

# In The Beginning Was The Word

## John 10:22-42

### **INTRODUCTION: RELIGIOUS LEADERS SURROUND JESUS AT THE TEMPLE**

It is interesting to note that the scriptures refers only to the feast of dedication here in John 10:22, and does not give us much information about the feast at all.

Nowhere else in the scriptures does it mention anything about the feast of dedication.

What was this feast of dedication and what was its significance that it would be kept by the Jews.

Never the less, Jesus chose to come here at this time of feast of dedication, and John finds it important enough to mention it here for us.

- So what was this all about?

The time, implies that two months had elapsed since the Feast of Tabernacles. It is known that the Feast of Tabernacles closed on October 19th, and the Feast of Dedication began on December 20.

## John 10:22-42

### **<sup>22</sup> And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.**

1. The [Feast of Dedication](#), today Hannukah, once also called "Feast of the Maccabees," was a Jewish festival observed for eight days from the 25th of [Kislev](#) (usually in December, but occasionally late November, due to the [lunisolar calendar](#)).
  2. It was instituted in the year 165 B.C. by [Judas Maccabeus](#), his brothers, and the elders of the congregation of Israel in commemoration of the reconsecration of the [Jewish Temple in Jerusalem](#), and especially of the [altar of burnt offerings](#), after they had been [desecrated](#) during the [persecution](#) under [Antiochus Epiphanes](#) (168 BC).
  3. The significant happenings of the festival were the illumination of houses and [synagogues](#), a custom probably taken over from the [Feast of Tabernacles](#), and the recitation of [Psalm 30:1-12](#).
- What was this feast of dedication all about?
  - Well here is some history which is important for us to know, if we want to know why Jesus was there at that feast.

## **Sacking of Jerusalem and persecution of Jews**

While Antiochus was busy in Egypt, a rumor spread that he had been killed. The [deposed](#) High Priest [Jason](#) gathered a force of 1,000 soldiers and made a surprise attack on the city of Jerusalem. The High Priest appointed by Antiochus, [Menelaus](#), was forced to flee Jerusalem during a riot. On the King's return from Egypt in 167 BC, enraged by his defeat, he attacked Jerusalem and restored Menelaus, then executed many Jews.<sup>[6]</sup>

“ When these happenings were reported to the king, he thought that Judea was in revolt. Raging like a wild animal, he set out from Egypt and took Jerusalem by storm. He ordered his soldiers to cut down without mercy those whom they met and to slay those who took refuge in their houses. There was a massacre of young and old, a killing of women and children, a slaughter of virgins and infants. In the space of three days, eighty thousand were lost, forty thousand meeting a violent death, and the same number being sold into slavery. ”

— [2 Maccabees](#) 5:11–14

To consolidate his empire and strengthen his hold over the region, Antiochus decided to side with the [Hellenized Jews](#) by outlawing [Jewish religious rites and traditions](#) kept by observant Jews and by ordering the worship of [Zeus](#) as the supreme god (2 Maccabees 6:1–12). This was anathema to the Jews and when they refused, Antiochus sent an army to enforce his decree. Because of the resistance, the city was destroyed, many were slaughtered, and a military Greek [citadel](#) called the [Acra](#) was established.<sup>[7]</sup>

“ Not long after this the king sent an Athenian senator to force the Jews to abandon the customs of their ancestors and live no longer by the laws of God; also to profane the temple in Jerusalem and dedicate it to Olympian Zeus, and that on Mount Gerizim to Zeus the Hospitable, as the inhabitants of the place requested...They also brought into the temple things that were forbidden, so that the altar was covered with abominable offerings prohibited by the laws. A man could not keep the sabbath or celebrate the traditional feasts, nor even admit that he was a Jew. At the suggestion of the citizens of Ptolemais, a decree was issued ordering the neighboring Greek cities to act in the same way against the Jews: oblige them to partake of the sacrifices, and put to death those who would not consent to adopt the customs of the Greeks. It was obvious, therefore, that disaster impended. Thus, two women who were arrested for having circumcised their children were publicly paraded about the city with their babies hanging at their breasts and then thrown down from the top of the city wall. Others, who had assembled in nearby caves to observe the sabbath in secret, were betrayed to Philip and all burned to death.

