

The Last Days re-visited

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Chapter nine

The Abomination of Desolation

As we study to determine the identity of “the abomination of desolation,” let us first place all the Scriptures that contain this phrase before us:

When ye therefore shall see **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (*whoso reads, let him understand*) (Matthew 24:15 AV, emphasis added)

But when ye shall see **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (*let him that reads understand*;) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains: (Mark 13:14 AV, emphasis added)

As we see above, there are only two places in Holy Scripture where the phrase “the abomination of desolation” is used. In both cases the writer urges the **FIRST CENTURY** (and all subsequent) **READERS** to be sure that they “understand” what is meant by that phrase, thus the identity of the “abomination” that brings about the desolation of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. In light of that fact, it is incredible that nearly 2000 years later the identification of that “abomination” is still being debated.

It is generally agreed that Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture; so let us see how the Scripture identifies the “abomination of desolation.”

Both of the above Scriptures identify “the prophet Daniel” as the one who has spoken about this “abomination.” However, Daniel does not use the phrase “the abomination of desolation.” Daniel states:

And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and **THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKES DESOLATE** is set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days. (Daniel 12:11)

Taken in the total context (Dan.9:1-12:13) of this passage of Scripture, Daniel clearly states that, "...from the time that...the abomination is set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" until the desolation occurs. A quick bit of math will show that 1290 days is equal to 3 1/2 years. We now know that the desolation of the temple and the city of Jerusalem occurred in September of 70 AD. Three and one half years before that the "abomination" that caused the desolation was set up. Daniel 12:7 establishes the same time frame and states that after the "time (one year), times (two years), and half time =one half year); ...He shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people (Jews), and all these things shall be accomplished." In a very interesting statement in the same context as His statement about the "abomination", Jesus told his first century followers "these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled...Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away until all be fulfilled."(Luke 21:22, 32) How could it be stated any clearer; by the time that the temple and the city of Jerusalem was desolated in 70AD, **everything** that Daniel and the other prophets had **written about the physical city of Jerusalem had been fulfilled!!!**

A careful re-examination of the verse above informs us that the setting "up of the abomination" was inherently connected to "the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away." Josephus writes:

...at this time...some of those that principally excited the people to go to war...Eleazar, the son of Ananias the high priest, a very bold youth, who was at that time governor of the temple, **persuaded those that officiated in the divine service to receive no gift or sacrifice for any foreigner. And this was the true beginning of our war with the Romans: for they rejected the sacrifice of Caesar on this account:...which is customary to offer...that they did now irritate the Romans to take arms against them, and invited them to make war upon them, and brought up novel rules of strange divine worship, and determined to have their city condemned for impiety...those who profaned it (the temple); as did the seditious, with Eleazar.** (Josephus, Flavius, Wars of the Jews, Book II, Chapter XVII, para.2-3 & 5, p.490-491)

In Daniel 11: 30-32, we are informed that "arms shall stand on his part, and **they** shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and **they shall place the abomination that causes the desolation.**" These are not Romans but Jews as we have demonstrated above.

The Hebrew word translated abomination in 12:11 & 11:31 is “shiqquwts (shik-koots’) and it is only used one (1) other place in Daniel:

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading **ABOMINATIONS** he shall make *the temple* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined (the **WRATH** of Yahweh) shall be poured upon the desolators (I. e. the abominators). (Daniel 9:27, emphasis and comments added)

In Daniel 9:2 we find that Daniel learned from the “books of Jeremiah the prophet” that Yahweh “would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem” while the Jews were in the Babylonian captivity.

Thus it seems prudent that, we should take a very careful look at the writings of Jeremiah. In so doing, we find that Jeremiah makes much use of “shiqquwts,” the word translated abomination. The most informative of these are listed below:

For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, said Yahweh: **they have set their ABOMINATIONS in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.** (Jeremiah 7:30)

I have seen **your adulteries, and your neighings, the lewdness of your whoredom, and your ABOMINATIONS** on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when *shall it* once *be*? (Jeremiah 13:27 AV, emphasis added)

But **they set their ABOMINATIONS in the house, which is called by my name, to defile it.** (Jeremiah 32:34 AV, emphasis added)

The prophet Ezekiel also uses this word several times, one of which we show below:

Wherefore, *as* I live, said the Lord GOD; Surely, **because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all your ABOMINATIONS,** therefore will I also diminish *thee*; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity. (Ezekiel 5:11, emphasis added)

