

The celebration of **Hanukkah** focuses on the lighting of the menorah. It is a special time for families and friends to spend together singing, playing, giving gifts, telling stories, and **meditating on the meaning of Hanukkah**.

Eight Days of Hanukkah (day 1 of 8)

The Feast of Dedication and The Feast of Light

The True Meaning of Hanukkah The “Conception” of the Light of the World

*“Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name
Jesus (Yashua – I am Salvation, I am the Light of the World).” Luke 1:31*

Introduction:

By doing a study of Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication and the feast of Light, many hidden truths concerning our Lord Jesus Christ can be discovered. The feast brings the Old and New Testaments of our Bible together in unique ways that glorify God’s son. It helps teaches us about His conception, His live birth, and His body, the church. Although the feast of Hanukkah originated many years ago, it continually points those who understand its truths to future prophetic events.

The fourfold purpose of this teaching is:

1. To describe what the Feast of Dedication is.
2. To tell the story behind its origination.
3. To connect it to our Christmas story about Jesus’ birth, and
4. To present observations about the Temple’s seven-branched golden lampstand and its light.

Let’s begin our study by remembering that Jesus attended Hanukkah (John 9-10:22-39) in Jerusalem just a few months prior to His death. And while He was at the feast Jesus actually declared Himself to be the Son of God ... the Light of the world:

I and the Father Are One

⁵ As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world** . . . ²² At that time the **Feast of Dedication** took place at Jerusalem. It was winter,²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. ²⁷ **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.** ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ 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. ³⁰ **I and the Father are one.**”

³¹ The Jews picked up stones again to stone him. ³² Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?” ³³ The Jews answered him, “It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.” ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? ³⁵ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—³⁶ do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘**I am the Son of God?**’ ³⁷ If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; ³⁸ but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” ³⁹ Again they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. **John 9:5, 10:22-39**

On the first night:

The earth was unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep . . . God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night . . .

*God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; they shall serve as signs for the set times – the days and the years; and they shall serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth.” And it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to dominate the day and the lesser light to dominate the night, and the stars. And God set them in the expanse of the sky to shine upon the earth, to dominate the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that this was good. **Genesis 1:2-5; 14-18***

Prayer on the first night:

Daily Exercise - Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a Latin term that means “divine reading.” It is a way or method of reading the Scriptures in such a manner that facilitates the reader in receiving a “specific word” from God. The practice was developed early in the church’s history with Origen first expressing its principles around 220 AD. The system consists of four parts: reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation. It may be practiced privately or in a small group setting. There are four elements to be considered in preparing for this exercise:

1. Set aside enough time to complete the exercise so that you don’t have to rush through it. Usually thirty minutes is adequate.
2. Find a quiet place free of distractions.
3. Read the Selected Passage Above of Scripture.
4. Transition from what you have been doing by calming you mind and body. This can be done by taking a few slow, deep breaths and inviting the Lord to speak to you through His word.

Reading

1. Read the passage aloud slowly a couple of times.
2. Be silent for one-to-two minutes.
3. Is there a word or phrase that is meaningful to you?
4. Repeat the word or phrase several times silently as if to memorize it.

* If in a group share it in turn. Do not elaborate simply state what it is.

Meditation

1. Read the passage again.
2. Be silent for two to three minutes.
3. Think about how the reading applies or touches your life today.

* If in a group share it in turn. Briefly state “I hear, I see, I feel ...”

Prayer

1. Talk with God about what he is showing you.

* If in a group pray quietly.

Contemplation

1. Read the passage again.
2. Be silent for two to three minutes.
3. Reflect on “I believe God wants me to _____ today/this week/etc.”

* If in a group share in turn. At this point you can elaborate somewhat on what you believe God is telling you to do.

Study on the first night:

Jewish Name and Meaning:

The Jewish name Hanukkah means **dedication**. The word in its various forms appears many times in the Old Testament portion of our Bible. It was used to describe the first use, the initiation, inauguration or dedication of a house, an altar or a priest. The word Hanukkah was used for the dedication of the Tabernacle in the wilderness by Moses, the dedication

of the altar in Solomon's Temple, and the dedication of the Second Temple and wall around Jerusalem in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. It is closely associated with consecration and anointing with oil. The verb form (Chanak) of the word also means to instruct or to **train up**. In Proverbs 22:6 it says, "**Train up** a child in the way he should go, when he is old he will not depart from it."

