

Session 12

# The Abomination of Desolation

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## A. Introduction

1. The Abomination of Desolation is a significant and primary sign event in the End Times that is mentioned multiple times in Scripture. This event is very important for God's people to know and was referred to by Jesus Himself in Matthew 24:15–22.
2. It is directly referred to six times in Scripture: four times by Daniel (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and two times by Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14). The events that would take place as part of the Abomination of Desolation are also described by Apostle Paul in 2 Thes. 2:3–4 and Apostle John in Rev. 13:12–18.

## B. What is the Abomination of Desolation?

1. The Abomination of Desolation consists of a series of evil and abominable events that happen almost simultaneously and are closely linked to the Mark-of-the-Beast economic system and Antichrist worship.
2. This act of abomination will occur in the middle of the last seven years (“middle of the week”) before Jesus returns (Dan. 9:27) and it will occur in Jerusalem making it central to the Antichrist's worldwide religion.
3. Central to this Abomination is the image of the Beast (Antichrist) which will be a statue (image or idol) that is demonically empowered so that it will seem to think, talk, breathe, and make laws (Rev. 13:14–16).
4. The desolation will occur in two different ways:
  - a. The Antichrist will seek to desolate or destroy any who refuse to worship him;
  - b. God will desolate or destroy in judgment all those who yield to the pressure to worship the Antichrist.

## C. Three Main Events of the Abomination of Desolation

1. Firstly, the Antichrist will put a stop to Jewish sacrificial worship in the Jerusalem temple and declare himself to be God (2 Thes. 2:3–4; Dan. 9:27).

- a. The Antichrist will exalt himself above all by sitting in the temple to demand worldwide worship and allegiance.
  - b. After the mortal wound on the Antichrist's head is healed (Rev. 13:12), the Abomination of Desolation will be the key event that begins his open and aggressive plan to rule the whole earth as God.
  - c. We can see a prophetic picture of this through what the Greek king Antiochus Epiphanes did in 167 BC:
    - i. He defiled the Jewish temple by sacrificing a pig — which is abominable to the Jewish people — on the altar in Jerusalem.
    - ii. This would prophetically foreshadow how the Antichrist would defile the Jewish temple in the End Times (Dan. 11:31).
2. Secondly, the False Prophet will set up the image of the Beast.
- a. This statue (image) will be the abomination that is in the temple. Apostle John made reference to this image ten times (Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).
  - b. This image will be the greatest abomination to God in history because the Antichrist will demand to be worshipped as God by all the nations.
  - c. It will be demonically empowered to breathe, speak, make laws and prophesy (Rev. 13:14–15).
3. Thirdly, the False Prophet will cause all the nations to worship the Antichrist, either by force or by deception.
- a. The False Prophet will also institute the Mark-of-the-Beast economic system.
  - b. Three reasons why many will be deceived by the Antichrist:
    - i. The Antichrist will perform many demonic signs and miracles (Rev. 13:13);
    - ii. The image of the beast will be able to breathe and talk (Rev. 13:15);
    - iii. The Antichrist will likely be resurrected after being killed by a deadly wound (Rev. 13:12). However, the source of this power is from Satan.

#### **D. The Jewish Temples in Jerusalem**

1. Much of End-Time prophecy surrounds the nation of Israel and makes reference to a Jewish temple in Jerusalem. A temple does not currently exist, but we know that one must be rebuilt in order for certain prophetic Scriptures to be fulfilled.
2. In order for the Abomination of Desolation to occur, the nation of Israel has to be back in her Land with a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem in which the Antichrist will set up the image (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 25:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 15–18).
3. Thus, the Abomination of Desolation cannot occur unless Israel rebuilds the temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1–2; 13:12–18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11).
4. Events and activities related to a Jewish temple in Jerusalem — including its rebuilding — signal the nearness of the End Times.
5. There are four temples found throughout Scripture that have been or will be built in Jerusalem:
  - a. First Temple: Solomon’s Temple (2 Chron. 2 – 7)
    - i. This was the very first temple established in the nation of Israel. It was planned for and funded by King David, who made all the necessary preparations for his son, Solomon, to build it.
  - b. Second Temple: The Zerubbabel Temple (Ezra 3)
    - i. After the first temple was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar and his army, this second temple was built when Jewish exiles returned to Jerusalem after their period of exile in Babylon.
    - ii. This is the temple that was in existence during the time of Jesus’ First Coming, and was destroyed by Emperor Titus in AD 70. Since then, until today, there has not been a Jewish temple in existence on Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The nation of Israel was also scattered and ceased to exist until 1948.
  - c. Third Temple: The Tribulation Temple
    - i. This is the temple that will have to be built before the start of the Great Tribulation, in order for the Abomination of Desolation to occur.
    - ii. It will be built by unbelieving Jewish people and they will be allowed to reinstate the Mosaic system of sacrifices and offerings.

- d. Fourth Temple / The Millennial Temple (Eze. 43)
  - i. This will be the final temple that will be built by Jesus in Jerusalem when He returns. It is termed the Millennial Temple as it will be where Jesus governs from during the Millennial Kingdom.
6. Even now, plans to rebuild a Jewish temple — which will be the third temple — are being pursued aggressively in Israel.
  - a. However, this is unlikely to occur until the first 3½ years of the final seven years of human history (often referred to as Daniel's 70th Week), during the period of false peace and safety.
7. Paul's prophecy about the Tribulation Temple is founded in Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27). Paul prophesied of the desecration of the Tribulation Temple by the Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:4).
8. For the Antichrist to stop the daily sacrifices in a temple, the Tribulation Temple must exist (Dan. 12:11; Rev. 11:1–2).
9. The Third Temple is NOT the same as the Millennial Temple. There are two distinct Jerusalem temples in Scripture that have yet to be built:
  - a. The Tribulation Temple (Third Temple), which will be built by unbelieving Jewish people and then desecrated by the Antichrist;
  - b. The Millennial Temple, which 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).

## **E. Conclusion**

1. The Abomination of Desolation is an important sign event that signals the beginning of the final 3½ years of human history. It also marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation and open persecution of the saints and Israel by the Antichrist.
2. As believers, we need to watch and pray as we see events unfolding in the nations. We also need to prepare ourselves for the significant implications of this event, so that when it happens, we will not be surprised but will be able to stand and shine.