The Hebrew word shiqquwts is used a total of 26 times in the Old Testament. twenty three (23) times it is applied to the abominations of the children of Israel, particularly of the house of Judah. It is clear from reading Jeremiah, that the primary reason that the house of Judah (Jews) was punished by being sent into the Babylonian captivity was that they had “set their abominations in the” temple thus defiling it. Thus is demonstrated a very high probability that the “abomination that

causes desolation” which Jesus Christ spoke of *would be an abomination that the Jews themselves place in the temple of Yahweh*. Now let us return to Daniel to see what Daniel identified as that “abomination”

In Daniel 11:30-31, we find Daniel’s description of “the abomination that cause desolation.” Daniel describes them as Jews that have forsaken the holy covenant (the Mosaic marriage covenant), that take up “arms” “on his part” and “pollute the sanctuary of strength, and ...take away the daily sacrifice, and...place the abomination that causes desolation...and do wickedly against the holy covenant.” These are Jews not Romans as we have demonstrated above.

Thus we have now learned that “the abomination of desolation” spoken of by Jesus is set up by the Jews themselves. In vs. 31 Daniel identifies the leader of this wicked group by the use of the pronoun “his”. Daniel states that “arms (men of strength, probably with weapons) shall stand on **his** part.” Is there any place in the New Testament where a Jews are described as those who forsake the holy covenant and pollutes the temple? We think there is.

The apostle Paul stated that he had “declared...all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27) According to both Matthew and Mark, the identity of the “abomination of desolation” was part of the counsel of God. Where then, did Paul declare the identity of the “abomination of desolation?” To the discerning reader it is evident that Paul declared the identity of the “abomination of desolation” in 2Thessalonians. **The “abomination of desolation” is none other than Paul’s “man of sin...the son of destruction (desolation).”**

Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come **a falling away** (from the holy covenant) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of destruction; Who opposes (Yahweh) and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that **he** as God **sits in the temple of God**, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholds that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now hinders *will hinder*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall **that Wicked** be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his Presence: *Even him*, whose presence is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And **for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie**: That they all might be judged (condemned) who believed not the truth (of Jesus Christ), but

had pleasure in unrighteousness (I.e. lawlessness). (2 Thessalonians 2:3-12, emphasis and comments added)

Dear brothers don't you see it: Daniel identified wicked individuals who had forsaken the holy covenant. Paul's "man of sin" is a composite of wicked individuals that have "fallen away" (from the holy covenant). Daniel's "abomination" "polluted the sanctuary of strength" which could be nothing but the temple. Paul's man of sin "sits in the temple...opposing Yahweh and exalting himself above all that is called God, showing himself that he is god" thus polluting the temple. Daniel's men of the "abomination," by means of deceiving promises, caused many (vss. 32 & 34) to "forsake the holy covenant," become "corrupt" by wickedness and "cleave" to him and his "arms" even to "the time of the end." (vs. 35) Paul's "man of sin" uses "power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness" to deceive many that "they all might be judged."

Other parallels could be drawn between Daniel's "abomination that causes desolation" and Paul's "man of sin." However, we think that we have provided sufficient evidence to establish beyond a reasonable doubt that Paul's "man of sin" is "the abomination of desolation spoken of the Daniel the prophet."

The Jewish historian, Josephus, gives us a detailed description of Paul's composite "man of sin" and all the gory details leading up to the destruction of the temple as the result of their great abomination in the temple. According to Josephus, one of the men who produced the abomination was a man named John, son of Levi, of Gischala. Josephus describes him as the one:

...who drew them into this rebellion, and encouraged them in it. He was a cunning knave, and of a temper that could put on various shapes; very rash in expecting great things, and very sagacious in bringing about what he hoped for. It was known to everybody that he was fond of war... (Wars of the Jews, Book IV, Chapter II, para. 1, p. 525)

John,...went about among all the people, and persuaded them to go to war, by the (false) hopes he gave them...he extolled his own power...These harangues of John's corrupted a great part of the young men, and puffed them up for war. (ch. III, ps. 1 & 2, comment added)

John...was the occasion of all these being destroyed. He was a man of great craft, and bore about him in his soul a great passion after tyranny, and at a distance was the adviser in these actions...so potent was he grown by his wicked practices...John was...**setting up a monarchical power** (I. e. kingdom, with himself as king). (ch. III, para. 13 & ch. VII, para. 1)

John became a leader of the seditious in Jerusalem and many robbers from the country joined with his group called zealots, of these men Josephus states, "**these**

very men,...were...the direct cause of the city's destruction...(ch. III, par. 3, p.527) Josephus states:

These robbers...took upon them **to appoint high priests**...they ordained certain unknown and ignoble persons for that office, that they might have there assistance in their wicked undertakings...**they transferred their contumelious behaviour to God himself, and came into the sanctuary with polluted feet**...Those men made the temple of God a stronghold for them, and a place whither they might resort,...the sanctuary was now become a refuge, and a shop of tyranny...**they undertook to dispose of the high priesthood by casting lots for it,...it was...a dissolution of an undeniable law**, and a cunning contrivance to seize upon the government,...to appoint governors as they themselves pleased. (Ch. III, paras.6 & 7) (W)hen any of the zealots were wounded, he went up **into the temple** and **defiled that scared floor** with his blood, insomuch that one may say **it was their blood alone that polluted our sanctuary**. ...*(T)he robbers...fled into the **inner courts** (of the temple)...and **shut the gates***. (para. 12, emphasis and comment added)

Josephus continues to describe how they cast lots and appointed a scoundrel as high priest, thus effectually ending the daily sacrifice. The real priests led by the “best esteemed...high priest” Jesus the son of Gamala, and Ananus “bitterly reproached the people for their sloth, and excited them against the zealots.” Josephus records the comments of Ananus:

Certainly it had been good for me to die before I had seen **the house of God full of so many ABOMINATIONS**, or these sacred places that ought not to be trodden on at random, filled with the feet of these blood-shedding villains; (ch. III, para. 10, emphasis added)

Josephus describes how the Idumeans, which were let into the city by the zealots to strengthen their cause, killed thousands (8,500) of people in the city then eventually sought out and killed the true high priests which had been **restraining** (2Thess. 2:6-7) the zealots.

But the rage of the Idumeans was not satiated by these slaughters; but they now betook themselves to the city, and plundered every house, and slew every one they met;...they sought for the high priests...as soon as they caught them they slew them, and then standing upon their dead bodies, in a way of jest upbraided Ananus with his kindness to the people, and Jesus with his speech made to them from the wall...they proceeded to that degree of impiety, as to cast away their bodies without burial. (Ch. 5, para.1 & 2, see also Revelation 11)

Speaking directly about the death of Ananus, Josephus stated:

I should not mistake if I said that the death of Ananus was **the beginning of the destruction of the city**, and that from this very day may be dated the overthrow of her wall, and the ruin of her affairs, whereon they saw their high priest, and **the procurer of their preservation** (Thess.2:6-7) slain in the midst of the city... (Ch. V, para.2, emphasis added)

In conclusion, we quote Josephus as he describes the horrors of the great tribulation of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 24:15-29. As we now know this great tribulation began (c.66 AD) with the “abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel” and ended with the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem (70 AD), a period of three (3) and one half (1/2) years just as Daniel prophesied (Dan.12:11).

...they (John and the other zealots) tasted of their own madness in their mutual seditions one against another...they guarded every passage out of the city, and slew every one that was caught at them,...Along all the roads also vast numbers of dead bodies lay in heaps,...these zealots came at last to that degree of barbarity, as not to bestow burial either on those slain in the city, or on those that lay along the roads; but **as if they had made an agreement** (covenant of death, Isa.28:14-22) **to cancel both the laws of their country and the laws of nature, and, at the same time that they defiled men with their wicked actions, they would pollute the Divinity itself also**,... (Ch. VI, paras.1 & 3 emphasis and comments added)

These men, therefore, **trampled upon all the laws of man, and laughed at the laws of God**; and for the oracles of the prophets, they ridiculed them as the tricks of jugglers; yet did these prophets foretell many things concerning [the rewards of] virtue, and [punishments of] vice, **which when these zealots violated, they occasioned the fulfilling of those very prophecies belonging to their own country**: for there was a certain ancient oracle (Dan.9:27) of those men, that the city should then be taken and the sanctuary burnt, by right of war, when a sedition should invade the Jews, and **their own hands should pollute the temple of God**. Now while these zealots did not [quite] disbelieve these predictions, **they made themselves the instruments of their accomplishments**. (Wars of the Jews, Book IV, chap.vi, para. 3, p. 536, emphasis and comments added)

Can any serious student of Scripture doubt that Daniel’s “abomination that causes desolation” was described in more detail by Paul as “the man of sin” and recorded in history by Josephus and the Holy Scriptures as the Jewish apostates?

That truth may prevail.

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