The Feast:

The feast itself commemorates the re-dedication of the Temple and its altar to God in the year 164 BCE (BCE means "Before Common Era" and is used by Jewish people like we use BC or "Before Christ"). Hanukkah is not described in the Old Testament portion of our Bibles because that portion ended with the prophet Malachi in 398 BCE. However, there are an additional fourteen books called the Old Testament Apocrypha. These books were written during the "400" silent years between Malachi and the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the Apocrypha is not included in the canon of Scripture it can be found in the "Catholic Bible". The historical account of Hanukkah is found in the book, 1 Maccabees 4:36-61.

Hanukkah, the Feast of Dedication starts on the 25th of Kislev and lasts for **eight** days. That date varies according to our calendar from November 27th to December 27th. Hanukkah is also known as the **Feast of Light**, as God miraculously provided enough oil to keep the lamps on the seven-branched golden lampstand burning for the entire eight days of the feast.

During the **eight**-day feast period of Hanukkah, Jewish people read the book of Numbers chapters seven through eight in their synagogues. Chapter seven tells of Moses and the leaders of Israel anointing and consecrating the Tabernacle, its altars, and furnishings. Chapter eight deals with setting up the seven-branched golden lampstand and setting the Levites apart for sacred service.

The Story Behind The Feast:

During the reign of Alexander, the Great (356 – 323 BCE) the Greeks conquered the known Biblical world (The "known Biblical world" is the area around the Mediterranean Sea. It stretched from India to France.). The Grecian period of influence lasted until 44 BCE when it was replaced by the Roman Empire. During their period of rule the Greeks forced their society, which was called Hellenism, upon the conquered people. It included their language, philosophy, religion, culture and governmental structure. The **goal** of Hellenism was a one-world order.

After Alexander the Great died, the Grecian empire was divided between his four generals: Cassander ruled in Macedon and Greece, Lysimachus in Asia Minor and Thrace, Ptolemy in Egypt and Seleucus in Mesopotamia and Persia. These four generals are referred to in the book of Daniel 8:8 and 11:4 (The Kingdom of Greece as a world power is described in Daniel chapters eight and eleven.).

One on Seleucus' descendents, Antiochus IV, ruled the Seleucid Empire (The territory included the northern and eastern portions of the Grecian Empire.) from 175 – 163 BCE. As king, he was very high on himself and even took the title "Epiphanes" which means "God Manifest." Antiochus, the villain in the story of the feast of Hanukkah, is the "little horn" or "despicable person" spoken of in Daniel 8:9 and 11:21. He is a "type" of the Antichrist who is to come and his story and character become intermingled with the Antichrist's in Daniel 8:9-12, 23-25, and 11:21-45. Similar events will occur at the time of Antichrist and the Great Tribulation.

Antiochus IV was the "supreme" Hellenizer and forced his one-world societal views on all of his subjects. The Hellenization of the Jews began in 173 BCE when Antiochus conspired with the Jewish High Priest at the time whose name was Jesus. This Jesus changed his name to Jason, a Greek name. Then in 169 BCE, Antiochus despoiled the Temple by taking its golden altar, lampstand, table of showbread, and the gold in the treasury to finance his campaigns.

Serious Hellenistic reform took place 167 BCE when a decree was issued for everyone in the empire to become one people by abandoning their own laws and religion. The Jews were forbidden from attending services in the Temple, participating in Sabbath and feast days, reading or possessing the Scriptures and circumcising their children. The penalty for failure to obey these laws was death!

On the 15th of Kislev in 167 BCE, Antiochus set up the "**abomination of desolation**" in the temple and built an altar on top of the existing altar of burnt offerings. No one knows for sure what this abomination was but many scholars have concluded that it was probably a statue of Zeus with Antiochus' face on it. Antiochus' desecration of the Temple was only a "type" of the "Abomination of Desolation" that is to come spoken of by Jesus Christ in His Olivet Discourse.

On the 25th of Kislev Antiochus sacrificed a pig on the altar and dedicated the temple to Zeus.

During this time a woman named Hannah and her seven sons were martyred for their faith. Each of the seven sons was asked in turn to bow to an idol or eat pork. Each son refused the request, professed his faith in God, and then was murdered. Upon refusal of the seventh son, both he and his mother were murdered.

A short time later, one of Antiochus' representatives entered the town of Modin to enforce the decree upon its people. He commanded one of the Jews to make a sacrifice to a foreign God. Then a priest named Mattathias Maccabees stepped forward and killed both of them thereby initiating a revolt. He led the revolt until his death later that year. Then, Judas Maccabees (The family name, Maccabees means "hammerer"), one of Matthias' five sons, took command of the resistance.

