

The Wonderful Numberer (Daniel 8:1-27)

I. Redemption's Timeline

We've found that the first half of Daniel focused on the amazing story of his life, while the second focuses on the insight Daniel received for the "end of the age."

We've learned this was not entirely about the end of the world, but the coming of the Son of the Man—**the Christ**—along with a period of great tribulation under the Roman Empire that would culminate with the destruction of Jerusalem. In the midst of these things, the new age of the Christ's Kingdom would come to earth.

In his 80s, during the final years of Babylon's reign under Belshazzar, Daniel was first shown four beasts that represented the four empires that would fill the world, the last being Rome which would bring about a ruler who would inflict great damage upon God's people.

Two years after this dream, as the time drew closer for the first beast to fall (Babylon), Daniel received another vision that focused exclusively on the second and third beasts that would influence Israel's future: Persia and Greece.

1 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, I, Daniel, saw a second supernatural vision. (Daniel 8:1 TPT)

This vision involved a different period of tribulation that would come during the end of the Greek empire. Daniel sees a ram with two horns—one larger than the other—that violently charges into view. This is followed by a second beast, a goat with one prominent horn that destroys the ram.

The two-horned ram is the Medo-Persian empire. The second beast was Greece, led by a prominent single "horn" representing Alexander the Great. He then sees this:

8 Then the goat grew exceedingly arrogant. At the very peak of his power, his big horn abruptly snapped off. In its place, four prominent horns came up, each pointing to a different direction. (Daniel 8:8)

This is exactly what would happen with Alexander the Great. He died abruptly at a young age with much of the world still to conquer. History shifted as the Greek empire was then split into four different territories. From there, Daniel sees another "little horn" that is different from the one he saw two years prior in his first vision (ch. 7). This one is connected to the Greek "beast" whereas the other one was connected to Rome.

9 From one of them, a small horn emerged. It eventually grew to be very big, and its power extended toward the south, the east, and toward the beautiful land. 10 It grew so powerful

that it attacked the armies of heaven and hurled some of the starry host to the ground and trampled them down.

(Daniel 8:9-10 TPT)

This scene suggests that there would be a significant spiritual battle behind the military campaign of whoever this “little horn” was. Somehow, his attack on Israel would affect even heavenly beings—which suggests that angels somehow suffer when God’s people suffer.

There is good reason to believe the powers of darkness knew the Roman Empire would lead to the age of the Messiah, so they stirred up a king from the last remnants of Greece to snuff out Israel so that the Jewish Christ could not come. Hence, this was an *antichrist* agenda.

11 The horn arrogantly exalted itself against the Prince of the heavenly armies. It abolished the daily sacrifices, and the place of his sanctuary was defiled.

12 God’s people began to turn away from him and gave themselves to the power of the horn. Sin replaced the daily sacrifices on account of the rebellion of the people. The horn was successful in all it attempted to do; truth was cast down to the ground.

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking. Another holy one asked the first one, the Wonderful Numberer, “How long will it be until this vision is fulfilled, in relation to the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the handing over of the sanctuary, and the trampling underfoot of the host of God’s people?”

(Daniel 8:11-13 TPT)

In the dream, a “holy one” (possibly an angel or a saint) asks a question to another holy one called the “**Wonderful Numberer**.” This was most likely a name for God, or an angel with a specific assignment from God to reveal dates, timelines, and/or the spiritual meaning of numbers. The question is this: *How long will these things take place where a future ruler will come against the nation of Israel, take over the temple, deceive the Jews, and put an end to temple sacrifices?*

14 He answered, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be purified.”

(Daniel 8:14 TPT)

The Wonderful Numberer gives a very specific timeline, which is measured by the evening and morning sacrifices that will be stopped by this coming king. In other words, there will 2300 sacrifices stopped—two each day—which means this period would last 1,150 days.

- *A **prophetic note** here that time itself revolves around the One that all sacrifice pointed to. Jesus’s sacrifice is the center of time itself. Time and space sprang from One called “the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world” in Revelation 13 (a chapter that also mentions a campaign of persecution from a “beast” lasting a similar period of time.)*

All of this came true. In 323 BC, Alexander’s empire was divided among his generals. One of those divisions was the Seleucid Empire in the east, which became the realm that took over Judea.

