

Whoso Readeth, Let Him Understand

An Examination of the 'Abomination of Desolation'
and the Great Tribulation in Matthew and Daniel

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**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)
MATT 24:15**

The above quotation from our Lord was given in answer to a very solemn question from his disciples. In their commenting on the beauty and grandeur of the Jewish temple, Jesus warned them that a time would soon come in which not one stone of the temple would be left standing upon another. Naturally the disciples wished to know when these events would take place.

Matt 24:1-3 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to [him] for to shew him the buildings of the temple. **And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.** And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, **Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?**

As students of the scriptures, when we come to the material in Matthew 24 – material which has given rise to so many varied and vastly different speculations – it is important that we do not ignore this question to which the remainder of the chapter is so evidently given to answer. The disciples were concerned with the timing of the overthrow of the Jewish temple, and also the end of the age.

The study of Bible prophecy is popular in our day, but unfortunately it is a subject about which there seems to be an enormous amount of confusion and misunderstanding. Our purpose in this present study is to examine and to attempt to answer some basic prophetic questions about which there seems to be the most misunderstanding. Among these are: What is the 'great tribulation' spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24? Is it something in the future, the past, or may it be that many Bible expositors have misunderstood the proper application of the 'great tribulation' entirely? What is the 'abomination of desolation' that Jesus warned of? What did Jesus mean in Matthew 24:34 when he told his disciples that 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled'?

As is the case with most prophetic material, the way these questions are answered is usually influenced by the particular school of thought which the Bible expositor prefers. In the area of prophecy there are mainly three such 'schools' of interpretation. These are the Preterist, which deems that most or sometimes even all prophecy has already been fulfilled in the past, the Futurist, which holds that much prophecy remains to be fulfilled in the future, and the Historicist, which believes that prophecy has a continual and linear fulfillment throughout history.

Our purpose is not to concern ourselves with all the particulars of each of these interpretations, but to attempt to harmonize the Olivet discourse given by our Lord in Matthew 24 with the detailed prophetic material given in Daniel – particularly Daniel chapter 11. It has been my personal observation that while each of the three mentioned ‘schools’ of interpretation have both strengths and weaknesses, one and all prove unsatisfactory in harmonizing *all* of these prophecies.

As noted, the disciples came to Jesus asking for information about the timing of a very specific event – the destruction of the Jewish temple. This is a fact which simply cannot be ignored if we ever hope to come to a better understanding of Jesus' words. Whatever our position on how the rest of Matthew 24 is to be interpreted we simply must deal with this piece of information honestly.

If we allow ourselves to admit that in Matthew 24 Jesus begins by answering the disciples' question about destruction of the temple then standing, how then should this affect our interpretation of the remainder of the chapter?

If we attempt to approach this question from the viewpoint of futurist expositors - believing as they do that the fulfillment of almost all of Matthew 24 lies in the future - many questions immediately arise. If the disciples' question related to the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 AD (as it unquestionably does), then might also the remainder of the chapter equally apply to the events of 70 AD? If this is so, then how can the proper application of most of these prophecies lie in the future? Is there a 'dual fulfillment' of this prophecy, once in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem and the passing of the Old Covenant, but yet a greater future fulfillment culminating in the consummation of the current age and the return of our Lord? If so how would we *know* this to be true? Or, does the passage point to the events 70 AD at all? Are we to understand a ‘gap of time’ in these prophecies in the same way futurists insert a two-thousand year gap of time in the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, 9, 11 etc.? In short, can a futurist interpretation of Matthew 24 ever be entirely satisfying in its efforts to harmonize these prophecies?

On the opposite end of the prophetic spectrum we have the Preterist interpretation which immediately seizes upon the fact that the disciples asked Jesus a question concerning the destruction of the Jewish temple of the first century and asserts that the answer given in the remainder of the chapter can only then be rightly understood in that context. To many Preterists, ALL of Matthew 24 (including the resurrection and the judgment) found its fulfillment in the events of 70 AD when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Old Jewish covenant passed away.

But Preterism, while taking seriously the issue that Jesus is primarily answering a question regarding the destruction of the first century temple, is not without its own set of problems. One problem is that Preterists seem to use a wholly inconsistent hermeneutic. For example: Preterists hammer on the time texts in scripture, adhering to the strictest most literal sense of their meaning – ‘soon’, ‘at hand’, ‘this generation’, etc mean what they say, and say what they mean *in their most literal and obvious sense*. However, this strict literal hermeneutic seems to be confined ONLY to the scriptural time texts and almost *nowhere else* (unless it suits the preterist interpretation). When we are told in the same context of MATTHEW 24 that the tribes of the earth would ‘see’ the Son of Man coming on the clouds with power and great glory, we are told that this visible coming is not visible at all, but would only be ‘seen’ in a ‘spiritual sense’. When in Revelation we read that at the coming of our Lord ‘Every eye shall see him’, we are told that this simply means that all would ‘understand’, or ‘comprehend’ that Jesus was ‘present’.

(Although we wonder how even this could have been fulfilled in 70 AD). When the book of Acts instructs us that our Lord would return in like manner as the disciples witnessed him ascend into heaven (personal and visible), we are told that just the opposite should be expected. But beyond this, *enormous amounts of both Old and New Testament scripture are 'spiritualized' in this very manner*; and for what reason or justification? So that the TIME TEXTS, and seemingly *they alone*, can be allowed the force of their strictest and most literal interpretation. Because of such a one-sided and inconsistent approach to scriptural interpretation, I also find the preterist interpretation of Matthew 24 to be wholly unsatisfactory.

A BETTER UNDERSTANDING?

In trying to come to a better and more satisfactory interpretation for such a very difficult passage of scripture, it is my conviction that we must face once and for all the reality that Jesus begins by primarily addressing the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. It seems contrary to reason that Jesus would answer such a straightforward question by primarily addressing events which would not begin until centuries later.

Neither am I inclined to believe that Matthew 24 was meant to be understood as having a 'dual fulfillment'; the 'near fulfillment' being the 70AD destruction of Jerusalem, and the 'far fulfillment' being a similar series of events at the end of the current age. While this is not entirely impossible, and while I once favored this position, it now seems to me that this was not to be our primary understanding. Nor does it seem likely to me that there is a 'gap' of time or a break anywhere in the prophecy in which two thousand years could be conveniently inserted. And while all this seems contrary to what many have learned concerning the prophecies of Matthew 24 – the popular view in our day being that the fulfillment of most of the chapter lies primarily in the future – I believe that simple honesty demands that we deal with these issues if we ever hope to come to a better understanding of Jesus' words.

But all of this raises a very serious question; If the events described by Jesus in Matthew 24 had their primary application to the events of 70 AD then does not this passage also seem to teach that Jesus would return at that time? This is a question that has baffled scholars and casual readers alike. In fact some, such as Albert Schweitzer, believing that Matthew 24 clearly teaches that Jesus would return upon the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and not being able to accept the Preterist view that he actually DID return then (as the Preterists propose), have concluded that the scriptures are in fact in error.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I believe that such confusion is wholly unnecessary and has as its source a fundamental misunderstanding. As I hope to show, this misunderstanding is once again based on a pre-conceived notion that many of us have heard so many times that it is not easily dislodged, but by seeing beyond it admits of a scriptural and satisfactory solution to this 'problem'.

It is my conviction that the scriptures in Matthew 24 do *not* in fact teach that Jesus would return at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, even though those events are most definitely prophesied in that chapter. On the other hand, I do not believe that the proper application of *most* of this prophecy lies in the future either. The 'problem' as well as the solution to this basic misunderstanding lies in whether or not we properly understand the terms used to describe these events. Terms such as 'great tribulation', 'the abomination of desolation', 'this generation' etc. often call to mind certain preconceived ideas and assumptions which may or may not be correct. In this study these terms will be extensively examined, and the contexts in which they appear will

be diligently compared with other scriptures. By doing this I feel that their proper meanings can firmly established, and with that we will come to a proper, reasonable, and most of all scripturally harmonious understanding of our Lord's words in Matthew 24.

DISCOVERING THE KEY – ‘WHOSO READETH, LET HIM UNDERSTAND’

I feel that the *key* to discovering the proper interpretation of Matthew 24 lies within verse 15:

Mat 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:)

What is it about this information that is so vital that we are admonished to make sure we have properly understood it? Have you ever stopped to think about that? ‘WHOSO READETH, LET HIM UNDERSTAND’. It almost seems as though the writer anticipated that it was at this very point that a great many may NOT understand.

Now, one would think that such an admonition would be rather straightforward; we are to look to Daniel’s prophecies concerning the ‘abomination of desolation’ in order to properly ascertain what is being spoken of here.

Before looking at those prophecies in Daniel, I wish to remind the reader of the importance to remember that Jesus is answering the disciples’ question regarding the destruction of the temple *then standing*. Current ‘pop prophecy’ literature has indoctrinated many with the idea that the ‘abomination of desolation’ will occur when an ‘antichrist’ marches into a newly rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, sits down in the holy of holies and proclaims himself to be God. In spite of the fact that such an idea should seem absurd to any reasonable student of the Bible, it is also simply not a possibility. Whatever is referred to as the ‘abomination of desolation’ must have primary reference *to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple of the first century*. That is not speculation; it is simply dealing honestly with the text.

A SECOND WITNESS – CLARIFYING THE LANGUAGE OF MATTHEW 24

It is a scriptural principle that ‘in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established’ –Matt 18:16, and ‘It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true’ –John 8:17.

Keeping this principle in mind we should then consider that it is most unwise to draw conclusions about the ‘abomination of desolation’ and the ‘great tribulation’ from the material in Matthew 24 alone, without diligently comparing it to its parallel passages in the other Gospels.

Indeed, when we compare Matthew chapter 24 with its parallel in Luke chapter 21 we get a much clearer picture of what this ‘abomination of desolation’ really is, as well as further proof that it does in fact refer to the first century destruction of Jerusalem and its temple.

Compare carefully the following two passages:

Matthew 24		Luke 21
Mat 24:15-16 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:	Abomination of Desolation ← →	Luk 21:20-21 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;

Notice carefully here how one passage defines the other. What Jesus calls the ‘abomination of desolation’ in Matthew 24 is clearly defined in Luke 21 as “Jerusalem compassed with armies”. This comparison alone should serve to show exactly what the ‘abomination of desolation’ is. In spite of all the speculations of commentators it should be obvious that the ‘abomination of desolation’ is clearly defined *as the military presence of the Roman army in Jerusalem*. Nor can there be any mistake about when these events were to take place – the information about the ‘armies’ and the ‘desolation’ here spoken of is once again clearly given to answer the disciples’ question about the temple and the fact that Jesus had told them that ‘not one stone would be left upon another’. That is to say, here we have a clear prediction of the Roman destruction which would come upon Jerusalem in 70 AD. Jesus calls these events ‘the abomination of desolation’. It seems to me to be a fallacy of interpretation to try to give to these passages as their primary meaning a fulfillment which would not take place until the 21st century or beyond.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS PROPHECY

Jesus tells his disciples that the ‘abomination of desolation’ was spoken of by Daniel the prophet. Now to what text in Daniel was our Lord referring when he spoke of this ‘abomination of desolation’? We have three possibilities; the first given in Daniel 9:26-27 within the context of the ‘70 weeks’ prophecy. The second occurs in Daniel 11:31 within a long discourse concerning the kings of the north and south. Lastly we have a final reference in Daniel 12:11 within a series of time prophecies which have baffled commentators for centuries. We will look at these individually.

Dan 9:25-27 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. (26) And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war **desolations** are determined. (27) 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 of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.**

It is not within the scope of this present discussion to go into all the particulars of Daniel’s ‘70 weeks’ prophecy, but only to try to establish the fact that it encompasses the same events as described in Matthew 24 and Luke 21: namely the first century destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple at the hands of the Romans.

Years ago, as a Baptist, I was taught that there was a ‘gap’ in this prophecy between the 69th and 70th weeks. I was told that after the 69th week, when the Messiah was ‘cut off’ that God’s ‘prophetic time clock’ stopped, and that it would not resume; that is, the 70th week would not take

place until after the 'rapture' of the church. Needless to say, such an exposition seems impossible if we keep a few basic facts in mind:

- 1) To what time period did the disciples' question of Matthew 24 as well as Jesus' answer refer to? Doesn't it seem obvious that the immediate context of the question was temple that was THEN STANDING?
- 2) If this is the case, then wouldn't it naturally follow that Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation' and 'Jerusalem compassed with armies' also had reference to the first century destruction of Jerusalem and the temple?
- 3) And because Jesus referred to these events as those 'spoken by Daniel the prophet' doesn't it then follow that those events in Daniel must be understood within that same period of time?

The only way a futurist expositor can get around these obvious conclusions is by resorting to the following:

First, by asserting that these verses have no reference to the events of 70 AD at all, or second, by stating that they have a dual fulfillment - the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem and its temple being a 'type' of 'great tribulation' at the end of the age. In either case the futurist must see in these verses a primary fulfillment at the end of the current age, and not in 70 AD.

But this seems most unnatural and these points are all well documented by Preterist commentators and others who find the Futurist viewpoint untenable. To them, Daniel is very straightforward - the 70th week immediately follows the 69th week, and the desolating abomination mentioned in these verses is indeed the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

With this we would agree but would add a few comments:

First, that although we feel that the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of by Daniel to which Jesus refers is to be found in Daniel 9:25-27 within the 'seventy weeks' prophecy, we must state our conviction that it is not the ONLY passage in Daniel which mentions the 'abomination of desolation' - the other references must be considered equally as well. While this seems obvious, as this study continues it will become clear as to why this passage in Daniel 9:25-27 is usually believed by many commentators to be the main reference in Daniel to which Jesus was referring rather than the passages in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. What needs to be examined however is whether one of these passages which speak of the 'abomination of desolation' should be emphasized over the others. Many commentators do this very thing - why they do it, and whether or not their logic is valid is what must be examined.

Second, the above point, namely that Daniel 9:25-27 is usually taken by many as the primary 'abomination of desolation' reference in lieu of the others, becomes very curious when one realizes that the actual phrase '*abomination of desolation*' is not to be found in Daniel 9 at all. While most commentators agree that the same object is in view (a conclusion we agree with), it is important to note that this exact phrase 'abomination that maketh desolate' IS to be found in Daniel 11:31. Therefore, if the information in Daniel 9 has bearing upon Jesus' words in Matthew 24, then surely the more precise reference in Daniel 11:31 should carry the same, or even more weight.

Third, the language of Daniel 9:26-27 is obscure. We note the words of Albert Barnes:

And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate - The marginal reading here is very different, **showing clearly the perplexity of the translators**: "Upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator." There is great variety, also, in the ancient versions in rendering this passage. The Latin Vulgate is, "And there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation." The Greek, "And upon the temple shall be an abomination of desolations." The Syriac, "And upon the extremities of the abomination shall rest desolation." The Arabic, "And over the sanctuary shall there be the abomination of ruin." Luther renders it, "And upon the wings shall stand the abomination of desolation." Lengerke and Hengstenberg render it, "And upon the summit of abomination comes the destroyer." Prof. Stuart, "And the water shall be over a winged fowl of abominations." **These different translations show that there is great obscurity in the original, and perhaps exclude the hope of being able entirely to free the passage from all difficulties** (emphasis mine)

Adam Clarke writes:

Dan 9:27 - And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate - This clause is remarkably obscure. כנף שקוצים משמם kenaph shikkutsim meshomem, "And upon the wing of abominations causing amazement." This is a literal translation of the place; **but still there is no abominate sense.** A Hebrews MS., written in the thirteenth century, has preserved a very remarkable reading here, which frees the place from all embarrassment. Instead of the above reading, this valuable MS. has ובהיכל יהיה שיקוץ ubeheychal yihyey shikkuts; that is, "And in the temple (of the Lord) there shall be abomination." This makes the passage plain, and is strictly conformable to the facts themselves, for the temple was profaned; and it agrees with the prediction of our Lord, who said that the abomination that maketh desolate should stand in the holy place, Mat_24:15, and quotes the words as spoken οὗ Δανιηλ τοῦ προφητοῦ, by Daniel the prophet. That the above reading gives the true sense, there can be little doubt, because it is countenanced by the most eminent ancient versions. (emphasis mine)

While both of these men agreed that these words of Daniel 9:26-27 were referenced by our Lord in Matthew 24, and both agree that these words apply to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, they also admit of the obscurity and difficulty in translating this passage. Fortunately, when we come to Daniel 11:31 we will find no such obscurity or difficulty.

