



# CHANUKAH AND HAGGAI

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When it comes to the subject of end time prophecy, one of the most significant pieces of the puzzle is without a doubt the city of Jerusalem. In the Psalms we read:

*"When the Lord shall build up Zion, then He shall appear in His glory." (Psalm 102:16)*

Although some would note that the term "Zion" is interchangeable with the Church at times, there is no doubt that the restoration of the physical city of Jerusalem is a vital part of the equation as well.

On that note, Yeshua Himself said that He would not return until a remnant in Jerusalem called on Him and thereby usher in His coming (Matt. 23:39). This would help explain why throughout the ages, foreign Empires under the influence of Satan have constantly sought to occupy it. One powerful example is Antiochus Epiphanes IV and the Seleucid Greek empire which were no exception to the rule. Around the time of 170 BCE as they conquered their way through the Middle-East in their long fought battle with the Ptolemaic dynasty (The king of the South), Jerusalem would eventually find itself within their crosshairs (Dan. 11). They would go on to trample the city, desecrate the holy Temple and



persecute the Jewish people. Centuries earlier however, in anticipation of this event, the Lord gave His people an amazing word of encouragement. As the Jewish exiles made their way back to Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Temple, the prophet Haggai declared:

**“Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid—consider it...From this day I will bless you.”** (Haggai 2:18)

Very rarely does prophecy come to us with a date on it, but this one did! The day was the 24th day of the 9th month (Kislev 24) on the Jewish calendar, which often coincides with December on our Gregorian calendar. From that day, the prophet foretold that there would be a turnaround from travail to blessing and it would somehow tie together with Jerusalem. In its original context, the word had to do with the laying of the foundation in the Temple, yet the date of Haggai’s prophecy would become crucial for future eschatological events. The 24th day of Kislev from Haggai’s prophecy was the day in which the Jews defeated the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes and liberated Jerusalem from their hands! Thus, the very next day, which would be Kislev 25, the Temple would be rededicated and thus the Feast of Chanukkah was born!

Moreover, it is no coincidence that the one whom the Spirit chose to give this prophecy was given the name Haggai from birth. The name Haggai stems from the word “Chag,” which means celebration! The reason is because the fulfillment of his prophecy came to pass with the laying of the foundation of the Temple and later with the liberation of the same Temple from Gentile occupation in the event that would become known as Chanukkah. Yet, the prophecy goes even further. Although Haggai's prophecy was fulfilled when the Maccabees liberated the Temple from Greek occupation, amazingly, some of the greatest events surrounding Jerusalem's modern restoration also happen to take place around the date of this prophecy as well!

For instance, at the time of the first world war in the year 1917, Jerusalem had been under Muslim occupation by the centuries old Ottoman Turkish Empire. The ones who were demonically inspired to build the Dome of the Rock, which stands as a modern abomination on Jerusalem's Temple Mount to this day. As a Muslim entity, they had no intention of giving up the city, which contains one of the holiest sites in Islam. Yet, that very year, the British forces under General Allenby defied the odds and defeated them in battle, which would alter the course of world history.

The reason being that one month prior, the then British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour made what became known as



"The Balfour Declaration" stating his support for a national Jewish homeland in the region then known as "Palestine." So, when exactly did the British liberate Jerusalem from the Ottomans? On our calendar, the day was December 9, 1917, but on the Jewish calendar, the day was Kislev 25! The same exact day of Chanukkah and the day prophesied by Haggai as the beginning of a time of blessing and favor upon God's people! Thus, while Jewish people around the world celebrated and remembered the feast of Chanukkah by lighting up their candles, that very night Jerusalem would be liberated into their hands. An event orchestrated by the unseen hand of God.

On that note, let's skip forward a hundred years to 2017. By this time, the nation of Israel had obviously been reborn and Jerusalem had been restored into the hands of the Jewish people as foretold by the prophets. However, there was still something missing. Although Jerusalem was now in Israel's possession, it had not yet been legally recognized by the International authorities. Something that was required to complete the restoration process (Ezra 1:1). However, in the year 2017 exactly one hundred years after the Balfour Declaration and fifty years after the retaking of Jerusalem, that would all change. Against all odds, God permitted a very unlikely candidate in President Donald Trump to be (and now President-elect) was elected President of the United States, and would go on to make the