- **It is thus that we find verse 23 so interesting. This was the very place where those candid atrocities took place in 165 BC.**
- **Was Jesus here to show that he was greater than a defile cleansed temple.**
- **I am sure he was.**

<sup>23</sup> **And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.**

1. And Jesus walked in the temple porch,....possibly..... To keep himself warm, and to shelter him better from the inclemency of the weather:
2. The Solomon's porch; was covered over, and the outside of it was enclosed with a wall, which made it very convenient for such a purpose: this was on the outside of the temple eastward, and was a very magnificent structure: As the account Josephus (n) gives of it is this;

(n) Antiqu. l. 20. c. 8. sect. 7.)

*"there was a porch without the temple, overlooking a deep valley, supported by walls of four hundred cubits, made of four square stone, very white; the length of each stone was twenty cubits, and the breadth six; the work of king Solomon, who first founded the whole temple."*

Now, though this was not the porch that was built by Solomon, yet as it was built on the same spot, and in imitation of it, it bore his name; mention is made of it in [Acts 3:11](#).

**Acts 3:11** <sup>11</sup> And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

3. So this is where we find Jesus on the day of the feast of the dedication.

John transparently uses the various feasts to give a better understanding of Jesus to his readers.

Passover clearly gives background to the Exodus themes running through the Bread of Life discourse in John 6.

Similarly, it's fairly easy to see how John uses the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles) as background for the speeches and drama in chapters 7, 8, and 9.

However, what is the relationship between the Good Shepherd discourse and the Feast of Dedication? Well possibly to show that he is greater than any temple that gets defiled. Like what happened here in the time of Antiochus Epiphanies IV.

4. While [John 10:22-42](#) in some ways continues the discourse running before it, the reference to the Feast of Dedication shows that some time has elapsed since the previous discussion, which creates some discontinuity as well.
5. So while there might be a connection to Ezekiel 34, in understanding John's use of the festival, it's better to look ahead to the next exchange between Jesus and the Jews rather than necessarily back to the Good Shepherd discourse.
6. In doing so, the reference to the feast is seen to create a fitting *setting* for the discussion that follows as well as allow to John to continue emphasizing Jesus' *fulfilment* of the feasts, and in particular of the temple.

**24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.**

### **The Setting**

1. The Feast of Dedication commemorates the re-dedication of the Second Temple following the Maccabean Revolt which took place (165 BC).
2. The revolt, while successful in some of its aims, left the nation anticipating a Messiah who would overthrow at last the (Seleucid or) Roman rule and establish Israel again as an independent kingdom.
3. The Feast is therefore an appropriate setting for the question of the people: "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, (Messiah) tell us plainly."
4. The political overtones of the feast, however, also ensure that Jesus does not answer directly, in case his purpose is misunderstood.

### **The Fulfillment**

1. While the Feast of Dedication is not one of the festivals required in the Torah, John also shows that Jesus fulfills this feast as well.
2. John writes a little after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD as (at least in part) an appeal to Jews struggling in the new environment to make sense of their religious practice.
3. While many at the time turned from a Temple-based worship to a Torah-based one, others still anticipated the Messiah's coming to overthrow the occupation and rebuild the temple.
4. John's gospel is then (in part) an appeal to those looking for a new temple to look to Jesus as a new temple. Thus John highlights Jesus' prediction: "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."
5. Continuing this theme, Jesus fulfills the role of the temple in the Feast of Dedication. Whereas in the festival it is the temple that is set apart (dedicated) for God's purposes.
6. John highlights Jesus, in verse 36, as the one "set apart" by the Father.
  - **Having gone through many trials during the Maccabeun revolt, I think the average fuse of the Jew was very short.**
  - **They had been oppressed for far to long and for so many times. 18 Times had Jerusalem changed hands? From the Muslims to the Romans back and forth.**
  - **Many wars had already been fought and much blood had already been spilled.**

**25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.**

**26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.**

**27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:**

1. There was nothing new asked. Everything had already been asked and the questions remained the same.
2. They were not Gods sheep.
3. They were still walking astray.
4. They did not recognize the Shepherd call.
5. So they were of some other sheep's call.