THE 'ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE' DANIEL 11:31

We do not disagree with the above conclusions of commentators that Daniel 9:26-27 is a reference to the same 'abomination of desolation' spoken of by our Lord in Matthew 24:15. However we do find such unanimity strange in light of these same expositors comments when we come to Daniel 11:31. For in that passage we find, without the slightest obscurity or difficulty (as all admit exists in Daniel 9:26-27), the exact phrase as used by our Lord in Matthew 24:

Dan 11:31 And 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 maketh desolate.

Jesus had given his disciples a very clear sign about when the desolation of their city and temple would occur. He said to them 'when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place, then let them who be in Judea flee to the mountains', etc. Then it should seem obvious that when we come to this very phrase (such as does NOT exist in Daniel 9:26-27) within the prophet Daniel *we should connect the two thoughts together.* Again, while we do not at all deny that Daniel 9:26-27 is a reference to the 'abomination of desolation', *we also believe that this reference in Daniel 11:31 should command even more attention since its words are exactly those of our Lords' without any obscurity or difficulty in translation.*

But brothers and sisters in Christ, herein is the problem: VERY FEW COMMENTATORS ARE WILLING TO ALLOW THAT JESUS IN MATTHEW 24:15 WAS PRIMARILY REFERRING TO DANIEL 11:31!!! Might I also suggest here that it seems very profound to me that at the very place we find the words 'whoso readeth, let him understand' we find commentators of every prophetic school denying the connection between these words and so obvious a reference to them in Daniel 11:31!

I should point out here that futurist expositors ARE in fact very consistent on this point. To them, the 'abomination of desolation' in Matthew 24:15, Daniel 9:26-27, and Daniel 11:31 all refer to the same event and that the fulfillment of them all still lies in the future. But as noted, this can only be allowed by divorcing the prophetic material in Matthew 24 from the disciples' question that it was given to answer, and by inserting a 2000+ year gap of time into Daniels prophecies. Consistency in interpretation is good, but not when such other gymnastics as these are required to maintain it.

Can it be proven that in Matthew 24:15 Jesus had in mind the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of in Daniel 11:31? I believe that this can be proven as much as any other Biblical 'cross-reference' can be established. As we have attempted to show, Matthew 24:15 finds a parallel in Luke 21:20. When we compare the material in Luke 21 with the portion of Daniel 11 under consideration, we should immediately see that this is in fact the portion of Daniel to which our Lord is referring:

Matthew 24	Daniel 11		Luke 21
<p>Mat 24:15-16 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:</p>	<p>Dan 11:31-33 And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily <i>sacrifice</i>, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. (32) And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do <i>exploits</i>. (33) And they that understand among the people shall instruct many:</p>	<p>Abomination of Desolation</p> <p>← →</p>	<p>Luk 21:20-24 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; ... (22) For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled...</p>
	<p>yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.</p>	<p>Sword, Captivity, Etc...</p> <p>← →</p>	<p>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.</p>

Proof that Jesus is Referring to Daniel 11:31-33 Within His Discourse of Matthew 24

Notice the link between the 'abomination of desolation' in Matthew 24 with the desolation of Jerusalem in Luke 21. Then further notice Luke's reference to the Jews falling by 'sword and captivity'. In Daniel 11 we find this very sequence in almost the same words – first the 'abomination that maketh desolate' in Daniel 11:31 followed shortly by the description of the people falling by 'sword, flame, and captivity' in Daniel 11:33. In light of the close similarity in language, it seems obvious that Jesus' words concerning the 'abomination of desolation' and 'Jerusalem compassed with armies' are in fact a direct reference to the material in Daniel 11:31-33.

Some might suggest however that Daniel 11:33 informs us that it is ‘those who instruct many’ who are the ones who ‘fall by the sword, etc’ whereas Jesus' words in Luke suggest that the unbelieving Jews are the subject of such persecutions, and that for this reason these passages are not parallel.

It is however a fact that the proper interpretation of Daniel 11:33 and the identity of the ones who would ‘fall by sword, flame and captivity’ is a matter of much debate. But might I suggest that the obvious parallel in language between Daniel 11:31-11 and Luke 21:20-24 *virtually settles this question for us?* E.B. Elliot, commenting on Daniel 11:33-34 says:

And it is supposed by Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, and other interpreters who, in common with them and myself, understand the abomination meant of that placed by the Romans, that they whose character and history are here given, are simply *the Christian body*... Thus the passage is explained by them in brief as follows: - “He (the Roman Emperor and his officers) shall by flattering offers induce *unfaithful* Christians, the transgressors of the new covenant, to apostatize from the faith; but the *faithful* Christians shall be strong and instruct many. Yet they shall fall many days by sword, flame, captivity, and spoil, - viz. in the ten Pagan persecutions; till holpen by the little help of Constantine and his descendants’ adoption and establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Then many shall cleave to them with flatteries, or hypocritically join themselves to the Church; and divers of the true and sincere Christians fall afterwards by new persecutions, to try them, and purify them, till the time of the end.”

But I cannot think that there may be here indicated *two* divisions of the people spoken of: viz. first, a division of the *whole Jewish people* into Jews rejecting Christianity, and Jews embracing it and becoming Christians: (this in the two former verses:) then, a further division of the *latter*, together with the Gentiles incorporated in their body, into the false and the true members of the professing Christian Church. For besides that we might expect, as I think, some notice of the desolated *Jewish people* at this sad crisis of their history, as well as of their desolate *city*, - just as in our Lord's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem,^[1] and other earlier prophecies also,^[2] - besides this, I say, there are various expressions in the two first verses of the passage under consideration which seem to me scarcely applicable, except to that unhappy people. Is the phrase “they that do wickedly against the covenant,” a fit designation of the insincerity and worldliness in heart of such members of the Christian body as were *ultimately* induced in the time of Pagan Rome's persecutions to apostatize? Or, if previously open transgressors of the covenant, did they need at all to be corrupted? Again, was it the fact that the Roman emperors and chief magistrates did then seek by *flatteries* to draw Christians into apostasy from their faith; and this on a scale as to be marked in history, and to answer to a notice like this in prophecy? Surely cruelty and violence, not flattery, were the characteristic weapons by which Pagan powers sought to destroy Christianity. Further, did the Christians, *as a body or people*, fall during these times of Pagan persecution, so as the expression in verse 33 seems to indicate; or only *a certain few* from among them? And, once more, could it be said of such as suffered in these persecutions, that they fell by *captivity*, as well as otherwise: - a word used in Hebrew, just like the words that represent it in the Greek, Latin, English, and other versions, not of imprisonment by order of the civil magistrate, but of the taking of prisoners in *war*, and holding them, so taken, in captivity and exile?

Thus my impression is that the *Jews* must be here meant, not Christians. (From *Horae Apocalypticae* by E.B Elliot fifth edition 1862 pgs 86-88 emphasis mine)

To my mind this evidence leaves little doubt that Jesus' reference to the ‘abomination of desolation’ in Matthew 24:15 is *primarily a reference to Daniel 11:31*. I am also equally convinced that this fact – allowing that Matthew 24:15 and Jesus' description of the ‘abomination of desolation’ is a direct reference to Daniel 11:31 – is crucial in coming to a proper understanding of prophecy.

As we proceed with this study I am convinced that the reader will begin to understand just how crucial this close relationship between Jesus' word in Matthew 24 and the prophetic material in

Daniel 11 really is. It will also become more clear why this clear link must be denied by many others in order for their own prophetic speculations to stand.

THE CONNECTING LINKS OF GREAT VALUE

Whether the words 'WHOSO READETH LET HIM UNDERSTAND' were spoken by Jesus, or added later by Matthew, they should call our attention to the fact that there is something in these words that we are likely to *not* understand. Or that these words are of such grave import that they deserve our closest attention.

Why is this reference to the 'abomination of desolation' so important? Clearly it had tremendous importance for Christians living in first century Jerusalem; it gave them a vital sign so they knew when to flee for their lives. But could there be something more to these words? Could they have significance still in our day, in that our failure to understand them properly might lead us into danger or into some false doctrine? I believe so.

There exist in our day teachers who would have us to believe that ALL prophecy is fulfilled. They believe that ALL of Matthew 24 was fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, including the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment. They would also have us to believe that the entire book of Revelation is fulfilled and that we are now living in the promised 'new heavens and new earth'.

As we mentioned above, these people are called Preterists, and while not all Preterists take the extreme view that ALL prophecy has been fulfilled (some call themselves 'partial Preterists and allow for the future fulfillment of some prophecy including the second advent, the resurrection, and the judgment) this extreme view of Preterism seems to be gaining ground in our day.

While it is not the intent of this discussion to analyze Preterism, I feel that seeing the correct application of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:15 makes very clear whether or not Preterism is true. How so?

First let's review some facts:

- 1) The disciples question to Jesus in Matthew 24 was in reference to first century Jerusalem and the then standing temple.
- 2) Then it stands to reason that Jesus would begin by directly addressing that question. It seems most unreasonable to assume that the entire discourse applies directly to the 21st century or beyond. It was given as a direct answer to the disciples' question.
- 3) It can be demonstrated by the parallel passage in Luke 21 that Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation' would be fulfilled by Jerusalem being surrounded by Roman armies.
- 4) This same sequence of events is confirmed in Daniel 9:26-27 in which most expositors see this same reference to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, although the language allows for some obscurity.

- 5) This same 'abomination of desolation' is mentioned again in Daniel 11:31, but in language so clear, and in such parallel to Luke 21:20-24 that it is nearly impossible to miss the blatant cross-reference.

Dan 11:31 And 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 maketh desolate.

There has been innumerable speculations about just to whom this verse in Daniel 11:31 refers. Some would say that the passage refers to an 'end-time antichrist' that will defile a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. Others say that the passage refers to the ancient Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes (215-164 B.C) who defiled the Jewish Temple.

But friends, if the above five points are reasonable and true, *then there should be absolutely no doubt about who is referred to in Daniel 11:31, because Jesus himself has settled the matter.* Clearly, according to Jesus it is the ROMANS who are in view in this passage; they are the ones who compassed Jerusalem with armies and desolated the temple and the city.

There is much that can be written on this point, and much historical information can be brought bear on this subject in order to show that the Roman destruction of Jerusalem is indeed what is in view in Daniel 11:31. And while it is not within the scope of this current discussion to examine all that evidence, I must express my conviction that all the evidence that SHOULD be needed has already been provided in the information given to us by our Lord along with the added admonition to 'LET THE READER UNDERSTAND'. If we attempt to place the primary application of the 'abomination of desolation' found in Daniel 11:31 in any other time period other than that in which our Lord expressly placed it, aren't we inviting error?

Now why should this be so important; to understand something that seems so basic and simple? - Because evidently many in our day DO NOT understand it, or refuse to deal with the implications. In fact, this simple connection between Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:31 makes many prophetic speculations – some which have spawned ministries which make millions of dollars per year – completely untenable.

We have noted how Futurist expositors deal with these passages; they simply disregard any historical fulfillment of these verses and place their primary application in the future. To my mind, this is wholly unsatisfactory. But what of others such as the Preterists?

It should come as the utmost shock that Preterists in general *do not see a direct cross-reference between Daniel 11:31 and Matthew 24:15.* Why this is so should become obvious as we continue.

Most Preterists feel that Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet' really points to Daniel 9:26-27. We completely agree. Why then is it that when we come to Daniel 11:31, most Preterists deny that this verse *also* is a direct cross reference to Jesus' 'abomination of desolation'?

Phillip Mauro (1859-1952) a preterist author wrote concerning Daniel 11:31:

This brings us to the climax of the wicked deeds of Antiochus, which the prophecy foretells distinctly, and which the histories record with great detail. We refer to his gross impiety and sacrilege in respect to the temple, the sacrifices, and the religious customs of the Jews. Verse 30 speaks of his coming to an understanding "with them that forsake the holy covenant." For many of

the Jews apostatised at that time, forsaking God, and turning against all their religious customs. Thus in I Maccabees 1:41-43 & 52 we read:

"Moreover, King Antiochus wrote to his whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and everyone should leave his laws. So all the heathen agreed according to the commandment of the king. Yea, many also of the Israelites consented to his religion, and sacrificed unto idols, and profaned the Sabbath. * * * Then many of the people were gathered unto them, to wit, every one that forsook the law; and so they committed evils in the land."

The fulfilment again is most exact. Verse 31 of Daniel 11 foretold that "Arms shall stand on his part," or more literally, "arms from him shall stand." This was fulfilled by Antiochus' sending an army into Judea (I Mac. 1:29 et seq.)

They also "polluted" at this time the sanctuary of strength and caused the daily sacrifice to be taken away; for it is recorded in I Maccabees 1:44 et seq. that Antiochus sent letters commanding them to follow strange laws, and forbidding "burnt offering and sacrifice, and drink offerings in the temple; and that they should profane the Sabbath and festival days; and pollute the sanctuary of the holy people."

The words "and shall place the abomination which maketh desolate" (#Da 11:31) call for special examination, because of their recurrence in (#Da 12:11), and of their use by the Lord Jesus Christ, in (#Mt 24 Mr 13). We have already shown, and expect to refer to the matter again, that the expression "the abomination which maketh desolate" means an armed heathen force. **Such a force was placed by Antiochus in the city of David (I Mac. 1:34, 35)**. From 'The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation' (emphasis mine)

So to Phillip Mauro the 'abomination of desolation' referred to in Daniel 11:31 was fulfilled by the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes *and not the Romans*. But didn't Jesus clearly place the 'abomination of desolation' in the *future* when he made reference to it in Matthew 24:15? Doesn't that alone prove that the primary application of Daniel 11:31 is to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and not to some king who lived almost two centuries before Jesus was born? Should we not inquire as to WHY something which seems so obvious is denied by those such as Phillip Mauro?

Regarding Daniel 9:26-67 which we considered a bit earlier, notice how Phillip Mauro has no problem seeing how *that* passage has a direct connection to our Lord's words in Matthew 24:15. He states:

We would also call attention to a parallel between verses 26 and 27 (of Dan. 9). The first part of verse 26 foretells that after the threescore and two weeks Messiah shall be cut off; and the first part of verse 27 contains the parallel prediction; "And He shall confirm the covenant with many," "and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." The second part of each verse speaks of the desolations of the city and sanctuary. This parallel affords further confirmation of the correctness of our reading of the prophecy.

The words "for the overspreading of abominations" are very obscure, and many suggestions as to their meaning have been offered. We shall not discuss these, for the reason that the Septuagint translation gives a clear rendering, and our Lord's adoption of it puts the authoritative stamp of His approval upon it. According to that version "the abomination of desolation" was to be upon (or to come against) the temple, that is, *for its destruction*. In other words there was to come ail agency or force (which God terms an "abomination", which was to make the place a "desolation."

The Lord Jesus Christ used *the same expression* when, in warning His disciples of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Titus, He said: "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), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountain , " etc, **This**

reference by our Lord to the last verse of the Seventy Weeks' prophecy is a connecting link between that scripture and His own prophecy on Mt. Olivet. The great value of this connecting link will appear later on. From 'The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation' (emphasis mine)

So here, although Mauro admits that the language of Daniel 9:26-27 is 'very obscure' he has no problem identifying the 'desolating abomination' of that passage with Jesus' words in Matthew 24:15. In fact the author expresses his conviction and confidence in this by calling it a 'connecting link' of 'great value'.