One of the later Seleucid kings, *Antiochus IV Epiphanes* (175–164 BC) is the one who fulfilled this prophecy. He grew very powerful and launched a campaign of deception and persecution against Judea. He named himself “Epiphanes,” meaning *God Manifest*, which was an act of total arrogance and rebellion against heaven.

When this Antiochus took over Judea, he officially stopped the sacrifices at the temple that took every morning and evening. Daniel learned this was an act against the Prince of heaven, the Messiah. Antiochus also brought a statue of Zeus into God’s temple and slaughtered pigs on the altar—one of the most repulsive things ever done against Israel, and it became known as the “abomination that causes desolation” or destruction (Daniel 8:13 & see 1 Maccabees 1:54-59).

This campaign against Israel lasted a little over 3 years—1,150 days

During that time period, a family of Jewish priests named the Maccabees rose up in revolt against Antiochus. Led by Judah Maccabee, they waged a daring guerrilla warfare campaign. They defeated the Seleucid forces, reclaimed Jerusalem, and rededicated the temple, completely fulfilling Daniel’s entire vision. This rededication of the temple would become a holiday known **Hanukkah**, also called the Feast of Dedication, an eight-day celebration.¹

II. Gabriel’s Message (Antichrist & “The Little Horn” Pt. 2)

Daniel has no idea what this vision means initially. Like always, he needs divine help. So, God sends an angel to give him understanding...

15 While I, Daniel, was pondering the vision I had seen, suddenly there appeared before me one who looked like a man. 16 Then I heard the voice of someone calling out over the waters of the Ulai canal, “Gabriel, help this man understand the meaning of his vision.”

17 As the angel Gabriel came closer to where I was standing, I was so terrified that I fell facedown on the ground. Then he said to me, “Daniel, son of man, you need to understand that your vision refers to the time of the end.”

**18 When he spoke with me, I lost consciousness and passed out. But he took hold of me and raised me to my feet. 19 “Listen,” he said, “and I will tell you what will take place in the time of wrath, for the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end:
(Daniel 8:15-19 TPT)**

Many Christians read this passage as a message for the end of the world in our own time. But in reality, this “*time of wrath / appointed time of the end*” was clearly about something that already

¹ During Antiochus’s tyranny, the people missed the Feast of Tabernacles, an eight-day festival in the Fall. To make up for this, they created this new eight-day holiday in the winter to commemorate the temple’s liberation.

took place. As we said last time, *the end* was the end of the Old Covenant era. The “wrath” was the persecution that would come against Israel to try to stop the Anointed One, the Son of Man, from coming forth—the Christ.

In his first dream, Daniel was shown an antichrist agenda from the future kingdom of Rome. He saw a “little horn” in chapter 7 that would be fulfilled one day through Emperor Nero. In chapter 8, Daniel sees the remnants of the Greek empire and different little horn coming against God’s people, which would be fulfilled through Antiochus IV.

The angel named Gabriel tells the following to Daniel about *this* little horn:

25 By his cunning, he will make treachery succeed under his rule. In his own mind, he will highly exaggerate his own importance. When they are at ease, he will suddenly destroy many. But when he rises up against the Prince of all princes, he will be broken—but not by any human power.

**26 “The explanation of the vision you had about the evening and morning sacrifices is absolutely true. And seal up the vision, for it concerns the distant future.” 27 I, Daniel, was dazed and lay sick for several days; then I got up and went back to serve the king. I was perplexed by the vision, for it seemed beyond understanding.
(Daniel 8:25-27)**

Daniel endures spiritual battle over these dreams because they are releasing prophetic promises from the Kingdom of Heaven that was planning to invade the earth over the next couple hundred years.

Gabriel tells Daniel that this little horn will be broken, but not by human agency. Indeed, Antiochus lost Judea, experienced many other setbacks, and died sick and alone in a foreign country. He did not die by the hand of a person or in battle (“*not by any human agency*”).

This little horn, similar to the last one, speaks of a larger *antichrist* agenda.