**28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**

1. I give unto them eternal life.
2. They shall never perish.
3. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. (Jesus)

- These are the three promises that Jesus told them about. But they still did not want to heed his shepherds call.

**29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**

1. My Father, which gave them me. (The sheep are given by the Father to Jesus).
2. No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.
3. Jesus' hand is as secure as his Fathers.
4. The promise of Jesus is the same promise of the Father.
5. Eternal salvation comes with a great security behind it.

**30 I and my Father are one.**

1. Verse 29 is evidenced by verse 30.
2. What the Father is the Son is also.
3. What the Father has, the Son has also.
4. Jesus and the Father are in unity in the Godhead. Only one God.
5. This is further evidence of Jesus deity as God.

**31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.**

1. This claim to be God, caused the Jews to take up stones to stone Jesus.
2. This was the second time they wanted to stone Jesus.
3. Jesus declared his deity to them before and he declared his deity to them now again.
4. The result was evident that they did not believe in Jesus Christ to get saved.

**32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?**

1. Which work were they stoning Jesus for?
2. None.

**33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.**

1. They did not look to Jesus as having done bad works; on the contrary they thought he had done some very good work.
2. The reason for stoning him lay in the fact of him declaring himself to be God.
3. The Jews accused Jesus as being a man, declaring himself to be God.
4. This they did not believe, and sought stone him for blasphemy.

**<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?**

1. Despite the previous mentions by their own law (the writings prophets)

**Psalm 82:1-8**

<sup>1</sup> God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; **he judgeth among the gods.**

<sup>2</sup> How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

<sup>3</sup> Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.

<sup>4</sup> Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.

<sup>5</sup> They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.

<sup>6</sup> **I have said, Ye are gods;** and all of you are children of the most High.

<sup>7</sup> But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

<sup>8</sup> Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.

2. The Israelite judges were called gods.
3. God called the Israelite judges gods because they were agents of Gods revelation and will.
4. How could it be blasphemy for Jesus to call himself the Son of God?
5. Jesus was rebuking them because he is the Son of God.

- They same can be said for Moses.

**Exodus 7:1** And the LORD said unto Moses, **See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh:** and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

**<sup>35</sup> If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;**

**<sup>36</sup> Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?**

**<sup>37</sup> If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.**

**<sup>38</sup> But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.**

1. Even though Jesus had pointed them back to the scriptures of Moses writings who they revered as their greatest prophet they still did not want to believe.
2. They still wanted to stone Jesus because he said they were called gods by God in their scriptures.
3. Jesus words to the Jews were simply to believe that **the Father is in me, and I in him.**
4. They did NOT want to believe that by FAITH.
5. The result was to take Jesus by force.

**<sup>39</sup> Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,**

1. Jesus did not allow himself to be taken.
2. Jesus had said he would be the only one who could lay it down and take it up again. (John 10:18)
3. So no man could thwart Gods plan to come.

**<sup>40</sup> And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.**

**<sup>41</sup> And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.**

**<sup>42</sup> And many believed on him there.**

1. The result of Jesus ministry took another turn when the Jews rejected him here again.
  2. Jesus went again beyond the Jordan where John first baptized.
  3. This was a place that Jesus knew would be place where they would come to him for salvation.
- Don't spend time cultivating unfertile ground where the seed of the Word will not take root.
  - Take time to sow on soils that will reap a harvest.

**Matthew 13:3-5** <sup>3</sup> And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; <sup>4</sup> And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: <sup>5</sup> Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

PRAYER.....CLOSE