In a two-year span Judas won four major battles against superior Syrian forces and took control of Jerusalem in 164 BCE. He refurnished the temple with its furniture and utensils. Then he tore down the stones that covered the Lord's altar and had them buried. On the 25th of Kislev in 164 BCE, Judas rededicated the temple to God, exactly three years after Antiochus dedicated it to Zeus. He ordered a feast for the occasion, which lasted eight days and became known as Hanukkah.

When the temple was rededicated on the 25th of Kislev, the lamps on the seven-branched golden lampstand were lit providing the only light in the temple. However, when the lamps were lit only one jar of sacred olive oil could be found that was not polluted because the seal of the high priest on it had not been broken. A jar of oil was only enough to keep the lamps burning for one day. Yet the lamps miraculously stayed burning for the entire eight days of the feast until more oil could be prepared and dedicated. That is why Hanukkah is also called the Feast of Light.

An interesting sidebar to this story is that Judas Maccabees was killed in a battle in 160 BCE and his brother assumed the leadership of Israel until 142 BCE. From the Maccabees came the Hasmonean line of rulers in Israel, who eventually became Hellenized themselves and oppressed their own people. King Herod the Great defeated them in 37 BCE and established his own line of rulers.

by Michael Gibson, Key2Changes.com

The Hanukkah Story:

1 Maccabees 4:36-59

Purification and Rededication of the Temple. ³⁶ Then Judas and his brothers said, "Now that our enemies have been crushed, let us go up to purify the sanctuary and rededicate it." ³⁷ So the whole army assembled, and went up to Mount Zion. ³⁸ They found the sanctuary desolate, the altar desecrated, the gates burnt, weeds growing in the courts as in a thicket or on some mountain, and the priests' chambers demolished. ³⁹ Then they tore their garments and made great lamentation; they sprinkled their heads with ashes ⁴⁰ and prostrated themselves. And when the signal was given with trumpets, they cried out to Heaven.

⁴¹ Judas appointed men to attack those in the citadel, while he purified the sanctuary. ⁴² He chose blameless priests, devoted to the law; ⁴³ these purified the sanctuary and carried away the stones of the defilement to an unclean place. ⁴⁴ They deliberated what ought to be done with the altar for burnt offerings that had been desecrated. ⁴⁵ They decided it best to tear it down, lest it be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had defiled it; so they tore down the altar. ⁴⁶ They stored the stones in a suitable place on the temple mount, until the coming of a prophet who could determine what to do with them. ⁴⁷ Then they took uncut stones, according to the law, and built a new altar like the former one. ⁴⁸ They also repaired the sanctuary and the interior of the temple and consecrated the courts. ⁴⁹ They made new sacred vessels and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. ⁵⁰ Then they burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the lampstand, and these illuminated the temple. ⁵¹ They also put loaves on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

⁵² They rose early on the morning of the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, that is, the month of Kislev, in the year one hundred and forty-eight, ⁵³ and offered sacrifice according to the law on the new altar for burnt offerings that they had made. ⁵⁴ On the anniversary of the day on which the Gentiles had desecrated it, on that very day it was rededicated with songs, harps, lyres, and cymbals. ⁵⁵ All the people prostrated themselves and adored and praised Heaven, who had given them success.

⁵⁶ For eight days they celebrated the dedication of the altar and joyfully offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of deliverance and praise. ⁵⁷ They ornamented the facade of the temple with gold crowns and shields; they repaired the

gates and the priests' chambers and furnished them with doors. ⁵⁸There was great joy among the people now that the disgrace brought by the Gentiles was removed. ⁵⁹Then Judas and his brothers and the entire assembly of Israel decreed that every year for eight days, from the twenty-fifth day of the month Kislev, the days of the dedication of the altar should be observed with joy and gladness on the anniversary.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Maccabees+4%3A36-4%3A59&version=NABRE>

2 Maccabees 1:18-36

¹⁸Since we shall be celebrating the purification of the temple on the twenty-fifth day of the month Kislev, we thought it right to inform you, that you too may celebrate the feast of Booths and of the fire that appeared when Nehemiah, the builder of the temple and the altar, offered sacrifices. ¹⁹For when our ancestors were being led into captivity in Persia, devout priests at the time took some of the fire from the altar and hid it secretly in the hollow of a dry cistern, making sure that the place would be unknown to anyone. ²⁰Many years later, when it so pleased God, Nehemiah, commissioned by the king of Persia, sent the descendants of the priests who had hidden the fire to look for it. ²¹When they informed us that they could not find any fire, but only a thick liquid, he ordered them to scoop some out and bring it. After the material for the sacrifices had been prepared, Nehemiah ordered the priests to sprinkle the wood and what lay on it with the liquid. ²²This was done, and when at length the sun, which had been clouded over, began to shine, a great fire blazed up, so that everyone marveled. ²³While the sacrifice was being burned, the priests recited a prayer, and all present joined in with them. Jonathan led and the rest responded with Nehemiah.