However we must ask then why Daniel 11:31, which speaks in clear language even closer to that of our Lord's words in Matthew 24:15 *is not ALSO a connecting link of great value?* Out of these two passages which speak of a 'desolating abomination', why should the more obscure of the two provide such a direct link and the other one should not? Why is one said to be a direct reference to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD while the other is relegated to the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes? Does it not seem that consistency in interpretation would demand that both be understood the same way?

We have already shown how a comparison of Matthew 24, Daniel 11, and Luke 21 undeniably links these three passages together, and how there can be little doubt that Jesus had Daniel 11:31 in mind when he made reference to the 'Abomination of Desolation'. Why must Preterists deny this connection?

Phillip Mauro is just one of many commentators who believe that Daniel 11:31 is primarily a reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, and not the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. But can Daniel 11:31 be properly applied to Antiochus Epiphanes at all?

Consider the following from E. B. Elliot commenting on Daniel 11:31:

"And arms shall stand up *from, or after,* him:" a phrase hardly to be interpreted, I believe, agreeably with the precedents of other analogous Hebrew phrases in the prophecy, except of some *new* prince or power, arising *after* in respect of *time,* or *from* him, in respect of *origin,* that was before the subject of description. And the *latter* has the *definite article* prefixed to it. "***The abomination making desolate:***" as if to designate either one particular desolating abomination previously made known to Daniel (Dan. ix. 27, "*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 of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*") or that which was to be emphatically the grand abomination of desolation: on neither of which grounds could that spoken of in the passage before us mean the idol set up in the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes: there having been no previous prediction of it, and the desolation it caused being one of very short duration.

And in fact, while thus excluding the abomination set up by Antiochus, this little but very significant particle in the prophetic language seems to me very strikingly to point out that which was afterwards set up by the Romans, as the one intended: both as being that which introduced the longest and greatest desolation of the Jewish temple and city, and that which alike other previous prophecies, and more especially the one communicated to Daniel himself a little before by the angel Gabriel, distinctly foretold. (underlines are mine) From Horae Apocalypticæ Vol. 4

Elliot points out that the 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 11:31 *carries the definite article and thus points to something already made known to Daniel* – that being the desolating abomination mentioned in 9:26. Therefore these two passages are also inseparably linked to one another, and in turn are also linked to our Lord's words in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. ALL have reference to the first century destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Herein are the TRUE and

CONSISTENT 'CONNECTING LINKS OF GREAT VALUE', but again, why are such links denied by so many?



It may be of some interest to mention that the Jews of Jesus' day themselves had very clear ideas about the identity of Daniel's 'abomination of desolation', and when it was fulfilled. The Jews, very much like many scholars today, as well as Preterists also believed that the 'abomination of desolation' mentioned in Daniel 11:31 was a reference to the acts of the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes.

The book of First Maccabees which was written between the writing of the Old and New Testaments records the deeds of this vile king and his dealings with the Jewish people. Regarding this king, we find in First Maccabees the following:

1:54 Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, **they set up the abomination of desolation** upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side;

It is for precisely this reason that many Jews in Jesus' day (and indeed many Jews to this very day) believed that the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of in Daniel 11:31 referred to this second century BC king.

Whether or not this is the proper understanding of Daniel 11:31 should be dependant upon one thing and one thing only; HOW DID OUR LORD INSTRUCT US TO UNDERSTAND THESE WORDS? Did Jesus ever say 'When you see something like the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of by the Maccabees'? Clearly Jesus knew that many Jews believed that Daniel 11:31 had already been fulfilled in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, but was their understanding correct?

Clearly not. Jesus places the time of this 'abomination' in the FUTURE then warns them to UNDERSTAND. In effect Matthew 24:15 is saying 'Look, many believe that they understand that the 'abomination of desolation' is past, but they have misunderstood. Therefore when you see the coming Roman Desolation of Jerusalem, then UNDERSTAND that THIS is what Daniel the prophet was talking about.'

Many admit that Matthew 24:15 refers to the 'desolating abomination' of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Many admit that the 'desolating abomination' of Daniel 9:26-27 also refers to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. But almost all *deny* that Daniel 11:31 refers to those same events as well. Is this not wholesale *rejection* of how Jesus used these words and expressly warned us to understand them?

Whenever we come to such a glaring inconsistency as this, as in the Preterist position – that one desolating abomination should refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and the other to events in the life of Antiochus Epiphanes – we should demand an explanation of how these things could be so. Many Preterist authors are dogmatic and berate other Futurist or Historicist commentators for what they see as inconsistencies in their various interpretations. We hope that we shall be forgiven for demanding an explanation for what we see as equally questionable inconsistencies!

Why this inconstancy? Keeping in mind that Preterists believe that ALL prophecy was fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, a comparison of Daniel 11 with Matthew 24 makes the answer obvious:

Daniel 11		Matthew 24
<p>Dan 11:31-45 And 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 maketh desolate.</p>	<p>Abomination of Desolation ← → If These Two Passages are Parallel, as They So Obviously Are, and Preterism is True, Then... ↓</p>	<p>Mat 24:15-31 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:)</p>
<p>(32) And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. (33) And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. (34) Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. (35) And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed. (36) And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. (37) Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. (38) But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. (39) Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. (40) And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. (41) He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. (42) He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. (43) But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. (44) But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. (45) And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.</p>	<p>All These Things Must Have Been Accomplished Between 66-70 AD ← → Can Preterism Account for the Material in Daniel 11:32-45 between 66 and 70 AD? ←</p>	<p>(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. (22) And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (23) Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. (24) For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (25) Behold, I have told you before. (26) Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. (27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (28) For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. (29) Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.</p>

Now notice carefully: What was to *follow* the setting up of the 'abomination of desolation' according to Daniel 11?

Verses 33-34: A falling of the people by 'sword, flame, and captivity' for many days.

Verses 36-39: The rise and reign of a 'willful king'.

Verses 40-45: The final wars of the kings of the north and south.

Since Preterist authors believe that ALL of Matthew 24 was fulfilled in 70 AD their problem with Daniel 11 becomes glaringly obvious. If they allow that Jesus' words in Matthew 24:15 are a direct reference to those in Daniel 11:31 *then they have to account for all of the prophetic information in Daniel 11:32-40 within a very short period of time; roughly from 66 to 70 AD.* Did the captivity, flame and sword for many days, the rise and reign of the 'willful king', and the final military campaigns of the kings of the north and the south described in verses 40-45 ALL take place AFTER the placing of the abomination of desolation of verse 31 and BEFORE the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD? Clearly such an exposition is a nightmare, and to even suggest that such an interpretation is likely or even possible is suspicious to say the least!

Preterist expositors are faced with a choice; either relegate the 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 11:31 to the era of Antiochus Epiphanes, or try to find fulfillment for the vast amount of prophetic information given in Daniel 11:32-40 within the narrow time boundaries of 66-70 AD. Most will take the former option, and explain that the atrocities of Antiochus Epiphanes were a 'type' of the destruction of Jerusalem.

But at this juncture we need to ask: aren't the Preterists then allowing for a 'dual interpretation'; one of the methods that Preterists themselves deplore when used by others elsewhere. Preterist authors ridicule Futurist or Historicist authors when they allow for a 'dual fulfillment' of the events of Matthew 24, yet they (or at least many) are willing to apply this same device in Daniel 11 in order that their own interpretations may stand. Is this honest?

Preterists would protest that they are not allowing for such 'dual fulfillment' but are rather saying that Jesus used an illustration in which the deeds of Antiochus Epiphanes are a 'type' of the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. But this is clearly wishful thinking at best. Our Lord expressly warns his disciples, 'When ye therefore see THE abomination of desolation, etc'. We have documented how Jesus clearly had Daniel 11:31 specifically in mind, and how that passage with its use of the definite article points backward to something already made known to the prophet; namely the desolating abomination of Daniel 9:26-27 which Preterists themselves admit is a direct reference to the destruction of Jerusalem. *The burden lies on the Preterists to PROVE that Daniel 11:31 (evidence notwithstanding) does not refer to the first century destruction of Jerusalem.* The only 'proof' which seems to be offered is that this cannot be so because it overthrows their entire scheme.

The fact is that it can be demonstrated that Matthew 24:15, Daniel 9:26-27, Daniel 11:31 and Luke 21:20-24 are all inseparably linked together. The Preterists can only deal with this in one of two ways; break these links and pretend that Daniel 11:31 is only a 'type' of the destruction of Jerusalem, or attempt to account for the vast information of Daniel 11:32-40 within a very brief period of time - something they have never done, and something I believe that CANNOT ever be done. On the other hand, futurist authors find it necessary to insert a 2000+ year gap of time into these prophecies in order to confine them all to a future time while ignoring the fact that Jesus'

discourse in Matthew 24 is a direct answer to the disciples' question about the first century destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that was then standing. I feel that all such schemes are wholly unsatisfactory.

THE 'PROBLEM'

Mat 24:15-31 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...29) **Immediately after the tribulation of those days** shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

These words have been a source of confusion to many because they SEEM to teach that Jesus would return immediately upon the fall of Jerusalem in the first century. As we have seen, attempts to explain this difficulty are hardly satisfactory.

Is there a solution to this difficulty? I feel that there is as long as we always keep certain facts in mind. Once again let's review:

- 1) The disciples question to Jesus in Matthew 24 was in reference to first century Jerusalem and the then standing temple.
- 2) Then it stands to reason that Jesus would begin by addressing that question. It seems most unreasonable to assume that the entire discourse applies directly to the 21st century or beyond. It was given as a direct answer to the disciples' question.
- 3) It can be demonstrated by the parallel passage in Luke 21 that Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation' would be fulfilled by Jerusalem being surrounded by Roman armies.
- 4) This same sequence of events is confirmed in Daniel 9:26-27 in which most expositors see this same reference to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, although the language allows for some obscurity.
- 5) This same 'abomination of desolation' is mentioned again in Daniel 11:31, but in language so clear, and in such parallel to Luke 21:20-24 that it is nearly impossible to miss the blatant cross-reference.
- 6) If the 'abomination of desolation' mentioned in Daniel 11:31 is a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem, then we have no choice but to account for the vast amount of prophetic information which *follows* the placing of that abomination. This information is found in Daniel 11:32 to the end of chapter 12.

7) The prophetic information given in Daniel 11:32-12:13 can hardly be accounted for by the time Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD.

These are the facts we must deal with. Any correct interpretation must deal with this information honestly, and in my opinion can only be ascertained by a careful comparison of scripture with other scripture. Therefore we propose the following solution:

Matthew 24		Luke 21
<p>Mat 24:15-30 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...</p>	<p>Abomination of Desolation</p> <p>← →</p>	<p>Luk 21:20-28 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.</p>
<p>(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. (22) And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. (23) Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here <i>is</i> Christ, or there; believe <i>it</i> not. (24) For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if <i>it were</i> possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (25) Behold, I have told you before. (26) Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, <i>he is</i> in the secret chambers; believe <i>it</i> not. (27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (28) For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.</p>	<p>Great Tribulation</p> <p>← →</p>	<p>(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.</p>
<p>(29) Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.</p>	<p>Consummation and Resurrection</p> <p>← →</p>	<p>(25) And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (26) Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. (27) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. (28) And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.</p>

It is only by carefully comparing the two passages shown above that we can find a satisfactory solution to this prophetic enigma. Look carefully at these two passages and notice how they define one another's terms. Notice how the 'abomination of desolation' in verse 15 of Matthew 24 is defined by Luke's gospel as 'Jerusalem compassed with armies'.

Notice carefully Matthew 24:21: 'For then there shall be great tribulation, etc'. Then in verse 29 we are told that 'immediately after the tribulation of those days...they shall see the Son of man coming ...with power and great glory'. Doesn't this seem to teach that Jesus would return immediately following the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century? As a matter of fact it *does not!*

Ask yourself; how long does Matthew 24 tell us that the 'great tribulation' would last? The fact is, nowhere in Matthew 24 are we given any indication about how long the 'great tribulation' would last, , but beyond that **THERE IS NOTHING IN MATTHEW 24 THAT CONFINES THAT GREAT TRIBULATION TO THE EVENTS OF 70 AD.**

Some tell us that the 'great tribulation' spoken of in Matthew 24 ended in 70 AD. Others tell us that it is a time period of 3.5 or seven years which lies in the future. Since Matthew 24 seems to be their main proof text, where pray tell are they getting this information regarding the timing? Friends, we can examine Matthew 24 with a magnifying glass if we wish, but we will find nothing there that tells us the duration of the 'great tribulation' that our Lord speaks of. Next time someone tells you how long the 'great tribulation' will last (or did last), ask for PROOF.

(Note: I am well aware that some see Matthew 24:34 and 'this generation' as a 'time text'. The reasons why this is incorrect will be discussed in part four.)

But if Matthew 24 gives us no information regarding the duration of the 'great tribulation' might we be able to find such information elsewhere? While Matthew offers us no information on this, it is almost universally overlooked that the parallel passage in Luke DOES! Luke's gospel defines for us, in no uncertain terms the bounds and the scope of the great tribulation. Just as Luke clarified the language of Matthew 24:15 by defining the 'abomination of desolation', Luke also clarifies what is meant by 'great tribulation. Notice:

From Matthew 24:

(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.**

From Luke:

(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.**

What IS the 'great tribulation' and how long will it last? It is the falling of the JEWISH PEOPLE by sword flame and captivity, and the trampling down of their beloved city **UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES ARE FULFILLED!** It is 'immediately after' the days of THAT tribulation that our Lord will return, and the resurrection will take place. However Luke makes it clear that the tribulation lasts 'until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled'.

'In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established'. We cannot draw conclusions on the timing of the 'great tribulation' while ignoring the parallel passages which define for us *exactly what that tribulation is and how long it will last*.

I would like to ask my Preterist friends, since in their view all of Matthew 24, and thus of necessity all of Luke 21 is already fulfilled, exactly WHEN prior to or during 70 AD the treading down of Jerusalem STOPPED? Additionally we might ask, in light of the bloody persecution of the Jewish people over the past 20 centuries, exactly when did they stop being the victims of 'sword and captivity'. According to Luke's gospel which defines the limits, scope, and object of the 'great tribulation', are not these the very conditions which are to last until our Lord's second coming? And if these conditions still exist, isn't this the clearest proof that he has not yet come?

Brothers and sisters, it seems as though we have had it hammered into our heads that the 'great tribulation' is some definite and probably brief period of time. We are often told that it is a period of exactly 3 1/2 years either at the very end of the age, or which has already been fulfilled in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem. However, if all our facts are scripturally sound, then this is simply not the case. By comparing scripture with scripture the 'great tribulation' is defined as the judgments on the Jewish nation which BEGAN with the destruction of the city and temple in 70 AD, BUT WHICH CONTINUE TO THIS DAY.

The troubles upon the Jewish nation, and their time of 'great tribulation' are in no way confined to the events of 70 AD. Beyond this, it is a travesty to ignore the sad history of the Jews over the past 20 centuries and say that their time of 'great tribulation' lies only in the future. Consider the following extended information documented by historicist author Henry Grattan Guinness. We provide this extended quotation because we do not believe that the average Christian today understands the magnitude of the suffering which has plagued the Jewish people over the past 20 centuries:

About sixty years later (after 70 AD), the Jews had sufficiently recovered from this crushing blow to rise afresh in revolt against the Roman power, and then Hadrian completed the work of their dispersion among all nations of the earth. He made the whole country of Palestine a desolation, expelled all its remaining Jewish inhabitants, forbade the Jews on pain of death even to approach Ælia Capitolina, the Roman city erected on the site of Jerusalem. He slaughtered 580,000 Jews in a murderous war which lasted three years and a half, and sold thousands of prisoners at the lowest prices into slavery...

