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## Hanukkah, Blossoms, and Yeshua

### Let us hear His voice

The menorah (or lampstand) that was in the Tabernacle of the Lord is described in Exodus 25. It was created of solid, poured gold with gold almond blossoms for the cups of the candlesticks. For our Hanukkah art card, I painted the almond blossoms to be alive – white with pink hues.

Almond trees bloom in the late winter in Israel and are the first blooms of the year. They signal the celebration of Passover which occurs on the first full moon of spring. The Hebrew word for *almond* means *eager anticipation*, *wakeful hastening*, and *readiness* – all descriptions the Israelites needed at the first Passover when the LORD delivered them from their enemy.

The weeklong winter celebration of Hanukkah celebrates another miraculous deliverance of the Jewish people in 168 BC. This year (2023), it begins at sunset December 7<sup>th</sup> and ends at nightfall December 15<sup>th</sup>. To read the history, please see *The Feast of Dedication – Hanukkah* at [ShaleFragments.com](http://ShaleFragments.com)

Hanukkah is mentioned in John 10:22. John 10:22-30 reads:

“At that time, the Feast of the Dedication [Hanukkah] took place in Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple area in the portico of Solomon.

The Jews [the religious leaders] then surrounded Him and began saying to Him, ‘How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Messiah, tell us plainly.’

Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name testify of Me, but you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.’”

Yeshua (Jesus) spoke of Himself as the Good Shepherd whose sheep knew His voice. The listeners would have connected His words with King David’s familiar description of God as his Shepherd in Psalm 23. In the words above, Yeshua had declared Himself to be one with God, His Father and David’s Shepherd.

The listeners would also have connected His words with the words of the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel who spoke of the bad shepherds (prophets) who scattered the flock of Israel and the Good Shepherd to Whom Israel needed to return (Isaiah 40:11). Yeshua was the Good Shepherd incarnate standing in their midst!

When the Hanukkah candles were lit to remember God’s provision of light and deliverance, Yeshua, The Eternal Light of the World, called them to receive Him. Some received Him and recognized His intimate, familiar voice. Others rejected Him, their pride dulling their ears and cutting off His wooing voice.

During Hanukkah, let us take time to listen, hear, follow, and love our Good Shepherd, Yeshua.

The fragrant almond blossoms encourage us to lift our heads in *eager anticipation* for His return. We wait with *wakeful trust and readiness* because we know our redemption is near and our deliverance is here!