²⁴The prayer was as follows: "Lord, Lord God, creator of all things, awesome and strong, just and merciful, the only king and benefactor, ²⁵who alone are gracious, just, almighty, and eternal, Israel's savior from all evil, who chose our ancestors and sanctified them: ²⁶accept this sacrifice on behalf of all your people Israel and guard and sanctify your portion. ²⁷Gather together our scattered people, free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look kindly on those who are despised and detested, and let the Gentiles know that you are our God. ²⁸Punish those who lord it over us and in their arrogance oppress us. ²⁹Plant your people in your holy place, as Moses said."

³⁰Then the priests sang hymns. ³¹After the sacrifice was consumed, Nehemiah ordered the rest of the liquid to be poured upon large stones. ³²As soon as this was done, a flame blazed up, but its light was lost in the brilliance coming from the altar. ³³When the event became known and the king of the Persians was told that, in the very place where the exiled priests had hidden the fire, a liquid was found with which Nehemiah and his people had burned the sacrifices, ³⁴the king, after verifying the fact, fenced the place off and declared it sacred. ³⁵To those whom the king favored, he distributed many benefits he received. ³⁶Nehemiah and his companions called the liquid naphtha, meaning purification, but most people named it naphtha.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Maccabees+1%3A18-36&version=NABRE>

Question: "What is the prophecy of 2,300 days in Daniel?"

Answer: Daniel 8 speaks of 2,300 days in a prophecy concerning a persecution of the Jewish people during the intertestamental period. Similarly, in Revelation 11 and 12, John mentions 1,260 days in two prophecies concerning another persecution of the Jews during the end times. The main differences between these two prophecies are 1) Daniel's has been fulfilled, and John's has not; and 2) Daniel predicts the actions of Antiochus Epiphanes, and John predicts those of the Antichrist.

The prophecy of the 2,300 days ("evenings and mornings") is found in Daniel 8:13-14:

"Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, 'How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, the surrender of the sanctuary and the trampling underfoot of the Lord's people?' He said to me, 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated.'"

The time period covered, 2,300 days, figures to about 6 1/3 years. We believe this prophecy was fulfilled before the birth of Christ, during the reign of the Seleucid king Antiochus IV (Epiphanes). Antiochus desecrated the temple in Jerusalem and severely persecuted the Jews from about September 171 BC to December 165 BC. When Antiochus died, the Jews purified and rededicated the temple, just as Daniel had predicted. These events are commemorated in the celebration of Hanukkah.

The detailed prophecies contained in God's Word are part of what makes the Bible unique among religious texts. Our

God can “make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come” ([Isaiah 46:10](#)), and He has revealed significant events in the future, counting out the very days of those periods of time.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/prophecy-2300-days-Daniel.html>

On **the fifteenth day of the month of Kislev** in the year 145, King Antiochus set up The Awful Horror on the altar of the Temple, and pagan altars were built in the towns throughout Judea.

The first of Daniel’s own visions recorded in Daniel 7 is a broad summary of the times of the Gentiles, with emphasis on the climactic events culminating in the second coming of Christ to the earth. Beginning in chapter 8, Daniel’s second vision concerns the empires of Persia and Greece as they relate to Israel. Under Persian government, Israelites went back to rebuild their land and their city, Jerusalem. Under Grecian domination, in particular under Antiochus Epiphanes, the city and the temple were again desolated. Daniel 9 presents Israel’s history from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah to the inauguration of the kingdom from heaven at the second coming of Christ immediately preceded by the time of great trouble for Israel. Chapters 10-11 reveal the events relating the Persian and Greek Empires to Israel, with emphasis on the Gentile oppression of Israel. The final section, 11:36—12:13, deals with the end of the age, the period of the revived Roman Empire, and the deliverance of Israel. It is fitting that the last five chapters of Daniel should be written in Hebrew, the language of Israel.

