

HOW TO HANUKKAH – DAY 1

0:01

Hello, everyone.

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I'm Jim Staley.

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Happy Hanukkah.

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And welcome to our new Passion for Truth instructional video series, where we have short videos for

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each night of Hanukkah, all eight nights, and tonight is the very first night.

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Tonight is the night where you get to talk about the story of Hanukkah.

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Where did the Feast of Dedication come from?

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How does it relate to us as believers today?

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Why do we as Christians celebrate this day when this is a true Jewish holiday?

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Well, we're going to talk about that and much more in this short video.

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So let's begin, first of all, a little disclaimer.

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This is not a commanded holiday.

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This is a minor feast day.

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This is a tradition.

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And there's nothing wrong with traditions as long as they don't go against the scriptures

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and they don't take away from the feast days or God's calendar.

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And this one certainly does not.

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I know that there's a lot of information out there.

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Some people say, oh, Christians shouldn't be celebrating Hanukkah or it's pagan.

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No, none of the above.

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This is one of the most amazing traditions that our family has used to deepen our family

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structure during the season and to create deeper walk with him, a deeper understanding

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of what light is and how it's travelled from Genesis all the way through Revelation.

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That's the pattern that the father is giving me.

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It's a tradition that we started many years ago, almost 15 or 20 now.

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I can't even remember.

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It goes by so fast where we start off in Genesis, and then I'm going to show you how each night

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of Hanukkah represents a different light given to a different person or a group of people,

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and how it comes all the way down through time into the millennium, where the Light

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of the World comes again and takes his bride.

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And so we're going to travel through time, travel through even the future and discover

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what this this amazing light does and how God, over and over again reintroduces himself

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to us.

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But first, the most important is to tell the story of Hanukkah.

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Where did it begin?

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What's true and what's not true?

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Well, this goes all the way back to 169 B.C., where the Greek king Antiochus Epiphanes the

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Fourth.

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He waltzed his way into Jerusalem and began occupying Jerusalem, just like the Romans

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did after him.

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This was a deep oppression, but unfortunately, many of the Jewish people began to become

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what's called Hellenism.

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They begin to operate like the Greeks.

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They got to incorporate and begin to synchronize all of the Greek philosophy and the way of

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life, begin to creep itself into the Jewish religion, into the Hebrew Israelite religion.

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And that's where things begin to kind of go astray.

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Well, in that process, there was a story that happened about 167 B.C., where a gentleman

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by the name of Mattiyahu, who was a priest, and he was approached by a Greek officer with

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an incredible deal that he thought that there's no way that he would ever deny this deal.

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So he, Mattiyahu, had a lot of influence within the Jewish people.

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And the Greek officer knew that if he could get Mattiyahu On his side, then a lot of people

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would just fall right in line under Mattiyahu.

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So he offered him great fame and riches and he would be set for life.

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All he had to do was to do what the Greeks said to do, which included sacrificing a pig

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on an altar.

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Well, Mattiyahu, who turned it down, hands down, he was not interested in that at all.

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He was a man of God.

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But there was another young priest who stepped up and basically said, 'if he doesn't want

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to deal, I'll take the deal'.

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And in that moment, Mattiyahu's zeal and righteous anger rose so high that he took

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his sword and killed that young man and the Greek officer all in the same moment.

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So he had a Star Wars moment, where Yoda takes down everybody in that room.

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Well, then I would imagine in that plot and that moment that Mattiyahu, who thought, 'Well,

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what am I going to do now?'

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And so he began to have to go on the run.

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This is the pattern that Moses went through.

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Moses, out of his righteous anger, killed an Egyptian and then had to go on the run.

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And Mattiyahu, who falls in line with Moses, goes on the run and then from there people

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begin to join them.

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And they went to fight against the Greeks year after year until he died.

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And his son, Judah Maccabee, which was called 'The Hammer', took over and began to fight

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this guerrilla warfare and they eventually won against the Greeks.

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Well, when they won, they began to take back the temple.

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That was the first thing that they wanted to do, was rededicate the temple.

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They cleaned it up.

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After all, they were three and a half years into occupation, remember?

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Three and a half years, okay.

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Three and a half years into occupation.

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The antichrist Antiochus Epiphanes put up a statue or an idol in the Holy place of the

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temple and in the Holy of Holies in the temple, and defiled the entire temple in the same

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way.

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Daniel, Chapter nine says three and a half years into the last seven years on Earth,

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the Antichrist is going to do the exact same thing.

