees and shrubs, and waited. The branches were poking into my back, but I tried very hard to be still and wait. The Greek army could be seeing entering our camp and then turning around, because there was nothing but an empty camp!

"Look! They think we fled to the mountains!"

Judas rose and yelled, "Remember how Pharaoh was thrown into the sea! There is one Elohim who delivers Israel!"



With that we ran, and the enemy ran, too. We got some of them, though, before they ran away like little dogs. YHVH had put a great fear of us in the enemy camp. The hoplite Greek foot soldiers were well armed, with spears and swords, but we fought with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

I had seen this many times before, but I still fell on my knees and thanked YHVH with all my heart.

“YHVH, forgive me for doubting you. I questioned you and wondered if you could take on the Greeks. You are more powerful than all and I will trust only you.”

The fifteen miles to Jerusalem suddenly seemed such a great distance. I felt an irresistible draw to the Temple. My father had served as a priest, and my heart desired to do the same. We must get to Jerusalem somehow.

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Get out your tambourines and sing the song of Moses found in Exodus 15:1-21.

Rather than paintings of Greek leaders, make some paintings or drawings of YHVH's victories in the past, like in Exodus 15. Perhaps there is an area in your life where you need victory from YHVH. Make a painting of that victory with you in it!



PART 7

Judas shouted among the people, “Don’t collect the spoils yet! We still have some fighting to do!” And sure enough, as we looked up, some of the soldiers that had fled into the mountains were reappearing. But before they could do anything, we had burned all the tents in their camp, and the smoke rose like a huge pillar into the sky. If that didn’t scare them, seeing us wave our weapons and shouting probably did. They ran so far that they left the country.

So we returned and began collecting all the things they had left behind. We found gold and silver, and luscious blue silk. We even found purple dye from murex shells, and other incredible things. We felt like the Israelites when they plundered Egypt on their way out. We had just plundered the Greeks.

After this great victory, we all went home for a much needed rest. I was so happy to see my beloved Modin again. I knew in my heart that we would see Jerusalem very soon, so I rested. We sang songs of victory and thanked YHVH for His incredible goodness.

O sing unto YHVH a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

YHVH hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Make a joyful noise unto YHVH, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

Sing unto YHVH with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before YHVH, the King.

Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together

Before YHVH; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

(Psa 98:1-9)

Many of the women greeted us as we returned with dancing and singing. They lifted their tambourines above their heads and twirled around all in unison. What a beautiful thing to see YHVH’s people praising together as one! I lifted my voice with them and knew I would miss this if it was ever taken away.

But, of course, our rest could not last forever. Our job was not done, because some rather disgruntled Greek officers feared for their lives for not carrying out Epiphanies’ commands. They were determined to stop us, once and for all. After several weeks of rest, we heard that an army of sixty thousand men and horsemen was heading our way.

By now, I think I finally knew the Elohim I served. He had been faithful against all odds. I knew that no matter what happened, He was worth living for and worth dying for. When Judas



called us to battle once again, I was ready, with no fear in my heart. What were sixty thousand men in the face of YHVH? My heart joined with Judas as he once again came before the great throne and asked YHVH to please fight for us. He asked that we be strong in heart and courageous. I prayed for the other men as well.

When the battle started, we killed five thousand men just like that! The rest of the army started to run! When we finally lost sight of them, Judas raised his voice, “Okay, boys! We got them on the run! It’s time to reclaim the Holy Temple. To Jerusalem!”

TO BE CONTINUED...

Activities:

Play dress up. This can be for boys, too. Pretend you are finding all the riches of the Greeks and then show it off in a parade. Find some fancy blankets, dresses, etc. and have fun!

If you haven’t done this already, decorate a cardboard box into a treasure box and fill it with special toys, coloring books, dvds, music, musical instruments, etc. that only come out on Shabbat.



PART 8

As we approached Jerusalem, I got that same sick feeling I had gotten when we came up with my Father, many moons ago. Jerusalem was still completely desecrated. No children played in the streets. The shrubs were overgrown like a jungle and the gates were torn down. We cried out and tore our clothes. There was much work to be done.

Judas sent men to remove any remaining Greek soldiers, and he headed directly to the temple. Our family was in the priestly line, so we found many believing priests that were able to put their hands to the work with us. Our first job was to remove that disgusting altar. There was no way to use it. It must be rebuilt from scratch with natural stones that had not been cut. We were not sure how to do everything the right way, so sometimes we set the work aside until we could ask a prophet.

The work was very tiring. We had to move heavy stones, and rebuild walls. Much repair had to be done, and everything needed a good thorough cleaning. Even the shrubs outside needed to be tended to. After all, YHVH's people were now occupying Jerusalem again! And it did not go unnoticed! Believers who had fled the city now began to return. They helped put gates back into place. Artisans began recreating the articles in the temple. Children now peeked around corners to see what we were doing, and then ran off giggling with each other.

What a happy day when we brought the new lamp stand into the Temple and filled it with oil, and its light once again filled the Holy Place. We put the showbread on the table and hung the curtains. The beautiful smell of holy incense once again reached my nose. The fragrant spices were such a contrast to the wicked incense that had burned here before. It had only made me sick.

On the twenty fifth day of the ninth month, the very day that Antiochus Epiphanies had sacrificed a pig, we sacrificed a proper sacrifice unto YHVH, and He accepted our offering once again. For eight days, we consecrated the temple and rejoiced before YHVH! Harps and cymbals and singing could be heard all over the city. We even hung up decorations of gold to celebrate the dedication of the temple.

It was quickly decided that every year, starting on this day and for a full eight day feast, we would remember this victory. We would remember how YHVH had given us the victory and enabled us to rededicate His temple, and worship Him in the proper way once again.

THE END

Epilogue

Jonathan did get his wish and was later appointed high priest to serve in the temple he loved so much.

Activities:



On this final day of Chanukah, throw a party! Be sure to clean your house real good beforehand and decorate as they did for the dedication. Tell your guests about YHVH's faithfulness to the Maccabees. Enjoy music and dance, just as they did during the original eight day feast. (And perhaps this would be the opportunity to enjoy a little fried food!)

We hope you have a wonderful Chanukah, remembering some of our great heroes of the faith. If you enjoyed this, we invite you to visit our website at www.torahfamilyliving.com. There you will find:

- printable stories about Torah principles
- My First Torah, a beginning reader version of the weekly portion.
- Coloring pages
- Torah portion copywork
- "The Children's Ketubbah Project," our ebook about biblical parenting

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