But the conversion of Constantine changed all this. When the ruler of the Roman world bowed the knee in adoration before the crucified Galilæan, a complete reverse took place in the condition of the Christ-rejecting nation. The Jews then became a condemned and persecuted sect, and sank ever deeper into oppression and misery. They lost the imperial favour, and the privileges they had enjoyed, and were excluded from one sphere after another. Military and civic careers were gradually closed to them, though they were still free to observe their own religion, and retain their rights as men and citizens; and their persons and property were as yet secure.

With the fifth century the gloom deepened; and both in the eastern and in the western empire of Rome the treatment of the Jews became worse and worse. The legislation of Justinian put the axe to the root of the tree, by declaring that "civil rights could only belong to those who professed the orthodox faith." The Jews were entirely excluded from his code and his edicts. Restrictions were imposed on them in favour of Christians, and proselytism was punished with death. From this time forward they had no political position of importance in the eastern empire, though in the farther East, beyond its bounds, they continued to flourish till the Saracenic wars. After that time popular hatred and contempt, with bitter persecution, were their portion under the crescent in the East, as well as under the cross in the West. Charlemagne and the entire Carolingian dynasty sought as far as possible to protect the Jews, but with the downfall of that line of monarchs began the worst troubles of the exiles of Palestine. With the rise of the Norman power, and the feudal system in

Europe, commenced a period of seven centuries of the most cruel oppression and profound degradation to the Jews in all the nations of Christendom.

The era of the crusades was the darkest part of this dark night of Israel's tribulation. It brought to them a long continuance of two centuries of the most atrocious massacres and tortures, which aimed at their utter extermination, and were not far from securing it. In vain even the popes exerted their influence to mitigate Jewish miseries and woes; men calling themselves Christians, and setting forth to rescue the holy places from the Turk, commenced their task by the massacre, on their way to Syria, of all the Jews in Europe! That age of chivalry esteemed only two classes of men—military heroes and agricultural serfs. The Jews were neither—they were traders, pariahs of society. Too often their financial transactions were usurious, and excited popular fury, as they still do occasionally on the continent. The men of those days understood little of finance, and considered all interest usury. The Jews, "doubly detested as the murderers of Christ and as the bloodsuckers of Christian wealth, were in the middle ages a special object of severity to the laws, both ecclesiastical and civil, of hatred to the burghers, and of violence to the populace. Even the sovereigns who gave them protection made use of them merely as a sponge, which they allowed to fill with the money of their subjects, that they might squeeze its contents into the royal treasury." [Dr. ISAAC DA COSTA: "Israel and the Gentiles." London: J. Kisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street, W.]

A Jewish calendar, with a chronological table, forming "a summary of Jewish history from the flood to the year 1860," lies before us. We run the eye questioningly over its pages, and what do we find as we review the incidents of this second section of Jewish history there recorded? An unconscious acknowledgment from Jewish pens that every threat of judgment denounced against Israel in case of continued rebellion and idolatry, by Moses and the prophets, has been fulfilled. An acknowledgment that ever since their fall before the power of Babylon, in the sixth century B.C., they have been in subjection to Gentile rulers; and that since AD. 135 they have been dispersed among all nations; that their history has consisted of one long chain of great and sore calamities, interrupted only with brief gleams of passing prosperity. That they have been exposed to innumerable evils of every kind: to famines and plagues, captivities and banishments without number, to social distress and degradation, to outlawry and the hatred of their Gentile neighbours, to false accusations and frequent massacres, to exactions and imposts almost exceeding belief, to pillage and torture, to the most painful forms of social ostracism and injustice; in a word, that they have been so relentlessly crushed down by their Gentile masters, that existence itself would have been crushed out of them long since but for the strange indestructibility with which, in the providence of God, their race is endowed, that wonderful, vigorous vitality, which caused them, even in their profound misery in Egypt, to multiply till their numbers alarmed their oppressors; and which, after the return of only 50,000 of them from Babylon, caused them again to increase to many millions during the five centuries prior to the first advent, has never forsaken them. From first to last their only appropriate emblem is the bush that "burned with fire, yet was not consumed." But general statements fail to impress the mind; let us take some special incidents, and try to realize the misery the facts imply.

In A.D. 1020 Canute banished all the Jews from England. What is it to be uprooted and banished from your native land? It is to be deprived at a stroke of home and friends, of business and prospects in life, and cast with a helpless family a stranger among strangers.

In A.D. 1068 the only burial place in all England allowed to the Jews was in Cripplegate (where Jewin Street now stands), and Jews from all other parts of the country were forced, at enormous expense and inconvenience, to bring thither their dead. How should we feel if we lived under such a law as that?

In 1096 the crusaders began what they called the "Holy War," by attempting to murder all the Jews in Europe who would not submit to baptism! The most horrible carnage took place all over Germany, where numbers of Jews destroyed each other, mothers even slaying their own children to avoid the barbarities of the infuriated Christian fanatics. Two hundred Jews who had thrown themselves into the Rhine at Cologne were dragged from the water and inhumanly butchered.

Similar atrocities marked the commencement of the second crusade in A.D. 1146, though St. Bernard exerted himself to the utmost to prevent them. About this time commenced the gross financial injustice which continued for many centuries to be one principal instrument of persecution. Louis VII., of France, released the crusaders from all their debts to Jews. Henry II. ordered the Jews to quit England, by way of extorting a large sum of money for permission to remain. In A.D.

1181 Philip Augustus seized the Jews in their synagogues, imprisoned them, cancelled all debts due to them, confiscated their property, and ordered them to quit France immediately. When starting on the crusades, Henry II. ordered £60,000 (an enormous sum in those days) to be levied on the Jews to defray his expenses. Murderous riots were raised against these unfortunate people at the coronation of Richard I., when the populace slaughtered every Jew they could find, and after plundering them set fire to their houses. The following year occurred a terrible and similar tragedy in the provinces. The governor of York Castle offered the Jews protection, which they accepted; but they were besieged in the castle, and their resources being cut off, they, at the instigation of their venerable rabbi, in one night slew their wives and children, burnt the property they had with them, drew lots for killing each other, and then set fire to the castle to avoid the more barbarous tortures their persecutors intended..

In England the condition of the Jews was for centuries peculiarly miserable; few things in our history reflect such disgrace on both kings and people. Up to the reign of Edward I., when they were banished the country, they were incessantly victimized in the most cruel and unjust manner. The Jews and their families were in the eyes of the law mere slaves and bondsmen to the king, having no rights whatever.

The laws of Edward the Confessor had established this. "The Jews, and all they possess, belong to the king." The Crown had therefore absolute power to appropriate at any time their persons, their wives and children, and the wealth which with peculiar facility and skill they accumulated. The laws provided that the Jews were not to be taxed like the rest of the nation, "as they are talliable to the king alone as his own bondsmen, and not besides." Apart from any purely arbitrary and capricious exertion of power by the Crown over the persons and property of the Jews, there were certain points in which cruel tyranny was systematically enforced. Thus upon the death of a Jew the king asserted his right to the whole of the property and effects of which the deceased had been possessed. If he left a wife or children they were permitted to succeed to the estate only on the payment of heavy and arbitrary fines, amounting to at least one-half of the whole. Upon the conversion of a Jew to Christianity the king, up to the reign of Edward I., seized all his estate and applied it to his own use. Edward I. granted that from henceforth only one-half of the estate should in such cases be taken. This custom seems to have prevailed in various countries of Europe, as well as in England, and the reason given for it is, that the sincerity of the conversion might thereby be shown. A curious mode for Christians to adopt in order to manifest their desire for the conversion of the Jews! They oppressed and ill-treated them for being Jews, and took away from them all their property on their becoming Christians!

Certain towns were appointed for the residence of the Jews, and certain parts of these towns; and they were not permitted to dwell in any other places. A special Court of Exchequer was appointed to manage all their financial affairs, so that the king could at any moment become acquainted with any transaction whatever, undertaken by a Jew, as these courts kept copies of all documents.

King John ordered all the Jews of England to be imprisoned until they made a full discovery of all they possessed, after which, by the most cruel tortures, he extorted from them an enormous sum of money. One man at Bristol was ordered to have a tooth extracted daily until he paid 10,000 marks. Henry III. demanded 20,000 marks from the Jews in A.D. 1241, and a second time, in 1245, he extorted 4,000 more. Louis IX. confiscated one-third of the debts due to them throughout his country. Henry III. obliged them to give him 18,000 marks. Philip V. imprisoned the Jews at Paris to compel them to prove all their debts; these he seized, and after obtaining 150,000 francs condemned many to the flames. But it would be impossible to enumerate all the instances of this kind of financial oppression which befell the Jews in Europe in the middle ages.

A very common pretext for robbing and murdering the Jews has been to accuse them of some unnatural crime, such as poisoning the rivers to produce cholera or plague, and then to rouse the populace against them. In AD. 1220, for instance, the body of a girl was found in the Rhine; the Jews of Cologne were accused of having drowned her, and the bishop fined them 4,200 pieces of silver. His Jewish physician was accused of poisoning John I., of Portugal, and the Jews were obliged to pay 50,000 crowns. They were often accused of crucifying children for their passover lambs, and of similar enormities; and when the passions of the people were sufficiently roused, massacre and plunder invariably resulted. The Lateran Council in 1215 ordered the Jews to wear a distinguishing mark, and the death penalty was affixed to a Jew marrying a Christian, or having a Christian servant.

Perhaps the worst calamity which befell these people in the middle ages was their banishment from Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, in A.D. 1492. The edict ran thus: "Seeing that the Jews of our cities induce many Christians to embrace their religion, particularly the nobles of Andalusia, for this they are banished under the severest penalties." The penalty was death if found in the kingdom after four months, unless they embraced Christianity. The inquisitor, Torquemada, prohibited Christians supplying them on their journey to the coast with bread, water, meat, or wine. A Jew offered 600,000 crowns in the name of his nation to procure the revocation of this cruel edict; the king and queen were inclined to consent, but the inquisitor Torquemada prevented their doing so. 800,000 souls on this account had to expatriate themselves from a country where they and their ancestors had resided in safety for centuries; a country whose darkness had been enlightened by their learning, and whose wealth had been increased by their industry. They had to quit the soil they had cultivated, the scenes of their youth, and the graves of their fathers, on a few months' notice, and at the sacrifice of most of their property; and to go forth, not knowing whither they went; and to their honour be it said they did so rather than adjure their religion, or forsake the law given on Sinai. Many of them suffered indescribable hardships, and a large number perished.

Mr. Guinness did not live to see the horrors of the Nazi holocaust which is not so much removed from our own time. It is said that in 70 AD when Jerusalem fell to the Romans, 1.1 million Jews perished – a horrid atrocity. But consider that in the holocaust of World War 2 an estimated 7 MILLION Jews perished. How then can we speak of 'great tribulation' upon these people which ENDED in 70 AD? Or how are we to ignore these facts and say that the tribulation of the Jewish people remains only for a future time? No friends, the 'great tribulation' upon the Jewish people BEGAN in 70 AD and according to the inspired words of Luke's gospel it CONTINUES to this day until the 'times of the Gentiles' are fulfilled. This tribulation will continue until immediately before our Lord's return:

Mat 24:29-31 **Immediately after the tribulation of those days** shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Immediately after the tribulation of WHICH DAYS? Only our scriptural comparison can accurately answer this question – immediately after the days in which the times of the gentiles will be fulfilled! It is an utter fallacy to assert that the treading down of Jerusalem and the bitter persecution of the Jewish people ended in the wars of 70 AD. If such treading down and persecution continues, then the 'times of the gentiles' are not complete, nor has the 'tribulation of those days' ended. And if this is so, then neither has our Lord returned, nor has the resurrection and judgment taken place as the Preterists assert, simply because these events are confined to a time AFTER THE TRIBULATION OF THOSE DAYS.

To use the words of Phillip Mauro, the verses concerning the 'abomination of desolation' really do form a 'connecting link of great value', one which unfortunately many do not appreciate or flatly deny. But once this link is acknowledged the errors of both Preterism and Futurism are exposed. Once it is understood that Matthew 24:15, Daniel 9:26-27, and Daniel 11:31 are to be understood together, and that all of these have reference to the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem, then Futurism can no longer stand because it must deny the historical application of these passages altogether. On the other hand Preterism has no way of dealing with the material in Daniel 11:32-40 if it is admitted that verse 31 also refers to the events of 70 AD.

To me, only a Historicist-Continuist exposition of these prophecies makes sense. While not denying the historical application of the 'abomination of desolation' to the events of 70 AD, the Historicist interpreter also sees that many other things must come to pass before our Lord's

return. By acknowledging that the verses cited really do form a valuable link, we see that the events of Daniel 11:32-45 take place *within the bounds of what our Lord has defined as the 'great tribulation'*- days in which the Jewish people would fall by flame, sword, and captivity for many days, and Jerusalem would be trampled by the gentiles. These events began with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and continue even to this day until our Lord Returns.

Matthew 24		Daniel 11
Mat 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:)	Abomination of Desolation ← →	Dan 11:31 And 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 maketh desolate.
Mat 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.	Great Tribulation ← →	Dan 11:32-35 Flame, spoil, captivity, etc Dan 11:36-39 The 'Willful King' Dan 11:40-45 Final wars of thing kings of the north and south
Mat 24:29-31 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.	Consummation and Resurrection ← →	Dan 12:2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Parallel Between Matthew 24 and Daniel 11

AN ANTICIPATED PROBLEM?

Did the scriptures themselves anticipate this potential problem in interpretation - that some might believe that our Lord's return was imminent in the first century? It seems so. Consider the words of the apostle Paul writing to the Thessalonians:

2Th 2:1-8 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by our gathering together unto him,* (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing

himself that he is God. (5) Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. (8) 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 coming:

The traditional date for the writing Matthew's gospel is given as 37-45 AD. It is thought that Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians was written about 54 AD. Therefore it seems likely that Paul and the believers in Thessalonica were familiar with the prophetic material of Matthew 24.

The Thessalonian believers were obviously troubled by a belief that the day of the Lord's return was then absolutely imminent, or perhaps even then present. It is very interesting to note the material which Paul uses in order to combat this erroneous conclusion. For that day would not come, says Paul:

...except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

From where did Paul draw this material? From Daniel 11!

Dan 11:36 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.

Remember what we noticed earlier regarding the Preterist position; that if they interpret the 'abomination of desolation' of Daniel 11:31 as the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD (an interpretation which we feel is demanded), and believing as they do that ALL prophecy, including Jesus' return was accomplished by that time, then it becomes nearly impossible for them to account for the vast amount of prophetic information given in Daniel 11:32-40.

We noted how a preteristic interpretation of Matthew 24 demands that Jesus would return at the time of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD. But remember what a mess this makes out of Daniel 11; a mess that can only be reconciled by either breaking the obvious link between Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:31, or by interpreting Daniel 11:31 as having reference to Antiochus Epiphanes and using Antiochus as a 'type' of the events which would occur in 70 AD.

We believe however that the words Paul used to correct the believers in Thessalonica also show that the Preterist position is in error. Paul tells them that the Lord's return is not as imminent as they think, and then offers as proof that there will be some delay **THE PROPHETIC MATERIAL IN DANIEL 11 WHICH HAD TO BE FULFILLED BEFORE OUR LORD'S COMING COULD TAKE PLACE.**

Paul seems to be saying that the tribulation which would precede our Lord's return (a tribulation that those in Thessalonica perhaps felt they were in) must encapsulate certain events; namely an apostasy and the rise of the 'man of sin'. Even though those in Thessalonica may have believed that they were actually *in* that 'great tribulation' immediately after which Jesus would return, Paul instructs them that the time of the second coming is not immediately at the door and introduces as evidence the prophetic material in Daniel 11 – specifically the rise of the 'willful king' - that remained to be fulfilled **DURING** the time of the tribulation.