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So we see this incredible foreshadowing of the story of Hanukkah, why it's so relative

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to believers today, because we believe that the Messiah is going to come back.

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We believe that there's going to be a great tribulation.

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And what initiates and inaugurates that great tribulation?

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None other than a retelling of this Hanukkah story.

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So by telling this story to our children ahead of time, we get to prepare them for the end-times

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and teach them as well.

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So when the Jews begin to take over the temple, the first thing they want to do is rededicate

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that temple.

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Now, from that moment forward they initiated this eight-day Festival of Lights, as they

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call it, the Feast of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication.

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And they made up a story that the reason why they do it for eight days, the Talmud says,

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is that because they found only one jar of oil and it lasted eight days, while they were

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going and looking for more oil.

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Now, finding oil would not have been difficult back then, especially in such a small knit

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community.

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That oil was being used everywhere, all the time.

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So we know through that, and the rabbis themselves will tell you, that this story was made up.

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And the reason why they made it up is because Jewish law, or law at the time, said that

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you cannot celebrate a military victory.

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But this was such an extraordinary victory for the Jewish people that set them on a brand

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new course that they wanted to celebrate this, the rededication of the temple.

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The temple was the entire centrifuge, it was the hub of all Jewish activity, all religious

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activity that related from Heaven to earth came through that temple.

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So dedicating that temple was really important to them and they wanted to remember the miracle

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that happened of this family and a few hob, you know, a few people here and there joining

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their clan and fighting against the Greeks.

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And one...it was truly a miracle, but they couldn't do it because it was a military victory.

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So making up the story of the oil was their way of getting around it.

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So we know that's not true.

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We don't teach our kids that.

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We focus on the reality of what it is true.

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Now, in the story of Hanukkah, one of the things that's different that some people don't

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understand is why do they use a nine branched menorah instead of the biblical temple?

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Seven branched menorah?

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Well, it's very simple.

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It's because there's eight days of Hanukkah and you have to have a shamash candle.

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Now, the Shamash candle is the very center candle.

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You can see over my shoulder that it stands higher than the rest of the candles.

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The word shamash in Hebrew literally means 'servant'.

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It is the servant candle that stands a little bit higher than the other candles.

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The eight days, most scholars believe, come from the fact that they did not and they were

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not able to celebrate the feast of Sukkot, which would have just finished.

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And so they celebrate this almost as a second Sukkot because they didn't get to celebrate

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the eight day festival of Sukkot.

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So they just made the Festival of Lights eight days and they were able to do what they wanted

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to do just a month or two earlier.

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So for whatever reason that they chose eight days, it's eight days.

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So there's nothing wrong with a nine branch menorah.

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It's not replacing the seven branched candlestick that is absolutely holy and honorable.

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This is just a tradition of nine branched a menorah that has a shamash candle.

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And I believe that you can make a case that the eight candles represent the eight days

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of eternity, of creation.

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Each days is a thousand years.

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And at the end of the seventh day, at the end of the first 7000 years of humanity, on

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the eighth day, the Bible says there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth.

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And so after the millennium, a new heaven and a new earth, and Yeshua is over all of

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it.

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So it's really incredible when you look at the fact that I teach this to my kids, that

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the Shamash candle is the serving candle and nobody lights those rest of the candles from

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right to left.

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We light them because the Bible is written from right to left.

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We...the end is from the beginning, right?

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So the shamash candle, the servant candles, the one that lights the rest of the candles,

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it's from Yeshua Christ that all of the other people are lit it.

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Their lights get passed through time, through Him and nobody else but Him.

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And so it also...you can also bring into the fact that we are supposed to be the servants

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of our homes.

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We're supposed to rise above the fray, we're supposed to go above our emotions and our

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mind and our will and our frustration.

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And sometimes we don't feel like being servants, but men, we need to be servants of our house.

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We need to serve our wives, we need to serve our children.

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And when we do, what we're doing is we're lighting our family on fire for God.

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We're passing the torch, the light, on to the next generation and to everyone that's

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around us.

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And so we tell the story of Hanukkah.

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And the first night is typically, you know, the biggest night, the longest night, because

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we got to tell the story of Hanukkah and then we might play the dreidel game.

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The dreidel game is a fun game.

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You can look it up online.

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It has to deal with spinning Israel and there's different letters and there's chocolate.

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And we just normally buy different kinds of chocolate or candy and it's kind of like a

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little like a game where they get to try to get...as they're trying to get as much candy

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as they possibly can, maybe put little toys in there or something.

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I don't know if you have little ones, but that's always a fun game.

