

The Abomination of Desolation of Matthew 24: Jerusalem Compassed with Armies



The early Protestant Reformers asserted that "Scripture interprets Scripture", which means the Bible is its own best interpreter. With that in mind, let's look at the Olivet Discourse as told in two of the three synoptic Gospels of Matthew 24 and Luke 21. I am not including Mark 13 because it's similar to Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:15 **When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)
16 Then let them which be **in Judaea** flee into the mountains:
17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:
18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:
21 For **then** shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

The parallel passage of the Olivet Discourse in the Book of Luke adds more detail to what Matthew wrote.

Luke 21:20 And **when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies**, then know that **the desolation thereof** is nigh.

21 Then let them which are **in Judaea** flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and **let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.**

22 For these be the **days of vengeance**, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be **great distress** in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and **Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles**, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

How Luke 21 explains Matthew 24

Let's compare Matthew 24 verse by verse with Luke 21 and see what we can learn.

Matthew 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

*Luke 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that **the desolation thereof is nigh.***

Luke 21:20 tells us what Matthew 24:15 doesn't. It explains clearly the final prophecy of Daniel 9:27:

Daniel 9:27b ... and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The "overspreading of abominations" is the Roman army. "He shall make it desolate" is the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Notice Luke 21:20 says, "the desolation thereof is nigh"? The desolation of what? Clearly from the context, it's talking about Jerusalem. And when? In 70AD by General Titus.

*Matthew 24:16 Then let them which be **in Judaea** flee into the mountains:*

*Luke 20:21 Then let them which are **in Judaea** flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and **let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.***

See how Luke adds more detail to the Olivet Discourse compared to Matthew? Not only does it tell the people of Judea to flee to the mountains, but it tells those who live outside Judea not to try to enter it! And why? Because if you do, the Romans will kill you! Do you see how this prophecy applies only to the people Jesus was talking to at the time? It's cannot possibly be an Endtime prophecy unless you include 70 AD as part of the Endtime. Jesus was telling who to flee? The people who lived in Jerusalem and Judea, not anywhere else in the world. And who obeyed Jesus' warning? The Jewish Christians! Every one of them was saved from the slaughter of the Romans! The

ones who were killed were the ones who believed the false prophets and fled to the Temple to be saved.

*Luke 24:22 For these be the **days of vengeance**, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

This verse is not included in Matthew 24. It explains why Rome was attacking Jerusalem. The “days of vengeance” are God’s wrath on the unbelieving Jews who rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Messiah. Jesus Himself brought the Roman army to destroy Jerusalem and the Temple to show that God is done with the Jews as a people. True Israel today consists of both Jews and Gentiles! The Epistles of Paul and the Book of Hebrews make this abundantly clear.

Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And **if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed**, and heirs according to the promise.

Hebrews 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

13 In that he saith, **A new covenant, he hath made the first old.** Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

*Matthew 24:21 For then shall **be great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

*Luke 21:23b ... for there shall be **great distress** in the land, and wrath upon this people.*

When was the “then” of Matthew 24:21? It was when Rome was attacking Jerusalem. The “days of vengeance” are God’s wrath on the unbelieving Jews who rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, the Messiah. Those days are over. There was never such tribulation of the Jews as there was in 70 AD!

Notice that Matthew 24 says “great tribulation” and Luke 21 says “great distress”? There are both the same thing! And Luke goes further and says, “wrath upon this people”. Upon which people? Upon the unbelieving Jews who did not obey Jesus’ warning to flee Jerusalem and Judea! They were killed by

the Romans. According to pastor Chuck Baldwin of Liberty Fellowship, General Titus did not want to totally destroy the city of Jerusalem and the Temple. His army was so enraged against the Jews his couldn't stop them! The soldiers therefore must have been divinely inspired to do what they did! Not even their own general could stop them from destroying the city and the Temple.

I hope I have given you enough food for thought in case you believe in the Futurist doctrine of a coming third Temple of Solomon and a future Antichrist occupying it for a seven-year peace pact with the Jews. The Temple may be rebuilt in the future, but I would not call it a fulfillment of prophecy. And I certainly wouldn't call it the "holy place" of Matthew 24:15! It would be an abomination to God because it would reflect yet the further rejection of the Blood of Christ in preference of the blood of animal sacrifices. God is finished with animal sacrifices! How do I know that?

Daniel 9:27 ...he (the Messiah) **shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease...**

Hebrews 9:11 But **Christ** being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, **not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;**
12 **Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood** he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

"Ok James Japan! So you're saying there won't be great tribulation in the Endtime?" I'm not saying there won't be tribulation caused by the enemies of Christ resulting in persecution of Christians. And I certainly do not believe that the Lord will rapture the Saints out of the midst or even before the beginning of great persecution. Nowhere does the Bible say that. If you think it does, please state the Scriptures that say so in the comments below. What I am saying is we do not know how long such a tribulation will last. It may be much shorter than 3 and a half years. It may be much longer than that. We cannot go by a final seven years scenario as I was taught because such a doctrine is based on a false interpretation of Daniel 9:27.

"So what will happen, James Japan?" I don't know! We only know that Christ will return for us. When? We don't know. Did any prophet of God predict that antichrists would bring the entire world into bondage and many into economic hardship by engineering the coronavirus scare which resulted in pandemic phobia and leading to greater government control of the people through vaccinations and vaccination passports? NO! NOT ONE PROPHET OF GOD PREDICTED THAT! Am I wrong? If I am, please educate me in the comments below. Thank you!