- Which is fascinating that the angel who gives the news about this “antichrist,” was the same one who gave Mary news about the true Christ being born within her (Luke 1:26)

The whole saga of Scripture is about Christ being born *in* humanity and redeeming us back to the Father’s image and likeness. (In other words, he would destroy the beastly identity.)

When Antiochus desecrated of the temple by setting up a pagan idol in the middle of it and slaughtered unclean pigs on the altar, he was only manifesting what humanity has done to the holy temple of our own being. Human beings are the temple of God, and we have been desecrated it with greed, violence, and fear.

All of these beasts Daniel sees are highlighting the beastly and false ways that humanity has embraced. Instead of living by the Spirit—the Anointing (which is what the word *Christ* means—“Anointed One”)—we have lived out of corrupted passions and desires of our five senses.

These antichrist figures—whether Antiochus or Nero—are only a fulfillment and personification of what has already been happening in human hearts since Adam.²

It’s interesting that both Nero and Antiochus were sixth in the line of rulers from which they came. Starting with Julius Caesar, Nero was the sixth ruler of Rome. Starting with Seleucus I, Antiochus was the sixth king in that line as well.

Six the number of the beast, which we’ve covered extensively in the first half of Daniel. In Daniel 7 and 8, we six beasts overall.

None of this is coincidence. God is the “Wonderful Numberer.” He loves to speak through numbers—there’s even a book of the Bible called Numbers! God is speaking about mankind who was created on the *sixth* day, and can only find completion in Christ—or in the Spirit.

In Daniel 2 and 3, we discussed the number 6 when we saw the Nebuchadnezzar’s statue that was built it with the dimensions of 60 cubits high and 6 cubits wide. We connected this with the number 666 given to the beast in Revelation, especially when in the following chapter of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar literally becomes a beast.

A momentous point is made here that we did not previously highlight:

**16 "Let his mind be changed from that of a man
And let a beast's mind be given to him,
And let seven periods of time pass over him.
(Daniel 4:16)**

In the story, the seven periods of time represent seven years that Nebuchadnezzar would become a beast before he repented and turned back into a humbled man. From a higher perspective, this can be seen as a prophetic word for the whole human race—that for seven periods of time (possibly 7,000 years of human history), mankind would change from Image Bearers to beasts. But *the Christ* would come to undo all of this...

III. The Signal of Jesse: Humanity Restored in the Messiah

We’ve also discussed how six is one digit short of seven—the number that points to Jesus and his finished work.

² This is why some believe Paul’s words in 2 Thessalonians 2 about a “Man of Lawlessness” sitting in the temple and declaring himself to be God is a picture of human sin and rebellion sitting on the throne/temple of our hearts.

In the temple there is an object that puts these truths on display. This was given by the Wonderful Numberer to Moses—a lampstand with six branches connected to a center, seventh pipe.

In the book of Revelation, we learn about the Seven Spirits of God which are seeing burning on a lampstand in front of Christ (Revelation 4:5). Many have connected this to a prophecy in Isaiah where it speaks about the coming Messiah—who is called the Branch.

**1 Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse,
And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.
2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and strength,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
(Isaiah 11:1-2)**



With the “Spirit of the Lord” at the center, the six other attributes of the Spirit all line up with the image of a Menorah.

The “branch” is the Son of Man who was promised to rise from the fallen stump of humanity to redeem our true nature. He is the One who will turn us from a beast back into a human. (Or—in other apocalyptic language—a prostitute back into a bride.)

It’s incredible to find that all the beasts mentioned in Daniel’s visions show up in Isaiah’s prophecy when he begins to talk about the Messiah’s Kingdom coming to earth:

**6 And the wolf will dwell with the lamb,
And the leopard will lie down with the young goat,
And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together;
And a little boy will lead them.
7 Also the cow and the bear will graze,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.
(Isaiah 11:6-7)**

We typically view this as a literal promise of a future peace on earth that will extend to the animal kingdom. This is true; however, hidden within this prophecy is a promise about humanity. The beasts will come into harmony with one another. This is speaking of the Kingdom of reconciliation, forgiveness, mercy, and peace. A Kingdom of the Holy Spirit.