Notice then the following facts:

- 1) The return of our Lord is ‘immediately AFTER the tribulation of those days’
- 2) Luke defines what ‘those days’ are; that the Jews would fall by sword and captivity and that Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the gentiles were complete.
- 3) Paul says that the day of Jesus’ return cannot come unless there is first an apostasy and the ‘man of sin’ is revealed, and makes reference to Daniel 11:36 as proof of this.
- 4) From this we can only conclude that the apostasy and the revealing of the ‘man of sin’ take place DURING the times of ‘great tribulation’.

In this we find another fact of monumental importance – namely that *Paul places the material of Daniel 11:36-40 within the ‘great tribulation’ which we believe began in 70 AD with the ‘abomination of desolation’.* This absolutely proves that Paul believed that the material in Daniel 11:35-37 was, at the time of his writing still future, and that such events must precede the second coming.

How does a Preterist answer this evidence? The answer is quite revealing.

To a Preterist, Paul’s ‘man of sin’ described in Second Thessalonians is either the Roman emperor Nero or one of many other evil characters in Jerusalem in the days immediately before 70 AD. But it follows that if this is true, then the *same character* must be referred to in Daniel 11:36 – for this is the very passage to which the apostle makes reference. Notice:

2 THESSALONIANS	Paul's Man of Sin	DANIEL
<p>2Th 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) <u>Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God,</u> or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.</p>	<p>← →</p>	<p>Dan 11:36-37 And the king shall do according to his will; <u>and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god,</u> and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. (37) Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.</p>

It is obvious to most commentators that Paul’s description of this ‘man of sin’ is drawn from the language of Daniel 11:36-37. In fact, most if not all reference Bibles will contain a cross-reference between these two verses

However, when we look at the Preterist writings on Daniel 11 we find that they believe the king in Daniel 11:36-37 to be Herod, the Romans in general, or the general Titus who led the siege against Jerusalem. *In other words, there is a complete disconnect between Paul’s ‘man of sin’ in second Thessalonians, and the very passage to which Paul makes reference!*

Preterist author Donald Hochner writing for Preteristarchive.com writes:

Now we are going to find out who was "THE king." Who was "THE king" that caused the Hasmonians to end their dynasty? The proof which I have discovered to identify "THE king" of Daniel 11:36-39, 44-45 with Herod the Great (the king of Judea ruled in 37 BC to 4 BC). This seems to be a direct reference to Herod the Great exclusively, but could also include his line of descendants who reigned over the Jews during this time of the end.

On the contrary, I would suggest that the identity of the KING in Daniel 11:36 can only be established by carefully comparing scripture with scripture, instead of relying upon an interpretation which can only be maintained by ignoring or denying the obvious cross references which were given to shed light on this subject. Donald Hochner's interpretation of Daniel 11:36-37 is *impossible*. Herod was dead long before Paul wrote Second Thessalonians. Paul explicitly wrote then that the 'man of sin' *had not yet been revealed*.

One can only interpret the King of Daniel 11:36 as Herod by first ignoring the cross reference between Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:31, and then ignoring the cross reference between 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and Daniel 11:36-17! But both these cross references serve to save us from the very error the Preterists make – the error of thinking that Jesus would return in the first century.

Notice that Paul places the 'man of sin' clearly in the future - that is, the 'man of sin' would arise sometime *beyond* 54 AD. when Paul wrote to the Thessalonian believers. Paul writes that something was then holding back this 'man of sin' from being revealed.

Because 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 is such an obvious reference to Daniel 11:36-37, notice then how impossible the Preterist position becomes. Since the same character is obviously in view in both Daniel 11 and 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul's 'man of sin' can certainly not be Herod the Great who died long before Paul penned these words. This explains why Preterist authors cannot and do not interpret both Daniel 11:36-37 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 as both having reference to Herod the Great.

But neither does it avail the Preterist position to apply the information about the 'man of sin' to the Roman emperor Nero because clearly the same personage is in view in both 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and Daniel 11:36-37. If one refers to the emperor Nero then so must the other. While many Preterist authors press the point that 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 is in their view an obvious reference to Nero, NONE apply the parallel passage in Daniel 11 in the same way. Thus their exposition utterly fails.

In 'The Parousia' by James Stewart Russell - considered by many to be THE definitive work on Preterism - a large section is devoted to the description of Paul's 'man of sin' in Second Thessalonians. While Russell lays out his evidence and expresses his conviction that the Apostle's words apply to Nero, *not once does he make mention of the parallel passage in Daniel 11:36-37 to which Paul is obviously referring, nor does he allude to the fact that such a parallel in scripture even exists*. How much confidence can be placed in any exposition which fails to consider such weighty evidence as this obvious parallel. Brothers and Sisters, such treatment of Paul's words is not exposition at all, it is obfuscation. Once again, all of this should serve to illustrate the insuperable difficulties and inconsistencies in the Preterist position.

The evidence is clear: Paul's instruction to the believers at Thessalonica that Jesus' return was not then imminent can only be understood by considering the material in Daniel 11 to which Paul makes reference. This evidence proves that Jesus' return was not imminent in 54 AD when he wrote, nor would it be imminent upon the destruction of Jerusalem and temple in 70 AD as

described in Daniel 11:31. Paul points out that an interval of time must elapse between the two events and uses as proof of this the intervening material in Daniel 11:36-37; that an apostasy must come first, and the 'man of sin' would be revealed. Only after such events would the Lord return and destroy the 'man of sin' at his coming.

SIGNS AND LYING WONDERS

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

These words from our Lord's mouth should be of the greatest concern to all Christians. Here Jesus speaks of a potential threat to his followers, and one so serious that he says it would deceive the very elect of God if such thing was possible. These words seem incredible, and they should command our most careful scrutiny to make sure that we have properly understood them lest we ourselves prove to be deceived.

The importance of ascertaining the truth about what is here being spoken of cannot be overstated. As we have seen, there is a growing movement in our time which would have us understand that everything in Matthew 24, including these words under consideration, have already been fulfilled, and in fact that *all* prophetic fulfillment was finished by 70 AD. If this is true, then the warnings from our Lord currently under consideration have no application to our time. If however this view which holds that everything in Matthew 24 was accomplished by 70 AD is incorrect, then considering our Lord's words that a deception would arise with the potential to deceive the very elect of God, nothing could be more dangerous than a belief that these words have no application to our time.

In considering this passage the first thing I would like to call to mind is the very grave nature of this warning. In Matthew 24:5 Jesus warned that 'many shall come in my name saying 'I am Christ, and deceive many'. However, in Matthew 24:8 he tells his disciples that the rise of those particular deceivers was a only a part of the 'beginning of sorrows'. But notice the contrast of that warning with the one in verse 24 which we are now considering. Clearly the warning of verse 24 is much more grave and serious - for here the deceiver comes with all manner of lying signs and wonders, and with the capability (if possible as Jesus says) to deceive the very elect. So although many deceivers would come even before the time of great tribulation, Jesus seems to be addressing something much more specific and grave in verse 24.

Notice secondly the *timing* of the warning of verse 24, which is quite different from the warning of verse five. We may summarize the series of events in Matthew 24 thusly:

- Verses 5-8 - Things which Jesus calls 'the beginning of sorrows' including deceivers in general.
- Verse 9-14 - General warnings and signs of the times.
- Verse 15 - A very specific warning about the 'abomination of desolation' which we have already considered in detail.
- Verses 16-22 - A description of the time which began by with the placing of the 'abomination of desolation'. Jesus designates this period as a time of 'great tribulation'. The corresponding verse in Luke's gospel tells us that this is the period in which the

Jewish people would fall by flame and sword and be led away captive into the nations.

- In verse 23 we come to this warning that there would arise false Christs and false prophets who would show *great signs and wonders* deceiving if possible the very elect.
- Then in verse 29 we find the words 'immediately *after* the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, etc'.
- Verses 30-31 - A description of Jesus' coming in power and glory.

Now the structure and the sequence of events as given in Matthew 24 is very clear and straightforward. Jesus places the warning concerning 'great signs and wonders' which could potentially deceive the very elect AFTER the placing of the 'abomination of desolation', DURING the time which he designates as 'great tribulation' but BEFORE his coming as described in verses 30-31. In this we see that whatever this deception is, it is a feature of the time which our designates as the time of 'great tribulation'.

Consider then how a Preterist who believes that all prophecy was fulfilled in 70 AD might understand what is here meant. They tell us that in the siege of Jerusalem (from roughly 66 AD when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem until 70 AD when the city was destroyed) that there did indeed exist many false prophets and others who claimed to be the messiah, and that these did in fact deceive many with pretensions to magical or miraculous powers. We are told that all of this is described by the Jewish historian Josephus, and that these facts fit the prophecy so perfectly that they have obviously been fulfilled exactly as our Lord predicted.

This 'evidence' may in fact seem impressive to some, but the real issue is not whether or not we may find something in the days leading up to 70 AD which *seems* to be a fulfillment of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:24. Indeed friends, one might say that this prophecy is being aptly fulfilled even in our day, but again that is not the issue. The issue is, and always must be *whether or not any supposed fulfillment of these words takes into account all the Biblical evidence, and whether such a fulfillment is in fact what Jesus had in mind when he spoke these words*. It is not enough to say that there arose in the first century many false prophets whose claims to magical powers deceived some apostate Jews. No, one must show that such an interpretation fits *all* the Biblical evidence and that such was what Jesus had in mind when he spoke these words.

As is our method elsewhere, we believe that a proper understanding of Jesus words will not be determined by comparing them with those of an ancient Jewish historian, *but by comparing them with other scripture*. A second scriptural witness is of infinitely greater value than one thousand secular history books.

Consider then the following words from the apostle Paul which carry with them the greatest weight:

2Th 2:3-10 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. (5) Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. (8) 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 coming: (9) **Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10)**

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

Paul expressly warns of a coming apostasy, deception and a 'man of sin' who would be accompanied by such *lying signs and wonders*. We might ask, where is Paul getting this information from? Does Paul's description of a great deception accompanied by lying signs and wonders stand alone in scripture? Did he receive this information in a vacuum? No! On the contrary, *isn't it obvious that Paul is here simply commenting upon our Lord's words in Matthew 24:24?*

Notice how the timing of the deception as described by Paul is exactly the same as that in Matthew 24:24: Jesus says that AFTER the placing of the abomination of desolation (which we have shown to be the Roman armies surrounding Jerusalem), but BEFORE his coming, that there would be this deception which would be accompanied by lying signs and wonders. Isn't this precisely what Paul tells the believers in Thessalonica - that BEFORE Jesus returns, there would first come a deception accompanied by all manner of lying signs and wonders? In this can anyone reasonably deny that Paul is simply commenting and expanding upon the words of Jesus?

The importance of this point cannot be overstated. There is much more to this singular point than first meets the eye, and so I plead with the reader for patience as I attempt to show how this connection between Paul's words in 2 Thessalonians 2 and Matthew 24:24 is crucial to a proper understanding of prophecy.

We noted in the previous section how we believe that Paul may have anticipated the error that some might make in believing that Jesus was to return immediately then in the first century. He introduces material which must take place before Jesus returns. We noted that Paul quotes material from Daniel 11:36-37 as the specific series of events which must come to pass before Jesus returns.

But beyond this, read carefully again 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10 shown above and notice what Paul has done. He has not only described Daniel 11:36-37 with its information about a 'willful king' as something which must take place AFTER he penned these words, but BEFORE Jesus must return, but even more importantly, he has tied Jesus' words of Matthew 24:24 and the reference to 'lying signs and wonders' to the words of Daniel 11:36-37.

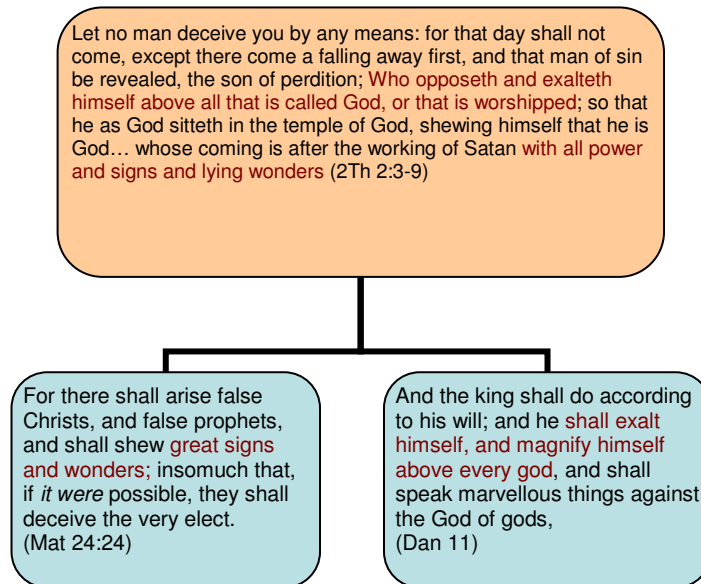
Put another way:

Paul warned the believers in Thessalonica that the 'Day of the Lord' - the day in which Jesus would return was not then at hand. Paul points to a coming apostasy, man of sin, and lying sign and wonders which must precede the Day of the Lord. But Paul is simply commenting on the sequence of events given in the Matthew 24 which also places the rise of 'false Christs' 'false prophets' and 'signs and lying wonders' *before* our Lord's second coming.

Paul takes the words of Jesus in Matthew 24 - that false Christs with 'lying signs and wonders' would arise during the tribulation and before his coming - AND APPLIES THEM TO THE MATERIAL IN DANIEL 11:36-37.

What does this tell us? That Paul understood that Jesus' warnings of 'false christs and false prophets' who would work 'signs and lying wonders' capable of deceiving the very elect had a specific and direct application to the character described in Daniel 11:36-37 - the 'willful king'.

Notice in the figure below how Paul draws information from both Daniel 11 and Matthew 24 to describe the 'man of sin':



Paul then understands that Jesus' words about these false Christs and false prophets who would cause a great deception by lying signs and wonders applied directly and specifically to the 'king' described in Daniel 11:36-37.

But with this specific application from the inspired pen of Paul the entire preterist interpretation of Matthew 24:24 comes crashing down. As noted, Preterists believe that Matthew 24:24 refers to any number of false Messiahs who pretended to miracles and deceived many apostate Jews in the first century. *But Paul understands that the deception of Matthew 24:24 applies directly and specifically to the 'king' mentioned in Daniel 11:36-37.* Who are we to believe, Paul, or the Preterists?

According to Preterists, Paul's 'man of sin' was the Roman emperor Nero. However could Nero be described as a 'false Christ and false prophet'? No, no preterist applies those words in Matthew 24:24 to Nero. Additionally, can the material in Daniel 11:36-37 be applied to Nero? No, and no preterist attempts to do so.

Notice then the blatant inconsistency of the Preterist position:

Question: Who does the deception of Matthew 24:24, with its mention of 'lying signs and wonders refer to?

Preterist: The many false messiahs in the first century who by pretension to miraculous powers deceived many apostate Jews.

Question: Who is Paul's 'man of sin' who comes with all manner of 'lying signs and wonder' who must appear before Jesus returns?

Preterist: The Roman emperor Nero

Question: Who is the 'willful king' of Daniel 11:36-37 who Paul explicitly ties to these 'signs and wonders'?

Preterist: Well we don't all agree, but it may be Herod, it may be Titus, or it may be the Romans in general. (!!)

Although it is obvious that Paul understands that all three passages refer to the same apostasy with its 'lying signs and wonders' Preterism collapses into a jumbled mess. The reason for this is obvious: All of this shows that the material from Daniel 11:32-45 *takes place within the great tribulation*. This however is something a preterist simply cannot accept. To them all of the information in Daniel 11:32-45 takes place BEFORE the great tribulation. I would rather believe the scriptures rather than the theories of men.

