

Abomination of Desolation: The Primary Sign of the Great Tribulation

I. WHAT IS THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION?

- A. The Abomination of Desolation will clearly signal the beginning of the Great Tribulation. The Church will see it standing in the holy place of the Jerusalem Temple and will understand.

¹⁵ When you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²² Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved... (Mt. 24:15-22)

- B. The Abomination of Desolation involves a specific worldwide practice in the End-Times that is an abomination to God. This abomination will lead to the desolation (destruction) of many people and nations. This abomination begins when the Antichrist claims to be God and then forces hundreds of millions of people by law to accept this claim as evidenced by worshipping him as God. This legal decree of the Antichrist will cause great desolation worldwide.

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin (Antichrist) is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. (2 Thes. 2:2-4)

- C. The Antichrist will set up an idol (image or statue) of himself in the Jerusalem Temple and then command the nations to worship him as God. Multitudes will join in this blasphemy of God. This will be the greatest abomination to God in history, yet it will be the Church's greatest hour.

- D. The abomination to God will occur in two ways. First, by the fact that the Antichrist will demand by law to be received as God as he sits in the holy place in the Jerusalem Temple. The essence of the abomination is that he uses his political position to force the whole earth into satanic worship. Second, because hundreds of millions of people will fully accept his claims.

- E. The Antichrist will seek to bring desolation (destruction) to all who refuse to worship him. God will destroy the people who do worship him by the plagues in the Book of Revelation (7 seals, 7 trumpets and 7 bowls of wrath). This abomination will lead to 3½ years of global desolation.

- F. The very thing that Satan wanted from Jesus in Matt. 4 is what he demands from the whole earth.

⁸ The devil...showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:8-9)

- G. The Antichrist will demand to be worshipped before an idol as Nebuchadnezzar did (Dan. 3:1-6).

¹ Nebuchadnezzar...made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits (90 feet) and its width six cubits (9 feet)...⁴ Then a herald cried aloud, "...You shall... worship the gold image ...⁶ whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into...fiery furnace." (Dan. 3:1-6)

II. ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION: SUPERNATURAL STATUE OF THE ANTICHRIST

- A. The supernatural image or statue of the Antichrist that breathes and talks along with the mark of the Beast will be the main vehicles to deceive and enforce the worldwide worship of the Antichrist. The False Prophet will convince many to make an image to the Antichrist.
- ⁴ *They worshiped the Beast (Antichrist), saying, "Who is like the Beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5...He was given authority to continue for forty-two months (3½ years)...7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life...11 I saw another beast (False Prophet)... 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first Beast (Antichrist)...and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven...14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs...telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the Beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the Beast to be killed. 16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18...His number is 666. (Rev. 13:4-18)*
- B. *The great catalytic event* that thrusts the Antichrist into worldwide prominence will be a dramatic head wound and apparent healing (Rev. 13:3, 12, 14). He will seemingly be killed and healed before all causing them to be overwhelmed with awe so as to worship him. It will be a mockery, a parody of Jesus' dying and rising from the dead. After the Antichrist's head wound is healed, then the Abomination of Desolation which involves the setting up his image in the Jerusalem Temple will be the next significant legislation in his plan to rule the earth.
- C. The image of the Beast is when the Antichrist sets up a blasphemous idol of himself in the Jerusalem Temple. The image will probably resemble the Antichrist. It may even speak like him. It will represent him in a personal way. This will cause great desolation, even threatening the life of the majority for the people on earth (Mt. 24:22). This is one of the most significant prophetic signs in the End-Times. John emphasized this statue ten times (Rev. 13:14, 15 [three times]; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). This will occur in the middle of the last 7 year period.
- ²² *And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved (physically saved from death) but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:22)*
- D. The image or statue will combine cutting edge technology and a supernatural demonic element causing this image to breathe and speak. What will it say? I think it will prophesy by demonic power as it tells people private information, such as giving the contents of their dreams or of a private conversation with a deceased person (as in a séance). It will speak things that will cause the nations to worship the Antichrist as God.