**7 For the kingdom of God is...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
(Romans 14:7)**

All the deception that caused humanity to become dark and beastly on the outside goes back to one particular creature from Genesis 3—a serpent who led humans on this *anti-Image of God* path. That’s why the next few verses are even more encouraging.

**8 The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,
And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den.
9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain,
For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
As the waters cover the sea.
(Isaiah 11:8-9)**

That “holy mountain” is the Kingdom of God established by the Holy Spirit. This is the mountain Nebuchadnezzar saw that started with a little rock striking the Roman Empire.

Jesus is the Anointed Rock who reveals our true identity and calls to be vessels for the Spirit of God to flow through—for our “six” to be united to “seven.”

**10 Then in that day
The nations will resort to the root of Jesse,
Who will stand as a signal for the peoples;
And His resting place will be glorious.
(Isaiah 11:10)**

The word “signal” can be translated as a standard or a flag. Jesus is now the “standard”—the emblem and true “flag” of humanity. When nations “resort” to him—when they cling to him—they come back to their true selves. They receive the Spirit that enables them to live in righteousness, peace, and joy.

And they become his glorious resting place...

IV. Hannukah, the Lamb, and the Spirit-Filled Menorah

This brings us back to the holiday that came after the antichrist leader, Antiochus IV, was defeated—Hannukah.

There’s a story in the Gospels where Jesus walks into the temple during this holiday (the same temple that had been defended and rebuilt when that holiday was instituted):

22 At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; 23 it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. 24 The Jews then gathered around Him,

and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."
(John 10:22-24)

There was *much* more to this question than meets the eye. Remember, this feast was celebrating that time the Jewish people engaged in guerilla warfare against a foreign empire. The Feast of Dedication was very similar to the 4th of July and the American Revolution where the founding fathers engaged in similar warfare against the British Empire.

Jesus had good reason to be wise in how he answered these questions, especially since they were saying this in front of their Roman occupiers. They were essentially asking if he was going to be *the Son of Man* from Daniel's vision who would take down Rome. Their understanding of these prophecies was that the Messiah would be greater than Judah Maccabee who led the violent revolution against the Seleucids.

But Jesus was not going to be like the Maccabees of Hannukah or the American leadership of July 4th. As much as we thank God for those who stood for freedom in different ways, the true Kingdom of heaven advances through a different kind of path, represented by a creature very different from goats, leopards, bears, and devouring lions . . . a Lamb.

Jesus is the overcoming Lamb who lays down his life in love, forgives his enemies, and then teaches his followers to do the same. This is how the true Messiah would lead his Kingdom.

Ultimately, the Messiah doesn't just teach us how to live—he lives his life through us. The Anointed One brings humanity back into union with the Holy Spirit. Ironically, he brings about the name Antiochus gave to himself (God Manifest), but in the pure and right way as *God in us*.



That brings us back to Hannukah... The menorah was lit with *anointing oil*, the same term used for the Anointed One—Christ/Messiah. To commemorate this new eight-day celebration of victory over Antiochus, the Jewish people eventually expanded the menorah from seven branches to nine (eight pairs with a center ninth candlestick).

The Wonderful Numberer may have been behind this—for nine is a number that also points to the Spirit. There are nine “fruit of the Spirit” meant to flow through our lives (Galatians 5:22-23).

So, there is a sevenfold Spirit revealed in Scripture as well as nine-fold one. In both images, the menorah cannot escape its prophetic message: humanity was made to be connected to the Spirit of God—anointed to bear the fruit of heaven!

Follow-up Encounter:

As you take communion, consider the fruit of the Spirit in your life. Do you feel a flow of joy, peace, and goodness—or do you see beastly attitudes and actions?

*If there has been a beastly experience, the answer is always the same. Remember that the beast nature was crucified. This is not who you are and it's not how God sees you. Look away from yourself to Jesus. **He is the Standard of your true self.** Cling to him. Ask for fresh mercy to wash over areas where beastly ways have tried to settle in. As you receive communion, believe that the Spirit of God is already within you, ready to overflow in the day and week ahead of you.*