Some may however point out that Daniel 12:1 with its reference to a 'great time of trouble since never there was a nation' seems to indicate that the great tribulation did not in fact begin until after the events of Daniel 11:32-45. This is a question we will consider in the next section. We must note however that the evidence is absolutely clear that both Jesus and Paul place the material of Daniel 11:32-40 within the bounds of the great tribulation.

In closing this section I would like to point out the consistency of the historicist-continuist position on this point:

Question: Who does the deception of Matthew 24:24, with its mention of 'lying signs and wonders refer to?

Historicist: The Papacy

Question: Who is Paul's 'man of sin' who comes with all manner of 'lying signs and wonder' who must appear before Jesus returns?

Historicist: The Papacy

Question: Who is the 'willful king' of Daniel 11:36-37 who Paul explicitly ties to these 'signs and wonders'?

Historicist: The Papacy

The Papal deception has indeed succeeded on a grand scale. Its pretensions to miraculous powers and lying signs and wonders have been well documented and cannot be denied. This is a power which has sat in the 'temple of God' (the Christian Church) and proclaimed openly to be God on earth. The description of the 'willful king' of Daniel 11:36-37 fits the Papacy perfectly. The Papacy arose AFTER the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, DURING the great tribulation (the times of the desolation of the Jewish people), and BEFORE the second coming. In all this there is the greatest harmony of the scriptures and history.

A TIME OF TROUBLE

Mat 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.

Dan 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

The two passages above tell us in no uncertain terms that the 'great tribulation' will be a time of great distress. Ironically, these same words have also been a source of distress to many commentators as well as casual readers of the Bible who have sought to understand them.

Before attempting to ascertain the exact application of these words, I would like to call attention to the fact that their usage in Jesus' Olivet discourse of Matthew 24 once again serves to prove that Matthew 24 is primarily an exposition of the discourse given in Daniel 11 and 12. The series of events is the same in both: the placing of the abomination of desolation, a time of great tribulation, the suffering of the Jewish people by sword and captivity, and finally the consummation of the age in which Jesus will return. These facts are indisputable. The comparison of Matthew 24:15, Luke 21:20-24, and Daniel 11:31-40 proves that the 'great tribulation' would BEGIN with the desolating abomination of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD, but that such tribulation would be of considerable length and would encapsulate the events described in Daniel 11:32-40.

Unless this series of events is properly understood, the two passages shown above - Matthew 24:21 and Daniel 12:1 - seem to create many difficulties in interpretation. How so?

Consider the Preterist position that everything in Matthew 24 was fulfilled in the first century destruction of Jerusalem. They believe that those events were the 'great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, OR EVER SHALL BE'. But this is incredibly difficult to imagine. Although the tribulation which befell the Jewish nation in 70 AD was horrific beyond description, was that atrocity the GREATEST tribulation to befall the Jewish nation since that time? Many have pointed out that an estimated SEVEN MILLION Jews perished in the holocaust of World War 2, while roughly 1.1 million Jews perished in the 70 AD siege of Jerusalem. How then can it be said that the siege of Jerusalem in 70AD was the greatest time of trouble ever to befall the Jewish people? It seems that the only answer to this dilemma is for the Preterists to assert that the events of 70 AD were the greatest ever tribulation upon the Jewish nation *because their interpretation demands it*; even though this seems contrary to sense and reason, not to mention history itself.

The Futurist position runs into difficulty as well. Many futurist authors cannot reasonably deny that Jesus' words in Matthew 24 at least had *some* application to the events of 70 AD. When pressed, many are forced to admit that the words admit of a 'dual fulfillment' - that they were fulfilled in some sense upon the Jewish nation of the first century, but that they would have a final and greater fulfillment at the end of this age.

But this raises a serious question; can there be TWO periods of time of which both could be called 'great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, OR EVER SHALL BE'? Although some attempt to get around this question by suggesting that the phrase is

'hyperbolic' or 'parabolic' and that the language should not be pressed too far, such a solution is, in my view, highly suspicious.

I suggest however that there is no difficulty once one understands the relationship between Matthew 24 and the material in Daniel 11-12, as well as the sequence of events described above. Notice:

Mat 24:15-21 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.

This passage shows us that the 'great tribulation' would begin with the placing of the 'abomination of desolation'. As we have pointed out numerous times, this is an obvious reference to Daniel 11:31. Jesus describes this tribulation as the greatest time of trouble which has ever befallen the Jewish nation (or any nation), and that there will never again be a tribulation of such magnitude.

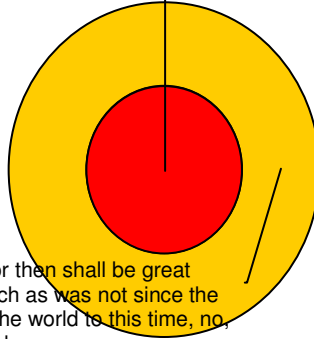
There appears to be some confusion when we consider the parallel in Daniel 11 and 12 because while the 'abomination of desolation is mentioned in Daniel 11:31, the 'time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation' is not mentioned until some fifteen verses later in Daniel 12:1. In other words, it seems as though Matthew 24 places the greatest 'time of trouble since ever there was a nation' at the *beginning* of the 'great tribulation' whereas Daniel places this 'time of trouble' near the *end* immediately before the second coming.

Jesus' words in Matthew 24 - 'for THEN (after the placing of the abomination of desolation) there shall be great tribulation' - indicate the time of trouble began with the first century destruction of Jerusalem. However Daniel 12 suggests that the 'time of trouble' arises as a result of the final military campaigns of the 'kings of the north and south' described in verses 11:40-45.

But this difficulty arises only from a misunderstanding of what the 'great tribulation' is. As we have seen, this 'tribulation' is not some brief period of time either in the first century or at the end of the age, but encapsulates *all the woes upon the Jewish nation which would transpire between the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and our Lord's return*. And in fact no NATION has been more persecuted or has suffered such troubles as has the Jewish nation during that period. There is no trouble at all once we realize that Jesus' words about a 'great tribulation ever since there was a nation nor ever shall' be *encapsulates all of Daniel 11:32-12:1 right up until the consummation of the age*. There are not two 'great times of trouble since ever was there a nation nor ever shall be' - that would be impossible. There is only one great time of trouble; however it is 'great' not only in the severity of its judgments, but also in its *duration*. Since Jesus' words in Matthew 24 concerning 'great tribulation' encapsulate all of Daniel 11:30-45 which are in fact only a more detailed description of this 'tribulation', and since, as we have seen, Luke 21 describes this tribulation as the days in which the Jewish people would fall by 'sword and captivity' UNTIL the times of the gentiles were completed, there is no difficulty or contradiction.

Dan 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time...

(Culmination of the great tribulation)



Mat 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to *this time*, nor ever shall be.

(Beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem lasting until the second coming)

There Are Not Two Periods of 'Great Tribulation' - Rather, Jesus' Reference to 'Great Tribulation' in Matthew 24 Encapsulates the Reference to a 'Great Time of Trouble' Found in Daniel 12

The fact that these descriptions of 'great tribulation' seem to 'bookend' the period as a whole may however suggest that an event of the magnitude of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD may in fact lie in the future just before Jesus returns. But we must stress our conviction that these would not constitute two 'great times of trouble' but are in fact only two parts of the tribulation which began in the first century but may perhaps conclude with some great catastrophe which is yet to befall the Jewish nation. We will consider this point in more detail later in the section entitled 'The Last Mention'.

‘THIS GENERATION’

(Mat 24:34) *Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*

Some verses in the Bible seem to give rise to more questions than answers. One such verse is Matthew 24:34. After answering the disciples' question about the temple and the desolation of Jerusalem, and after describing in vivid language his coming with power and glory, Jesus tells them that 'This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.' What did Jesus mean when he spoke this - that 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled'? Concerning these words the Preterist author James Stuart Russell wrote:

"Words have no meaning if this language, uttered on so solemn an occasion, and so precise and express in its import, does not affirm the near approach of the great event which occupies the whole discourse of our Lord."

Of course, by this Stuart means that the words of Jesus that 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled' meant that Jesus would absolutely return within the lifetime of some of

those to whom he spoke. If such is not the meaning of these words, then to James Stuart Russell the words have no meaning at all.

I find it curious however that a Preterist such as James Stuart Russell, or any who attempt to apply the Preterist hermeneutic can make such a statement and expect to be taken seriously. Within the same context in which our Lord spoke these words he also described in unambiguous language his *visible* and personal second coming - language which the Preterists refuse to take at face value. As noted, Preterists spiritualize vast amounts of scripture with the greatest latitude and variation of meaning even amongst themselves.

In illustration, consider what this same author has to say when commenting on the words of the apostle Paul in First Corinthians 15:26, that 'the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death'. Keep in mind that to James Stuart Russell ALL prophecy, including this promise from the apostolic pen, has already found its fulfillment in the events of 70 AD Stuart writes:

But what shall we say of the destruction of 'the last enemy, death?' *Is is not fatal to this interpretation that it requires us to place the abolition of the dominion of death, and the resurrection, in the past, and not the future?* Does not this contradict fact and common sense, and consequently expose the fallacy of the whole explanation? Of course, if the language of the apostle can only mean that at the Parousia the dominion of death over all men was everywhere and for ever brought to an end, it follows either that he was in error in making such an assertion, or that the interpretation which makes him say so is an erroneous one. That he does affirm that at the Parousia (the time of which is incontrovertibly defend in the New Testament as contemporaneous with the destruction of Jerusalem) death will be destroyed, is what no one can with any fairness deny; but it does not follow that we are to understand that expression in an absolutely unlimited and universal sense. (emphasis mine)

The 'short version' of what is here stated is that James Russell has already decided that the scriptures undeniably teach that Jesus' second advent occurred in 70 AD, therefore the words of the Apostle Paul cannot be taken in their literal and most obvious sense. Words fail me when confronted with 'logic' such as this: that one who proclaims that death itself has been destroyed, has the audacity to protest when one might suggest that our Lord's words concerning 'this generation' in Matthew 24:35 might have broader meaning than they themselves allow.

Within the Preterist system, it would seem as though only the scriptural time texts are immune from such 'spiritualizing' But are the Preterists themselves even consistent when it comes to the scriptural time texts? Consider the following quote from Preteristarchive.com which can be found in their 'Questions and Answers' section:

In my opinion, the "three and a half years" / "forty-two months" / "one thousand two hundred and sixty days" / "time, times and half a time" (and the implied "half week" in Dan. 9:27) are symbols of a time of trouble or distress. They are "broken sevens," as others have put it. The expressions occur in "apocalyptic" contexts. (Dan. 7,9; Rev. 11,12,13) (emphasis mine)

The scriptural time expressions quoted by this author appear frequently within the Biblical prophetic material, and their repetition should alert us to their great importance. Notice though how this author *spiritualizes* even these terms to make them simply 'broken sevens' instead of giving these 'time texts' (which I might add are much more specific than 'this generation') their literal meaning!

While it is not my intent to rail against the Preterist position, I feel that it's extremely important for believers to see that those who would tell us that we err if we do not believe with them that Jesus promised his second advent within forty years of when he spoke of 'this generation', are

themselves wholly inconsistent in their interpretation of scripture. Which is right; To accept a system of interpretation which is so blatantly inconsistent in order that the time texts such as 'this generation' - and SEEMINGLY THEY ALONE - CAN BE TAKEN AT FACE VALUE, or to commit that we will accept NO interpretation except one that can reasonably harmonize ALL the scriptural evidence?

What is the true meaning of 'this generation' in Matthew 24:35? Preterists say that it is unquestionably the generation to which Jesus spoke these words. Many Futurists tell us that it is the generation which saw the rebirth of Israel as a nation in 1948. Jehovah's Witnesses tell us that it is the generation which witnessed the events of 1914. Are any of these correct?

Before answering that question consider our Lord's words which he spoke almost immediately after he spoke of 'this generation':

Mat 24:36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

It seems incredibly strange that Jesus would first absolutely fix the time of his return within a mere 40 years duration, then mention this fact that he had no personal knowledge regarding that 'day and hour'.

Now some would say that Jesus knew his second coming would be close - within that generation - but could not specify exactly when within that generation he would return. But consider the words of Peter:

2Pe 3:3-8 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, (4) And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. ... (8) **But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**

Peter here admits the possibility that Jesus' return may be far off. His point here is that any delay in Jesus' return should not make us doubt the fact that he *will* return, regardless of how long that time is, whether a day or even a thousand years or more.

But why would Peter employ an argument such as this if he had understood Jesus as meaning that he would return within only 40 years. Would it not have been much more effective to silence the scoffers in that way; to make known that Jesus' return would absolutely occur within the lifetime of some to whom he wrote? Why prepare them for an interval of perhaps thousands of years if it was already widely understood that such a thing could not be possible?

All of this should alert us to the fact that there may be more in Jesus' words about 'this generation' than meets the eye.

Mat 23:34-39 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: (35) That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (36) Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. (37) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, your house is left unto you

desolate. (39) For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

These are the words from our Lord leading up to the discourse in Matthew 24 concerning the desolation of the temple and the destruction of Jerusalem. Notice that we find here the same parallel thoughts which we find in that discourse. That the temple would be left 'desolate', and that all the judgments mentioned 'shall come upon *this generation*'.

Did Jesus here mean specifically that the foretold desolations would be upon only those of the literal generation to which these words were spoken? The text here seems to imply a much broader application; that the prophesied desolation would come upon the nation as a whole UNTIL a certain condition was met - namely that they would recognize Jesus as their Messiah and welcome him proclaiming 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'. Does 'this generation' in this context mean that these desolations would apply only to those who would live within forty years of this prophecy, or do they not imply that 'this generation' means the whole of the unbelieving nation upon whom these desolations would fall? In other words, in this context, is 'this generation' mainly a 'time text', or may it not perhaps be more likely to be understood as meaning that the Jewish people as a nation would remain in a state of evil unbelief and experience the prophesied desolations UNTIL they learned to say 'blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'?

Look carefully at how Jesus addresses the Jewish national leaders:

Mat 23:34-36 Wherefore, behold, I send unto **you** prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them **ye** shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall **ye** scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: (35) That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, **whom ye slew between the temple and the altar**. (36) Verily I say unto you, **All these things shall come upon this generation**.

Is it literally true, in the strictest sense, that those to whom Jesus spoke are the ones who killed 'Zacharias son of Barachias'? No! But it is 'this generation' to whom Jesus attributes these things. This shows us that Jesus had more in mind than a period of forty years when he spoke of 'this generation'. *'This generation' clearly refers to those who reject and persecute God's true messengers, and ultimately Jesus himself as their messiah.* But 'this generation' was by no means limited to a brief time period of forty years either before Jesus' ministry to the Jewish nation as is shown here, or after the destruction of the city in 70 AD as is borne out by history. **THIS GENERATION**' as shown in Matthew 23:36 would last until the Jewish people were purged from their unbelief and learned to say 'blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'.

We also considered earlier Jesus' words from Luke 21:24:

Luk 21:24 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.

Notice here how the same thought is brought to mind - that the prophesied desolations would continue upon the Jewish people UNTIL a certain time. In Luke 21:32 we find the parallel of Matthew 24:34, that 'this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled'. Brothers and sisters, if we are to understand Jesus' words here that ALL of what he spoke concerning the desolation of Jerusalem was *finished* by 70 AD, then we must conclude that by that time the Jewish people stopped falling by 'sword, flame and captivity', and that the treading down of Jerusalem *then*

stopped. But how can we possibly believe these things? The bitter persecution of the Jewish people, and the desolation of their city at the hands of the gentiles in no way can be limited to the desolations of 70 AD, and in fact continues even now. Does not this sole fact alone demand that 'this generation' in this context cannot possibly mean 'those who would live to within forty years of when these words were spoken'? On the contrary, doesn't it seem reasonable that the true meaning of these words is that the Jewish people would continue as an unbelieving evil 'generation' and experience the prophesied desolations and persecutions right up until the second coming?