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And then I also want to encourage you, after you tell the story, we talk about light and

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how important it is.

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The first night is all about the creation.

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It's the light of creation.

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It's discussing 'what is that first light that is found in the Scripture on day one?'

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Because light is...the sun, moon and stars doesn't show up until the day four that.

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First light is the light of the essence of YHWH Himself, that He puts into the darkness

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inside of our universe.

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And then He creates our world from the light of His essence of who He is.

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So that shaft of light which ends up being Messiah himself 4000 years later, ends up

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showing up in Genesis chapter one in the very first couple of verses.

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It's a beautiful story to say that God loved us so much that He gave us only begotten Son.

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And this is where it all began, right here when the light was created.

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And there was...there was light day one.

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There was night and there was...and there was there was day on the first day.

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So I'm excited to bring this to you guys today and I want you to bring it to your children.

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That light is the most important thing.

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It's the very first thing that was created, was the Aleph-Tav.

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It was YHWH in the...manifested through Yeshua himself, the word of God.

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And then from that light everything else gets created.

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So we talk about the light of creation, talk about how important light is.

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And then if you have kids, I encourage you to do this, take them, blindfold them to where

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they can only see straight down.

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So maybe it's not so tight that it's impossible to see, but it's tight enough where they can't

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see forward.

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They can only see their feet.

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Then what you do is you put them somewhere in your home and then you give them just a

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flashlight.

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And the only thing that they can see is straight down, they're only going to be able to see

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their feet.

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And then you call out to them from different places and let them slowly use their hands,

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but they're only going to be able to see their feet and they're going to find you eventually.

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And then give them a prize and then pull out Psalms 119 and talk about how "Thy word

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is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

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And so you can begin to explain that the light of God is not designed to be a beam of light

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that goes 100 miles out in front of you.

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So you...everything that's happening, the light of the father's designed to shine on

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your feet so that every step is of the order, of the righteous is ordained.

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Every step is illuminated, that only that next step you're going to know, that you're

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going to know that step.

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And so as we're designed to have faith to go slow, to trust Him, to guide Him and only

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listen to His voice.

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It's an incredible exercise in leaning "not on your own understanding, but in all your

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ways acknowledge him and He will direct your path."

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And how does He do that?

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Through light.

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And what is light?

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It is His Word.

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And so, my friends, I pray that you totally enjoy the Festival of Lights.

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It is an incredible time.

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I encourage you to take the time each and every night with your family.

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Let me talk to you one other thing: about presents.

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Some people are okay with giving presents, some people don't.

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It depends on your sensitivity.

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If you came over from Christmas and there's lots of materialism...how we operate in the

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Staley home is we do one gift for one of our kids and everybody switches names, everybody

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picks a name.

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And that's the person that they have.

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And the gift that they give is not for materialistic purposes at all.

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It's to say, 'hey, this is the love that I have in my heart for you, and I'm going

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to do something creative for you.

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I'm going to do something that will bless you so that I can manifest my love in a physical

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way', you know?

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Matthew, Chapter seven, Yeshua said, 'Hey fathers, you know how to give good gifts to

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your children.

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How much more does the Heavenly Father love to give good gifts to his children?'

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And so we have patriarchs that give gifts.

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Esther, and Esther Chapter nine starts the feast of Purim, a tradition where they're

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supposed to give gifts and invite each other over for dinner and have a feast and celebrate

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the victory that they had.

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That was 200 years before the story of the Maccabees defeating the Greeks.

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So it is inside of all of us to give gifts and to be generous.

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We don't have to be as secular in that process and out of balance and giving gifts just because

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we want to please our kids.

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No, we're not trying to please our kids.

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We're trying to instill inside of them what generosity and love looks like.

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And sometimes that's in the in love language of giving, and sometimes that's doing something

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for somebody else and blessing them, and something that maybe they didn't even think that they

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wanted.

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But you made something for them or you bought something that they really would enjoy.

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So, again, that's just what we do.

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Everybody can do whatever they feel compelled by the spirit to do.

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When all is said and done, I pray that these eight days will absolute bring your family

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closer together, that you'll be more blessed than you began with, and you'll wonder why

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you've not been doing this your entire life.

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It's blessed me for the last couple of decades.

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My kids have grown up with this.

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They never...they will never turn back and they're teaching even their great...my grandkids

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is celebrating that as we speak.

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So bless you, my friends.

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I'm Jim Staley and I can't wait to see you each and every night.

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Tomorrow night, too.

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We'll see you then.