The second vision of Daniel occurred, according to verse 1, “in the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar,” in other words, about two years after the vision of chapter 7. Because it took place in the reign of Belshazzar, it is clear that both chapter 7 and 8 chronologically occur before chapter 5, the night of Belshazzar’s feast.

As Daniel considers, the he goat attacks the ram. The ram is identified with the one seen earlier in the vision as standing before the river. An unusual feature of the attack by the he goat is that it is accomplished “in the fury of his power.” There was considerable feeling based upon the historical background in which the Persians had attacked Greece earlier in history. Now it was time for Greek retaliation against the Persians. The goat accordingly “moved with choler against him,” that is, “in great anger,” and butting the ram, breaks the ram’s two horns. This symbolically refers to the disintegration of the MedoPersian Empire with the result that the ram had no power to stand before the he goat. The contest ends with the he goat casting the ram to the ground and stamping upon it. All of this, of course, was fulfilled dramatically in history. The forces of Alexander first met and defeated the Persians at the Granicus River in Asia Minor in May 334 B.C., which was the beginning of the complete conquest of the entire Persian Empire. A year and a half later a battle occurred at Issus (November 333 b.c.) near the northeastern tip of the Mediterranean Sea. The power of Persia was finally broken at Gaugamela near Nineveh in October 331 b.c.⁴²² There is no discrepancy between history, which records a series of battles, and Daniel’s representation that the Persian Empire fell with one blow. Daniel is obviously describing the result rather than the details.⁴²³ That the prophecy is accurate, insofar as it goes, most expositors concede. Here again, the correspondence of the prophecy to later history is so accurate that liberal critics attempt to make it history instead of prophecy.

The Great Horn Broken 8:8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. As Daniel contemplates in his vision the triumph of the he goat, an unexpected development takes place. The great horn between the eyes of the he goat is broken just when the he goat has reached the pinnacle of its strength. Out of this grows four notable horns described as being “toward the four winds of heaven.” Expositors, both liberal and conservative, have interpreted this verse as representing the untimely death of Alexander and the division of his empire into four major sections. Alexander, who had conquered more of the world than any previous ruler, was not able to conquer himself. Partly due to a strenuous exertion, his dissipated life, and a raging fever, Alexander died in a drunken debauch at Babylon, not yet thirty-three years of age. His death left a great conquest without an effective single leader, and it took about twenty years for the empire to be successfully divided. Practically all commentators, however, recognize the four horns as symbolic of the four kingdoms of the Diadochi which emerged as follows: (1) Cassander assumed rule over Macedonia and Greece; (2) Lysimachus took control of Thrace, Bithynia, and most of Asia Minor; (3) Seleucus took Syria and the lands to the east including Babylonia; (4) Ptolemy established rule over Egypt and possibly Palestine and Arabia Petraea.⁴²⁶ A fifth contender for political power, Antigonus, was soon defeated. Thus, with remarkable accuracy, Daniel in his prophetic vision predicts that the empire of Alexander was divided into four divisions, not three or less or five or more.

These conquests, of course, are confirmed in the history of Syria, especially under Antiochus Epiphanes, the eighth king in the Syrian dynasty who reigned 175-164 B.C. (1 Mace 1:10; 6:16). In his lifetime, he conducted military

expeditions in relation to all of these areas. Montgomery considers the expression “toward the pleasant land” as a gloss “which is absurd when aligned with the given points of the compass, in which the book is remarkably accurate.” There is no justification for this deletion from the text, however, as from Daniel’s viewpoint in this whole section, the important question is how the times of the Gentiles relate to Israel. The land of Israel indeed became the battle ground between Syria and Egypt, and the setting of some of Antiochus Epiphanes’ most significant blasphemous acts against God. According to 1 Maccabees 1:20, Revised Standard Version, Antiochus first invaded Egypt and then Jerusalem: “after subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred and forty-third year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force.” As a result of his military conquests, the little horn, representing Antiochus Epiphanes, is said to grow great “even to the host of heaven.” He is pictured as casting some of the host and of the stars to the ground and stamping upon them. This difficult prophecy has aroused many technical discussions as that of Montgomery which extends over several pages. If the mythological explanations such as identifying stars with heathen gods or the seven planets is discarded and this is considered genuine prophecy, probably the best explanation is that this prophecy relates to the persecution and destruction of the people of God with its defiance of the angelic hosts who are their protectors, including the power of God Himself. As Leupold says, “That stars should signify God’s holy people is not strange when one considers as a background the words that were spoken to Abraham concerning the numerical increase of the people of God, Gen. 15:5; 22:17. To this may be added Dan. 12:3, where a starlike glory is held out to those who “turn many to righteousness.” Compare also Matt. 13:43. If the world calls those men and women stars who excel in one or another department of human activity, why should not a similar statement be still more appropriate with reference to God’s people?” Leupold considers the host and the stars in apposition, that is, “the host even the stars.” That Antiochus blasphemed God and heavenly power as well as persecuted the people of Israel, the people of God, is all too evident from history. Even Driver states, “The stars are intended to symbolize the faithful Israelites: cf. Enoch 46:7.”