Notice then the absolute absurdity of the Preterist position when they attempt to assert that we 'make Jesus a liar' if we refuse to believe that he returned within the lifetime of some of his disciples. Don't they themselves make Jesus a liar since the treading down of Jerusalem did not end in 70 AD? Didn't Jesus say that Jerusalem would be trodden down UNTIL the times of the gentiles were finished? Since Preterists assert that all these things actually were finished in 70 AD, and since history makes obvious that Jerusalem has continued to be trodden down for centuries, then aren't the Preterists doing just what they accuse others of doing?

The Preterist position presses the language of Matthew 24:34 and believes that since in their interpretation everything must be completed by 70 AD, then it was, all evidence notwithstanding. They must imagine, as they do elsewhere that the treading down of Jerusalem must have ceased in some sort of 'spiritual' way. But this is simply a convenient 'ad hoc' way of getting around any scripture that seems to disturb their theory. One cannot pretend that somehow Jesus suddenly shifted focus to some spiritual heavenly Jerusalem when he said that 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the gentiles till the times of the gentiles be fulfilled'.

But if the Preterists feel that their logic is acceptable, then why isn't it just as acceptable to reason the opposite; namely that since it is obvious that the treading down of Jerusalem has not ceased, and since the Jewish people remained the victims of 'sword, flame, and captivity' for centuries following 70 AD, *that this then proves that Jesus has something more far reaching than 40 years in mind when he spoke of 'this generation'?*

Rom 11:25-27 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (26) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (27) For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Here we see the same thought. Paul is obviously commenting upon Jesus words' that the Jews would remain desolate and unbelieving until the 'times of the gentiles' were complete. Paul tells us that Israel's blindness (their unbelief in Jesus as their promised Messiah) will continue UNTIL the 'fulness of the gentiles are come in'.

Notice:

'You shall not see me again UNTIL you say 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord'...

'Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the gentiles are complete'...

'Blindness in part has happened to Israel UNTIL the fullness of the gentiles be come in'...

Now friends, if EVERYTHING in Matthew 24 was fulfilled within 40 years of the time Jesus spoke the words concerning 'this generation' and if we are to understand them as such, then of necessity, ALL of the above conditions would have to have been fulfilled by 70 AD. But notice how impossible this is. The horizon to which all these passages point *is not the destruction of the Jewish nation, but it's conversion immediately preceding or at the second advent.*

The events of 70 AD did not mark the end of the foretold period of desolation; on the contrary they marked only the beginning. These verses all carry the same thought; that there would be no great change in the Jewish nation - that the unbelieving generation and the desolations decreed upon it would continue UNTIL the Jews are CONVERTED at the second coming. 'THIS GENERATION' - this evil generation of unbelief will not pass away or cease UNTIL all things are fulfilled - UNTIL they say 'blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord', UNTIL the times of the Gentiles are FINISHED, UNTIL the FULLNESS of the gentiles are come in. Those events must be fulfilled before THAT UNBELIEVING DESOLATE GENERATION PASSES AWAY.

Luk 23:28-31 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, **but weep for yourselves, and for your children.** (29) For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. (30) Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. (31) For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

Notice here that Jesus foretells that the calamities which were to fall upon the Jewish nation were to affect not only those to whom he was immediately speaking, but their children as well. Should we press this language to mean that only those TWO literal 'generations' are in view here? Obviously not. The calamities upon the nation have affected every generation of Jewish people since the Romans razed the city in the first century. The children of the 'Daughters of Jerusalem' feel the weight of these words to this day.

Mat 27:24-25 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. (25) Then answered all the people, and said, **His blood be on us, and on our children.**

We note the excellent comments of Albert Barnes:

His blood be on us ... - That is, let the guilt of putting him to death, if there be any, be on us and our children. We will be answerable for it, and will consent to bear the punishment for it. It is remarked by writers that, among the Athenians, if anyone accused another of a capital crime, he devoted himself and children to the same punishment if the accused was afterward found innocent. So in all countries the conduct of the parent involves the children in the consequences of his conduct. The Jews had no right to call down this vengeance on their children, but, in the righteous judgment of God, it has come upon them. In less than forty years their city and temple were overthrown and destroyed. More than a million of people perished in the siege. Thousands died by famine; thousands by disease; thousands by the sword; and their blood ran down the streets like water, so that, Josephus says, it extinguished things that were burning in the city. Thousands were crucified suffering the same punishment that they had inflicted on the Messiah. So great was the number of those who were crucified, that, Josephus says, they were obliged to cease from it, "room being wanted for the crosses, and crosses for the men." See the notes at Matt. 24. To this day, also, the curse has remained. They have been a nation scattered and peeled; persecuted almost everywhere, and a hissing and a byword among people. No single nation, probably, has suffered so much; and yet they have been preserved. All classes of people, all the governments of the earth, have conspired to overwhelm them with calamity, and yet they still live as monuments of the justice of God, and as proofs, going down from age to age, that the Christian religion is true -

standing demonstrations of the crime of their fathers in putting the Messiah to death, and in calling down vengeance on their heads.

Barnes correctly notes that the woes of the Jewish People only *began* with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD but have continued for the last twenty centuries. But the scriptures are absolutely clear that these horrible calamities have a horizon in view - that the 'blindness' which Israel is experiencing will end; that the 'treading down of the holy city' will cease; that the Jews will one day no longer be the objects of bitter persecution in which they fall by 'flame, sword, and captivity'; that one day they will say of their Messiah 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' But as surely as this horizon is in view, equally clear is that fact that for now these calamities continue upon the generation about whom Jesus spoke - *the unbelieving Jews who to this day reject their king and Messiah.*

Commenting on 'this generation in Matthew 24 Anthony Buzzard points out how this phrase can indeed characterize a society who shares an evil trait such as unbelief:

Some will ask: Why did Jesus say that "this generation will not pass before all these things come to pass" (Matt. 24:34)? He was clearly referring to all the great events of Matthew 24 including his arrival in power and glory. Did these events happen within 40 years of his giving the prediction? Clearly not.

...For the meaning "age" for "generation," see Luke 16:8: "The sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own 'generation' than the sons of light." "Generation" here means a type of society characterized by evil qualities. This sort of society will last until the Kingdom comes. See also Proverbs 11:11-14 where "kind" translates the same word "generation." For the same meaning for "generation," as a group of people characterized by a single quality, usually wicked but sometimes righteous, see Psalm 22:30 and 24:1-6. "Generation" in Matthew 24:34 does not mean "race," nor does it refer to some future period of 40 or 70 years. (emphasis mine)

In this we see that the Jews as a nation will share the same evil trait - rejection of Jesus as their Messiah - right up until the end of the current age. In this we have a satisfactory and scriptural understanding of what Jesus meant by 'this generation' in Matthew 24:34. 'This generation' represents not only those who were living when these words were spoken, but the whole of the unbelieving Jewish society which would continue until our Lord comes again in power and glory.

THE LAST MENTION

We have seen how properly understanding that Jesus' discourse in Matthew 24 is actually a commentary on Daniel chapters 11 and 12 is crucial to a proper interpretation of the 'abomination of desolation' and the 'great tribulation'.

There is however one final mention of the 'abomination of desolation' found in Daniel 12:11 which must be considered.

Dan 12:11 And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Before examining this passage, I should call attention to the fact that the proper understanding of this verse is difficult regardless of which school of interpretation one takes to be the correct one, therefore we ask the reader for patience. The problem lies in trying to understand the proper

application of the three time periods mentioned in Daniel 12; periods of 1260, 1290, and 1335 days which are said to be connected to the 'abomination of desolation' mentioned in Daniel 12:11.

The problem is this: The only reference to 'the abomination which maketh desolate' in the immediate context of Daniel 12:11 is the reference we have previously considered in Daniel 11:31:

Dan 11:31 And 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 maketh desolate.

We have attempted to show beyond any reasonable doubt that Daniel 11:31 is a reference to the first century destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Roman armies. If this is however correct, in what way can these time periods be applied to that 'desolating abomination' at all? The terminus of ALL the prophetic events of Daniel 11 and 12 seems to be the conclusion of the final period of time mentioned in Daniel 12:12 - the end of a period of 1335 days. But did *all* of the prophecies mentioned between Daniel 11:31 and the end of Daniel chapter 12 occur within 1335 days of the destruction of Jerusalem? These events would have to include the falling of the Jews by 'sword flame and captivity' (Dan 11:34), the rise and reign of the 'willful king' (Dan 11:36-39), the final military campaigns of the kings of the north and south (Daniel 11: 40-45), and the resurrection itself (Daniel 12:2). Such is not only unlikely, but impossible.

Lest one should pause and think that applying these time periods from the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD lends credence to Preterism which does in fact believe that all prophecy, including the resurrection, was fulfilled with those events, we must point out what we noted earlier: that Preterism itself does not believe Daniel 11:31 (which is the only reference to an 'abomination of desolation in the immediate context) to be a direct reference to the events of the first century, but instead applies those words to Antiochus Epiphanes.

Futurist authors get around this problem by applying ALL these periods to a future time and completely ignoring their historical fulfillment. Historicist commentators have traditionally applied these periods using a 'year day scale' - that the periods of Daniel 12 are actually to be understood as 1260, 1290, and 1335 *years*. But all attempts to apply these periods, either to the destruction of Jerusalem, the rise of the Papacy, or any other thing that might be called an 'abomination of desolation' have entirely failed. This misapplication of these time periods has often resulted in 'date-setting' and with that has come much humiliation and disappointment on the part of believers.

Whatever our conclusions regarding these words, we must deal with the following facts:

- 1) Matthew 24:15 is an obvious reference to Daniel 11:31. Therefore the 'abomination of desolation' found in Daniel 11:31 is reference to destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- 2) Therefore the prophetic material in Daniel 11:32 through the end of Daniel 12 must be accounted for AFTER the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- 3) By comparing Matthew 24, Luke 21, and Daniel 11, one can readily see that Jesus' words are simply a commentary on the series of events found in Daniel 11 and 12. This series of events entails the placing of the abomination of desolation, the falling of the Jews by 'sword, flame and captivity, the times of the gentiles, our Lord's second advent, the deliverance of the Jewish

people, and the resurrection. *This parallel sequence of events is pivotal to a proper understanding of prophecy and cannot be ignored.*

4) The 1260, 1290, and 1335 days of Daniel 12 seem to mark the terminus of ALL the events prophesied in Chapters 11 and 12, including the resurrection of the dead.

5) If these periods are marked from the 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 11:31 they cannot account for the material of Daniel 11:32 through the end of Daniel 12, *whether reckoned on a day-day scale or a day-year scale.*

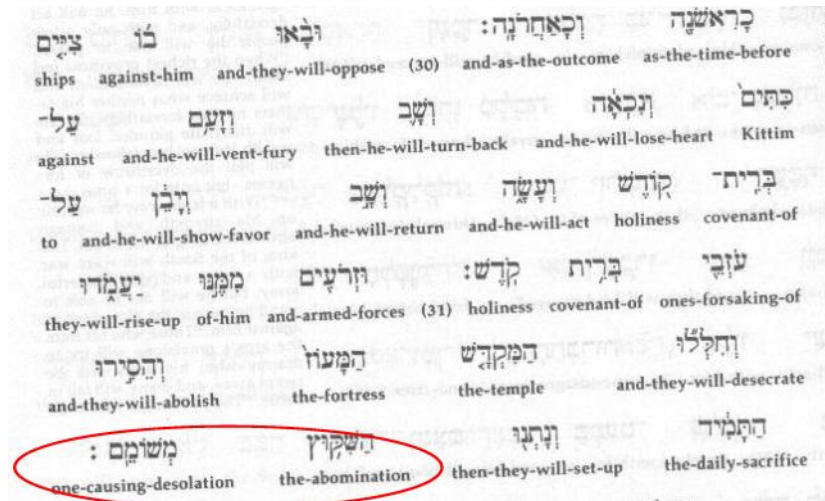
Regardless of the apparent difficulty, these are the facts we must deal with honestly if we ever hope to come to a proper understanding of these time periods.

We believe that the solution to this enigma was properly identified by E. B. Elliot in his monumental *Horae Apocalypticae*. Elliot Writes:

Then, as to the epoch from which the periods are to be reckoned, (an epoch marked by the setting up of some desolating abomination,) there is one thing very important to note, though hitherto, I believe, overlooked by expositors, - viz. that the definite article is wanting before the word abomination in verse (12:11) "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.", so that the correct rendering of the clause would be, "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and **an** abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be 1290 days. By this not only is the desolating abomination of xi. 31, "And 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 maketh desolate", (the same that we saw reason to interpret of the Roman armies that desolated Jerusalem under Vespasian) not plainly and specifically referred to, but rather almost excluded from being the subject of reference. A point this of no little consequence; since, if correct, it removes the difficulty, felt by almost every expositor of prophecy, of calculating these prophetic periods from the epoch of the Roman overthrow of Jerusalem: whence measured they conduct to no terminating chronological points, whether on the day-day or the year-day scale, that can at all satisfy the conditions of the prophecy. - *What the abomination making desolate meant is another question.* (From *Horae Apocalypticae* by E.B Elliot fifth edition 1862 emphasis mine)

We produce here images from the interlinear Hebrew text showing what Elliot has pointed out; that the 'abomination of desolation' mentioned in Daniel 11:31 carries the definite article and is thus properly translated as 'THE abomination of desolation' and hence THE desolating abomination that had previously been made known to Daniel - the abomination of Daniel 9:26-27. These unquestionably point to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

The 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 12:11 however does not carry the definite article and should thus be rendered 'AN abomination of desolation'. Elliot argues that the lack of the definite article excludes 12:11 from being a direct reference to the 'abomination of desolation' of 11:31:



Hebrew Interlinear of Daniel 11:31 Showing the use of the Definite Article - THE Abomination of Desolation



Hebrew Interlinear of Daniel 12:11 Showing the Absence of the Definite Article - AN Abomination of Desolation

Elliot points out that the difficulty in applying the final time periods of Daniel 12, the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days, arises from attempts to apply them to THE 'abomination of desolation' of 11:31, rather than from AN 'abomination of desolation' of 12:11, of which he admits the proper identity must be discerned elsewhere.

It should be mentioned here that this is a matter of no small significance. In Matthew 24:15 Jesus warned of THE 'abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet'. But consider then that of the three possible references to this abomination in the book of Daniel, *only one of them can surely be the one to which Jesus referred*. While we agree that Daniel 9:26-27 also had reference to the first century destruction of Jerusalem, and also mentioned an 'desolating abomination', as we pointed out the language of that passage is obscure - a fact admitted by all commentators. On the other hand, Daniel 12:11 speaks of 'AN abomination of desolation' as opposed to 'THE abomination of desolation'. *Therefore the only sure and safe reference which points to 'THE abomination of desolation' is to be found in Daniel 11:31*. Given this it should be thought incredibly strange that it is precisely this conclusion that the vast majority of commentators refuse to admit.

Now it might be argued by some in the Preterist camp, that since the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD could then be called AN 'abomination of desolation', then it would be lawful to apply these three time periods of 1260, 1290, and 1335 days to those events, and offer this as proof once again that all prophecy was fulfilled by that time. But this is impossible because it does not relieve any of the difficulties and inconsistencies which we have heretofore mentioned. In any case, preterism must attempt to divorce Jesus' words in Matthew 24:15 with those in Daniel 11:31. It must ignore the obvious parallel sequence of events as described in Luke 21, Matthew 24, and Daniel 11 and 12. It must ignore the obvious reference to Daniel 11:36-37 given by Paul in his description of the 'man of sin'. To my mind, any attempt to prove that all prophecy was fulfilled in the first century is utterly baseless unless it is prepared to deal honestly with these issues.