- E. People will worship the image (or the statue) of the Antichrist.
⁹ *A third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the Beast (Antichrist) and his image, and receives his mark...10 he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone...11 And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever...who worship the Beast and his image..." (Rev. 14:9-11)*
- F. Men will make idols that will be connected to the abomination in Jerusalem. They will make the idols out of different materials according to their economic ability.
²⁰ *The rest of mankind...did not repent...that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 They did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or thefts. (Rev. 9:20-21)*
- G. There will be some sort of a global network of these high-tech statues (or holograms) in local "Antichrist worship sanctuaries" that will be connected to the Jerusalem temple. They will probably monitor the people's attendance (to give proof of their allegiance to the Antichrist).
- H. *The mark of the Beast* (Antichrist) will be a public mark on people's right hand or forehead. It will be used to regularly identify the people that promise to worship the Antichrist (Rev. 13:16-17). Those who refuse this mark will not be allowed to buy or sell the necessities of life. They will be viewed as criminals of the state who are guilty of the death penalty. It will be illegal to refuse the mark. All who refuse to worship the Antichrist will be sought out. Parents will betray their children and children will betray their parents who refuse to receive this mark.
- I. This mark will be the outward proof of one's covenant to worship Satan and the Antichrist. In other words, people will not accidentally take this mark, nor will it be given to them against their will. The significance of the mark is found in making a heart commitment to worship Satan. Just as no one can accidentally commit their life to Jesus and receive salvation, so the mark will only be taken by those who willingly understand what they are doing. The foundational technology for the mark of the Beast currently exists in the form of implanted microchips. Microchip technology itself is not evil, but it gives us insight into how the mark could operate. The mark will undoubtedly be much more advanced than our present technology.
- J. This abomination will lead to worldwide desolation. It is important to have clarity about this.
¹⁵ *The four angels...were released to kill a third of mankind. (Rev. 9:15)*
¹⁴ *The LORD will judge all flesh; and the slain of the LORD shall be many. (Isa 66:14-16)*
³³ *The slain of the LORD shall be from one end of the earth even to the other... (Jer 25:33)*
¹ *The LORD makes the earth empty and makes it waste ...3. The land shall be entirely emptied and utterly plundered ...6. The curse has devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left. (Isa. 24:1-6)*

III. DANIEL'S PROPHECIES ABOUT THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

- A. The Abomination of Desolation is referred to by name 6 times in Scripture, 4 times by Daniel (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and twice by Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14). The Abomination of Desolation is the scriptural name for this period of this crisis and its activity.
- B. The Abomination of Desolation will need to be “set up”. In other words, the whole system needs to be “set up”. This will involve setting up the statue of the Antichrist (image of the Beast) in the Jerusalem Temple and setting up a worldwide infrastructure so that all can worship the image (Rev. 14:9-11). The Abomination of Desolation or the statue or image of the Antichrist will ‘stand in’ or be ‘set up’ in the Jerusalem Temple. The Abomination involves desolating the Jerusalem Temple with the image of the Beast and stopping the animal sacrifice offered there.
- ¹¹ *And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the Abomination of Desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. (Dan 12:11)*
- ²⁷ *On the wing of abominations shall be one (Antichrist) who makes desolate ... (Dan 9:27)*
- C. Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV; 175-164 BC) defiled the Temple in a way that would prophetically foretell how the Antichrist will defile it in the End-Times. Daniel 11:31 describes historical events in Antiochus’ day that give insight into when the Antichrist does this.
- ³¹ *They shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the Abomination of Desolation. (Dan 11:31)*
- ¹³ *I heard a holy one (angel) speaking...“How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host (army of Israel) to be trampled under foot?” (Dan 8:13)*
- D. Jesus quoted Daniel 12:11 as one of the most significant events in the End-Times. Matthew added, “whoever reads, let him understand.” Gabriel told Daniel to understand (Dan. 9:23, 25).
- ¹⁵ *When you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand)... (Mt. 24:15)*
- E. The Abomination of Desolation cannot occur unless Israel rebuilds the Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. For the Antichrist to stop the daily sacrifices in the Temple, the Tribulation Temple must exist. The Temple does not currently exist, but we know that it must be rebuilt (Mt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1-2; 13:12-18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11). Even now plans to rebuild the Third Temple are being pursued aggressively in Israel. This may occur just before the first half of the final 7-year period (often referred to as Daniel's 70th Week).
- F. The Third Temple is NOT the same as the Millennial Temple. There are two distinct Jerusalem Temples prophesied in Scriptures i.e. the Tribulation Temple (Third Temple) which will be built by unbelieving Jews and then desecrated by the Antichrist. The Millennial Temple will be built by Jesus (Isa. 2:3; 60:6, 10, 13; Ezek. 37:26-28; 40-48; Zech. 2:11; 6:12-15; 14:16-21).