According to verse 11, the little horn, fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes historically, magnifies himself even to the prince of the host. By this is meant that he exalted himself up to the point of claiming divine honor, as brought out in his name Epiphanes which refers to glorious manifestation such as belonged to God. His pretensions are similar to the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 20. Antiochus, however, obviously also directed blasphemous opposition against God Himself and to this extent magnified himself against God as well as reaching toward the glory and honor belonging to God.

As a specific illustration and supreme act manifesting this attitude, it is stated that he took away the daily offerings and desecrated the sanctuary. “By him,” in verse 11, is literally, “from him,” that is, from God. By this is meant that Antiochus stopped the morning and evening sacrifices, taking away from God what were daily tokens of Israel’s worship.⁴³³ The expression daily sacrifices, from the Hebrew *tamid*, which means “constant,” applies to the daily offerings (cf. Ex 29:38 ff.; Num 28:3 ff.). Young, accordingly, feels that it should not be restricted to the morning and evening sacrifices, but that it included all the offerings customarily offered in the temple services.⁴³⁴ This is brought out in 1 Maccabees 1:44-49, referring to the command of Antiochus Epiphanes to depart from the worship of the law of Moses, “And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane Sabbaths and feasts, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, to build altars in sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they should forget the law and change all the ordinances. And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die” (RSV). Although it is not necessary to take the expression “the place of his sanctuary was cast down” as meaning destruction by Antiochus of the temple itself, it is of interest that in 1 Maccabees 4:42 ff., in connection with the cleansing of the sanctuary, they literally tore down the altar and built a new one, “they also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts” (1 Mace 4:48). As Young comments, “Apparently Antiochus did not actually tear down the temple, although eventually he desecrated it to such a point that it was hardly fit for use.”⁴³⁵ The obvious parallel between the cessation of the daily sacrifice by Antiochus Epiphanes and that anticipated in Daniel 9:27, which occurs three and one-half years before the second coming of Christ, has led some expositors to find here evidence for reference to the end of the age and not simply to Antiochus. As far as this prophecy is concerned, however, it did have complete fulfillment in Antiochus.

If they are literally twenty-three hundred days, what is the fulfillment? The attempts to relate this to the last seven years of the Gentile period referred to in Daniel 9:27 have confused rather than helped the interpretation. Twenty-three hundred days is less than seven years of 360 days, and the half figure of eleven hundred and fifty days is short of the three and one-half years of the great tribulation. Exegetically, a safe course to follow is to find fulfillment in Antiochus Epiphanes, and then proceed to consider what eschatological or unfilled prophecy may be involved.

Taking all the evidence into consideration, the best conclusion is that the twenty-three hundred days of Daniel are fulfilled in the period from 171 b.c. and culminated in the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 164 b.c. The period when the sacrifices ceased was the latter part of this longer period. Although the evidence available today does not offer fulfillment to the precise day, the twenty-three hundred days, obviously a round number, is relatively accurate in defining the period when the Jewish religion began to erode under the persecution of Antiochus, and the period as a whole concluded with his death. The alternate theories produce more problems than they solve. Considering the days as year-days has provided no fulfillment. Using the figure of eleven hundred and fifty days only creates more problems as it does not fit precisely any scheme of events and has a dubious” basis. By far the simplest and most honoring to the Scriptures is the solution that the twenty-three hundred days date from 171 b.c. to 164 b.c. This prophecy may safely be said now to have been fulfilled and does not have any further eschatological significance in the sense of anticipating a future fulfillment. As far as Daniel 8:1-14 is concerned, there is no adequate reason for considering it in any other light than that of fulfilled prophecy from the standpoint of the twentieth century. It is adequately explained in the history of the Medo-Persian and Greek empires, and specifically, in the activities of Antiochus Epiphanes.

1 Maccabees 1:54 - Bible Gateway
Daniel: The John Walvoord Prophecy Commentary

“The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.” John 1:9