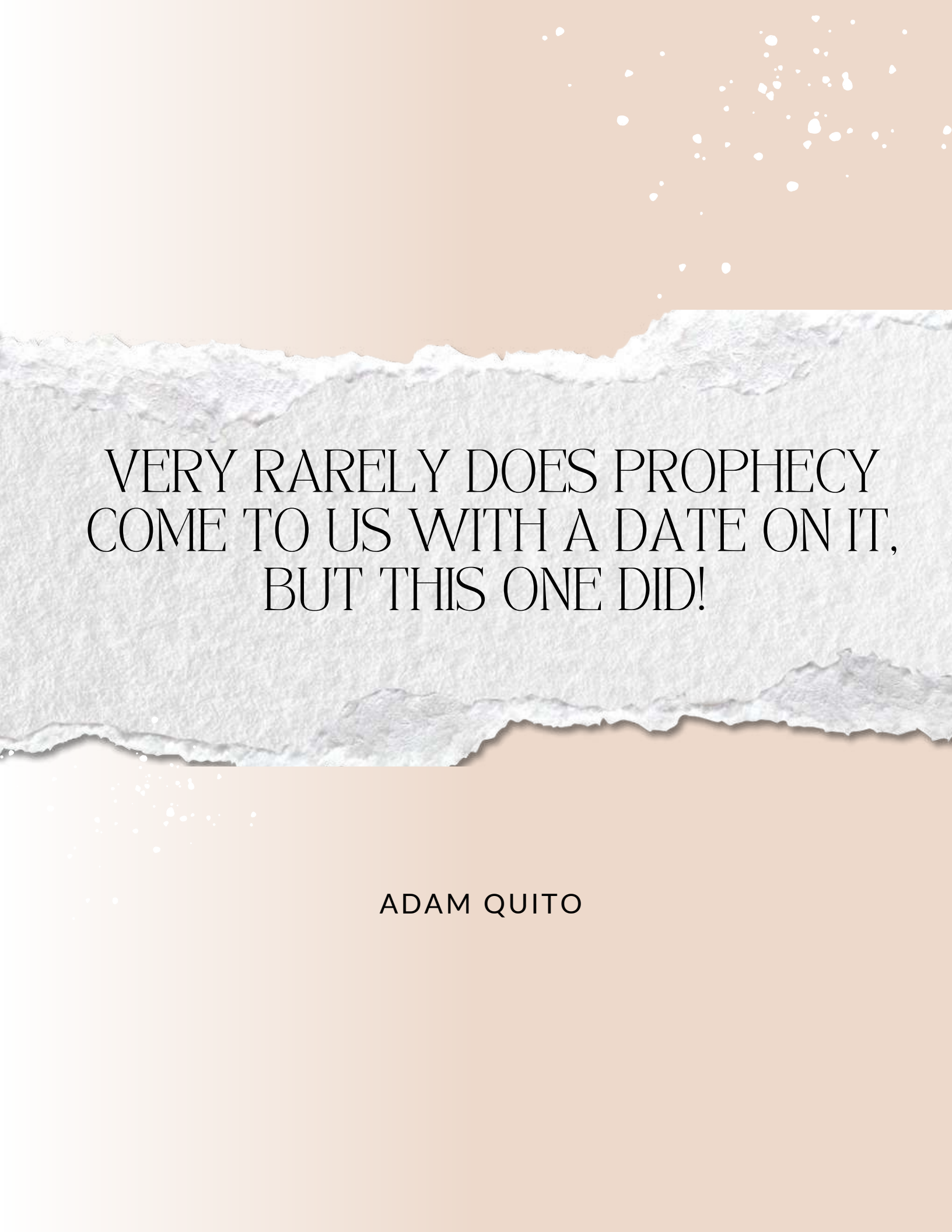
world famous Jerusalem declaration acknowledging it to be the rightful capital of the Jewish people! An event referred to by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as one of three most significant in Jerusalem's history. This move was further backed with his decision to move the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. So, when did the declaration take place? On our calendar, it happened in the month of December, but on the Jewish calendar, it was the month of Kislev! The same month of Chanukkah and in further fulfillment of the prophecy of Haggai!

With that in mind, there are several lessons I want to draw from Haggai's prophecy as it pertains to our walk with the Messiah.

Firstly, you must encourage yourself knowing there is an end date to every trial. Whether it was Zerubbabel and the remnant of the workers building the Temple in Haggai's day, the Maccabees or us, the end-time remnant, we must be willing to persevere in spite of the growing pressure mounting around us. To good news is that no matter how difficult the trial, Haggai's word tells us that God has an appointed time to bring every difficulty to an end and to usher in a time of favor and blessing for your life. Although He may not give us the exact date as He did with Haggai's prophecy, the principal still applies.

Secondly, if we persevere God is able to take our time of trial and turn it into a time of celebration. Although the remnant of the workers building the Second Temple and later the Maccabees came under severe pressure, God took a time of trial and turned it into the modern festival of Chanukkah. This is a picture of what God is looking to do in your life and what will ultimately transpire at the Return of our Lord Yeshua. So, do not quit and keep persevering in faith knowing that God has a time of celebration awaiting in your future.





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