

The “Shattering” of the Jewish People in the Future “Time of Trouble”

In this session we’re going to look at Daniel 11:21-12:13. When the disciples asked Jesus about the “signs of the end of the age” and of Jesus’ “return,” He referred them to Daniel 11:21-12:13. In Jesus’ mind it is the most important prophecy about the end of the Age. Daniel’s final prophecy revolves around an Age-ending assault on the Land of Israel that results in the “desolation” of Jerusalem and the “complete shattering” of the Jewish people. In this session we will also look at the issue of the Land of Israel as we consider the significance, meaning and relevance of what Daniel called “rage against the holy covenant.”

I. Jesus’ Emphasis on Daniel 11:21-12:13 in the Olivet Discourse

*“As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?”.....When you see **the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel**, standing in the holy place (**let the reader understand**), then **let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains**. Let the one who is on the housetop **not go down** to take what is in his house, and let the one who is in the field **not turn back** to take his cloak. And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! Pray that **your flight** may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For **then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be**. And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short..... “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Matthew 24:3,15-22, 29-31)*

- A. Jesus declared the desolation of Jerusalem to be the preeminent sign of the nearness of the end of the Age and of His return. These three events are prophetically and Scripturally inseparable.
- B. In Daniel 12:1-2 this time period was called “a time of trouble such has never been since the beginning.” And in Daniel 12:7 this time period was called “the shattering of the holy people.” The desolation of Jerusalem sets in motion the “trouble” and the “shattering.”
- C. To understand Israel in the end-times Daniel 11:21-12:13 is indispensable. It’s essential we understand it. It was Jesus’ frame of reference when teaching on the consummation of this Age.

II. An Outline of Daniel 11:21-12:13

The Rise of the Desolator (Antichrist) – 11:21-22

The Time Between His Rise and Abomination – 11:23-31

The Time Between The Abomination and The End – 11:32-12:13

III. Six Observations About the "Time of Trouble" in Daniel 11:21-12:13

- A. **This "time of trouble" is unquestionably eschatological.** Most liberal and all preterist commentators suggest that these prophecies were fulfilled loosely in ancient history. But Daniel was told that this unequalled "trouble" culminates in the salvation of Israel (12:2-3) and the resurrection of the righteous dead (12:3-4) at "the time of the end" (11:36, 40; 12:4, 11-13). Jesus declared the events in this prophecy as being the signs of the "end of the age" and of His "return" (Matthew 24:3-15). To deny the eschatological nature is exegetically illegitimate.
- B. **This "time of trouble" is instigated by a single "cruel" and "vile" man who commands an international conglomeration of armies ("forces" - 11:31).** The man that sets the "abomination" in the Temple that brings about the "desolation" of Jerusalem in 11:30-31 is the same man that emerged in 11:21-22. And he is also the same man that "comes to his end" in 11:44 at the "end of days" immediately prior to the resurrection of the righteous and the salvation of Israel in 12:2-4. This man is also known as "the Antichrist," "the Beast," "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," "the little horn," and dozens of other names. He is spoken about extensively in both the Old and New Testament.
- C. **This "time of trouble" is centered around the city of Jerusalem, in the Land of Israel, with a Temple standing.** In 11:30-44 we read of a brutal military invasion where many are "destroyed" and "annihilated" (v. 44). The Land will be divided (Joel 3:2-3) when it is invaded as the city is "desolated" (Daniel 11:31) and the Jewish people "shattered" (Daniel 12:7). In other words Jerusalem is the eye of the global eschatological storm. And the Jewish people will bear the greatest brunt of the crisis.
- D. **At the heart of this "time of trouble" is "rage against the holy covenant."** The term "rage against the holy covenant" (or variations) is found four times in the prophecy in reference to the Antichrist's invasion of Israel in 11:28-32. It is clearly intended to be a focal point of the prophecy. It refers to the Age-long Gentile contention over the promised Land of Israel that was given to Abraham's descendants eternally as an "everlasting promise" and "irrevocable" "oath" and "gift." The Land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem has always been the source of much Gentile conflict and contention. This contention will have its greatest expression at the end of the Age when the "controversy of Zion" (Isaiah 34:8) comes to its eschatological climax.

And he shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land. 29 "At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before. 30 For ships of Kittim shall come

against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant. 31 Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate. 32 He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.

1. **Heart set against the holy covenant** - He hates the very concept of promised Land and the election of the Jewish people. It is the ancient contention that began in the tents of Abraham between Isaac and Ishmael.

And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the Land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17:7-8)

2. **Enraged to take action against the holy covenant** - His offense towards the God, people and Land of the covenant will provoke him to take aggressive and hostile action to “annihilate” the Jewish people, “desolate” the city of Jerusalem, blaspheme God and “invade” the Land of Israel.
3. **Forsake the holy covenant** - Forsaking the holy covenant does not refer to Jewish apostasy but to Gentile unity with the Antichrist as he takes action against the covenant (i.e. Land). The covenant that is being forsaken is the covenant that was “confirmed” three and a half years earlier. Daniel 9:27 explains:

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [of years], and in the middle of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.” (Daniel 9:27)

4. **Violate the holy covenant** - The violation of the holy covenant is the result of forsaking the holy covenant which is the result of being enraged at the holy covenant. There is a logical progression between Daniel 11:28-32. At the beginning of Daniel’s week of years many nations will confirm/affirm the “holy covenant” because of the leadership the Antichrist. Then, in the middle the week the desolations will begin. Forsaking and violating the holy covenant looks like a brutal military invasion and the scourging of the Land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem (Isaiah 28:9-22; 51:17-23).
- E. **In the midst of this “time of trouble” are the ‘maskilim.’** “Maskilim” is a Hebrew word that refers to the “wise” in the Land of Israel at the time of the Antichrist’s final assault. The word literally means “enlightened ones.” It is the Hebrew plural of Maskil of which the *Strong’s Concordance* says:

"7919 sakal saw-kal' a primitive root; to be (causatively, make or act) circumspect and hence, intelligent:—consider, expert, instruct, prosper, (deal) prudent(-ly), (give) skill(-ful), have good success, teach, (have, make to) understand(-ing), wisdom, (be, behave self, consider, make) wise(-ly), guide wittingly."

The Maskilim in Daniel 11-12 are a prophetic company of anointed messengers who understand what is happening. They instruct the Jewish people. They will be led by the "two witnesses" in Revelation chapter 11.

The word is found in Daniel 11:33, 11:35, 12:3 and 12:10. The four-fold repetition of the word serves as a key element within the prophecy of the "time of the end" between Daniel 11:21 through to Daniel 12:13.

"He [the Antichrist] shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And the wise [Maskilim] among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, and some of the wise [Maskilim] shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time." (Daniel 11:32-35)

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise [Maskilim] shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." (Daniel 12:2-4)

"He said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end. Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise [Maskilim] shall understand. And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days. But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days." (Daniel 11:9-13)

- F. **From the time the abomination is set up and the desolations begin there will be 1290 days.** This is 30 days beyond the 42 months established in other prophetic texts (Revelation 11:2; 12:6, 14; 13:15 etc.). This means that Daniel 11:21-30 occur BEFORE the 42 month "tribulation" begins and Daniel 11:31-12:13 occurs AFTER it begins. The "abomination of desolation" in verse 31 is what begins the conflict.

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