While the purpose of this discussion concerning the last mention of the 'abomination of desolation' as given in Daniel 12:11 is only to show that it and its accompanying time periods provide no difficulty for our previously detailed interpretations of the 'abomination of desolation' and the 'great tribulation', it may be fruitful for those interested to provide some discussion of precisely what *may* be meant by AN 'abomination' of desolation' along with the time periods associated with it.

THE FINAL DESOLATING ABOMINATION AND THE END OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

If, as Elliot has pointed out, the proper translation of Daniel 12:11 is 'AN abomination of desolation', and if his understanding is correct that this then excludes it from being a direct reference to 'THE abomination' of 11:31, then we might wonder what might be here referred to. Since it seems that the final three periods of time mentioned in Daniel 12, the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days are dated from that particular abomination, it seems to be of some importance to try to properly identify what type of 'abomination' that will be.

While speculations may abound, I feel that the only safe course to take is to stick to the Biblical material alone. We have examined in considerable detail Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation' in Matthew 24. We have seen that the parallel passage in Luke 21 defines what that particular abomination was; namely the presence of the Roman army encompassing and destroying Jerusalem in the first century.

Would it not then at least seem reasonable to suggest that 'AN abomination of desolation', even though not referring specifically to the events of the first century, may again refer to a *future* Roman desolating military presence in Jerusalem? If that view is correct then it would be from *that* future desolating abomination that the periods of 1260, 1290, and 1335 days would then commence, with end of the age and the resurrection wrapping up by the end of the 1335 days.

Might I also suggest that such a military presence is clearly delineated in the immediate context of Daniel 11:45. Speaking of the final military rampage of the 'king of the north', we are told that this king will:

Dan 11:45 ...plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

This seems to indicate that at the end of this age there will again be one final catastrophe upon the Jewish nation, and that such will be 'AN abomination of desolation' of the magnitude, or even greater, than that of the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century. Notice the words of Daniel 12:1:

Dan 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time...

This of course calls to mind Jesus' words in Matthew 24:21. But while Jesus' words concerning 'great tribulation since ever was a nation, or ever shall be' encompass ALL of the woes upon the Jewish nation from 70 AD until the second coming, this passage in Daniel seems to indicate that this period will *conclude* with an extremely severe cataclysm for the Jewish nation.

If such a military invasion and severe woe upon the Jewish nation does in fact lie in the future then the three time periods of Daniel 12; the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days would date from that event:

It may also be asked why here we might understand these periods as literal 24 hour days, whereas elsewhere the historicist position understands that in prophecy a prophetic 'day' is symbolic of a year. Elliot's comments are once again insightful:

As to the question whether these periods are to be reckoned as *years*, on the year-day principle, or simply and literally as *days*, it may be deemed at first sight more doubtful: because this whole prophecy of Dan. xi. xii. is not, like those of Dan. vii. and viii., or of Apoc. xii. xiii., enunciated connectedly with any *individualizing symbolization* of the *ruling powers*, prophesied of: save and except that in verse 36 "*the King is the individualizing appellative given to one power*, noted near the conclusion. However, though *this* my primary ground for the enlarged chronological scale of interpretation may less clearly apply, yet the second defined ground for it seems so to apply as to warrant the application, though perhaps with less certainty, of the year-day principle.
(From *Horae Apocalypticae* by E.B Elliot fifth edition 1862 emphasis mine)

Elliot points out that there is difficulty and uncertainty in knowing whether these days are to be understood primarily as literal 24 hour days, or as years.

In order to attempt to ascertain the correct application, we might ask: is there any other place in scripture where we might find a series of 1260 'days', which are reckoned by historicist expositors as years, followed by a final period of 1260 literal days, which in order to be consistent might be referred to as 3 and one half days. In other words, do we find elsewhere in scripture any other place where 3 and one half days would then be understood as 3.5 prophetic years (or 1260 literal days), and can we find such a reference in a context immediately preceding the resurrection as is spoken of here by Daniel?

We do in fact see this very thing in Revelation 11. There the Two Witnesses prophesy for 1260 days. After their days of prophesying there is 'war' made against them in which they are overcome and killed. Their bodies lie dead in the street for three and a half days after which they are caught up to heaven. Very shortly thereafter the seventh trumpet sounds.

While the details of that particular prophecy are well outside the scope of our current study, all we wish to note is that in prophetic language the above time periods could be understood as follows: The time of the prophesying of the witnesses would then be understood as 1260 YEARS. After they are warred against and killed they would then remain dead for 1260 literal

DAYS (3.5 days in the prophesy thus symbolizing 3.5 years). Very shortly thereafter the seventh trumpet sounds signaling, in the opinion of a great many, the time of the resurrection. Thus we see that the prophetic language does in fact allow for an interpretation of a literal 1260 *day* period immediately preceding the resurrection. While we cannot go into all the detail of this in this current discussion, suffice it to say that I believe this more than allows for us to interpret the final epochs of Daniel 12 - the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days as literal days and not as years.

We might then conclude that the age in which we currently live will conclude with a final desolating abomination; AN abomination of desolation, which may once again be a desolating military campaign in Jerusalem. From that time we would reckon time periods of 1260, 1290, and 1335 literal days. It is during those periods that the 'great tribulation' will finally be culminated, the Jewish people will learn to say 'blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Jerusalem will at long last stop being trampled upon by the gentiles, our Lord will return, and the resurrection of the dead will take place. Even so, come Lord Jesus.

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

1) In Matthew 24 Jesus' disciples come to him with a question regarding the time when the temple then standing will be thrown down. We must assume then that Jesus begins by primarily addressing that question directly.

2) By comparing Jesus' reference to the 'abomination of desolation' in Matthew 24:15 with the parallel and corresponding passage in Luke 21:20, we see that the 'abomination of desolation' is defined as 'when you see Jerusalem compassed with armies, know that the desolation thereof is nigh'. Because the disciples' question was concerned with the city of Jerusalem in the first century and the temple then standing, we must therefore conclude that the 'abomination of desolation' spoken of in Matthew 24:15 is something connected to the first century destruction of Jerusalem.

3) Jesus refers to the 'abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet'. There are three possible references in the book of Daniel. These are: Daniel 9:26-27, Daniel 11:31, and Daniel 12:11.

4) Of these three possible references to the 'abomination of desolation' in the book of Daniel, *only one can be considered definitive*. Daniel 9:26-27 speaks with extremely obscure language as is admitted by almost all expositors. Daniel 12:11 on the other hand speaks of 'AN abomination of desolation'. Only Daniel 11:31 uses the exact phrase and contains the definite article: 'THE abomination of desolation'. Therefore Daniel 11:31 is the only reference that can be safely admitted to be the one referenced by our Lord in Matthew 24:15.

5) This above thought is confirmed by the fact that Luke's gospel records the words of Jesus that following the desolation of Jerusalem the Jewish people would fall by 'sword and captivity'. Following the 'abomination of desolation' described in Daniel 11:31 we also see shortly following a reference to the Jewish people falling by 'sword flame and captivity' (Dan 11:33). *This makes it at once clear that in Matthew 24 Jesus is primarily commenting on the material in Daniel chapters 11-12.*

6) Jesus' discourse in Matthew 24 indicates that following the 'abomination of desolation' that there would be 'great tribulation' (Matt 24:21). This tribulation was to last until immediately preceding his second advent (Matt 24:29).

7) Luke's gospel defines and clarifies that language concerning the great tribulation. Great tribulation is defined as 'great distress in the land and great wrath upon the people (the Jews), and that the Jewish people would fall by the sword, and go into captivity, and that Jerusalem would be trodden down by the gentiles until the times of the gentiles were completed. (Luke 21:23-24)

8) Thus the times designated as those of 'great tribulation' are bounded; on the one end by the 'abomination of desolation' which found its fulfillment when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem in 66 AD, and on the other by the days immediately preceding the second advent and the resurrection.

9) Because Jesus' reference in Matthew 24:15 to the 'abomination of desolation' is a direct cross-reference to Daniel 11:31, and since the Daniel 11-12 is one long discourse continuing to the consummation of the age, and since in Daniel 12:1-3 we find reference to the consummation of the age, we see the same boundaries of the 'great tribulation' within Daniel 11-12.

10) Therefore the material between Daniel 11:31 (the placing of the abomination of desolation) and Daniel 12:1-3 (the consummation and the resurrection) *must be describing events which take place during the great tribulation.*

11) Because the above points are manifest and clear, and rely on simple comparisons of scripture with scripture we will reject any system of interpretation which attempts to undermine that which seems so clearly obvious.

12) Because the preterist position fails to account for the material of Daniel 11:32-45 within the bounds of what they consider to be the times of 'great tribulation' (66-70 AD), and since their system must assign the fulfillment of this portion of Daniel to a time which in their view *precedes* the 'great tribulation' we reject it.

13) Because the futurist position in our opinion does not deal honestly with the fact that the 'abomination of desolation' had a primary historic fulfillment to events which transpired in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and since they seek to look for primary fulfillment of these events in the future, then we must also reject futurism.

14) Since not all of Daniel 11:32-45 has yet found its fulfillment in this age, and since it must all find its fulfillment before the second advent and the resurrection, then we conclude that we are still in the times of 'great tribulation'.

15) Since Luke 21 informs us that Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until the times of the gentiles are fulfilled, and since this trampling by the nations has not yet ceased, we then conclude that the 'times of the gentiles' are still ongoing.

16) Because Paul declares in Romans 11 that 'blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the gentiles be come in', and since that blindness remains to this day, we conclude that the 'fullness of the gentiles' has not yet 'come in'.

17) Since Paul declares that 'the redeemer shall come out of Zion and turn ungodliness from Jacob', and since it is manifest that Jacob has not yet turned from its unbelief and ungodliness' we then conclude that the redeemer has not yet come out of Zion.

18) Since Jesus declares to his hearers that 'this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled', and since it is manifest that we do not yet see 'all these things' fulfilled, we then conclude that 'this generation' meant more to our Lord than mere span of 40 years, and that the generation to which he referred is still ongoing.

19) We find that 'this generation' referred to the Jewish people in unbelief. The Jewish people would remain a desolated, unbelieving people, and that they would not pass from that condition until all the prophesied desolations which were to befall their nation were fulfilled.

20) It is declared by the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians that the 'Day of Christ' would not come unless there first came an apostasy ' and that a 'man of sin' must be revealed.

21) The language quoted to describe this 'man of sin' is taken from a description of a 'willful king' found in Daniel 11:36-37. Because, as noted earlier, this reference in Daniel is bounded between the 'abomination of desolation' in Daniel 11:31 and the consummation found in Daniel 12:1-3, we then conclude that the 'willful king' - which is also the 'man of sin' - is a feature of the 'great tribulation'.

22) We will not then accept any theory or interpretation which places the rise and reign of the 'willful king' or the 'man of sin' outside the bounds of the 'great tribulation'.

23) As a feature of the 'great tribulation' which takes places between the placing of 'abomination of desolation' and the second advent, Jesus mentions a very grave threat - that there would be the appearance of false Christs and false prophets who with all manner of signs and wonders would deceive a great many, and if possible the very elect.

24) Paul combines the language of Jesus - that a great deception involving lying signs and wonders would come preceding the second advent - and applies this language to his description of the 'man of sin', which is itself connected to the 'willful king' of Daniel 11:36-37.

25) We thus conclude that the great deception involving signs and wonders and capable of deceiving if possible the very elect has direct and specific reference the material in Daniel 11:36-37 and the description of the 'willful king'.

26) We will not then accept any interpretation which identifies the character in 2 Thessalonians 2 as something different as that which is referenced in Daniel 11:36-37.

27) Daniel 12:11 makes one final reference to the 'abomination of desolation', but in fact calls it 'AN abomination of desolation' thus excluding it from being a direct reference to the abomination of Daniel 11:31.

28) We believe that the fulfillment of this final abomination of desolation remains in the future, and speculate that once again it may be a desolating military presence in Jerusalem.

29) We believe that from that final desolation there will be 1335 days to the final and full consummation of the age and the beginning of the millennium; the 1260 and 1290 days making off various epochs within those 1335 days. (see Daniel 12:1-13)

^[1] Luke xxi. 20, 24: "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh . . . And great wrath shall be on this people; 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."

^[2] Deut. xxviii. 32, 52, 64, &c., &c.

CHART A

	Beginning of Sorrows	Abomination of Desolation Roman Destruction of Jerusalem - Great Tribulation of Israel Begins	The Great Tribulation - Time Period from the Roman Siege of Jerusalem in the First Century Until ??? The 'Times of the Gentiles'	Immediately after the Tribulation - The Day of the Lord and the Second Coming
Matthew 24	Mat 24:4-8 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. (5) For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ... (8) All these <i>are</i> the beginning of sorrows.	Mat 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:)	Mat 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.	Mat 24:29-30 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
		Mat 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass...		...till all these things be fulfilled.
Luke 21	Luk 21:9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end <i>is</i> not by and by.	Luk 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.	Luk 21:24 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.	Luk 21:25-27 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; (26) Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. (27) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
		Luk 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away...		...till all be fulfilled.
Daniel 9		Dan 9:27a ...and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make <i>it</i> desolate...	Dan 9:27 b... he shall make <i>it</i> desolate, even until the consummation...	Dan 9:27c ...and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator.
Daniel 11		Dan 11:31 And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily <i>sacrifice</i> , and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.	Dan 11:33b ...yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, <i>many</i> days. Dan 11:36-45 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. (37) ... for he shall magnify himself above all.	Dan 12:1b and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

			<p>...(40) And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him I...and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.... (45) And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.</p> <p>Dan 12:1a ... there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation <i>even</i> to that same time:</p>	
2 Thess. 2	<p>2Th 2:1-2 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and <i>by</i> our gathering together unto him, (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.</p>		<p>2Th 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for <i>that day shall not come</i>, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.</p>	<p>2Th 2:8 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 coming:</p>
Matthew 23	<p>Mat 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, <i>thou</i> that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under <i>her</i> wings, and ye would not!</p>	<p>Mat 23:38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.</p>	<p>Mat 23:39a For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth...</p>	<p>Mat 23:39b ...till ye shall say, Blessed <i>is</i> he that cometh in the name of the Lord...</p>
Romans 11		<p>Rom 11:25... blindness in part is happened to Israel...until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.</p> <p>Rom 11:8-10 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (9) And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: (10) Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.</p>	<p>Rom 11:26. There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer and He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.</p>	

CHART B

TIMELINE ----- ----->						
Daniel 11:1-20 Wars Between The Seleucids and the Ptolemys	Daniel 11:21-30 175-164 BC Reign of Antiochus Ephiphanes	Daniel 11:31 70 AD Roman Destruction of Jerusalem The 'Abomination of Desolation' - Matthew 24:15	Daniel 11:32-35 Aftermath of the Destruction of Jerusalem	Daniel 11:36-39 Approx 539-1799 AD 1799 - ??? Rise and Reign of the Willful King/Man of Sin (Compare 2 Thess. 2) The reign of the Papacy/Latin Kingdom Approx 539-1799 AD Approx 1799 - ??? AD	Daniel 11:40- 45 ??? - ??? End- Time wars of the Kings of North and South	Daniel 12:1-3 ??? Resurrection and Deliverance
<----- GREAT TRIBULATION ----->						
Jesus Makes reference to the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel. The appearance of this 'Abomination' within Daniel's prophecy helps us to see that the 'great tribulation' would be of significant duration. ----->		The detailed prophetic material in Daniel 11:32-40 lets us know of world events during the period of Jew's time of desolation. Many prophetic schemes must deny the link between Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:31 because they cannot account for this detailed material in Daniel 11:32-45.		Notice that Daniel 11 places the final deliverance of the Jewish people and the resurrection long after the 70 AD setting of the 'abomination of desolation'.		
Mat 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:) Luk 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.		Mat 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. Luk 21:24 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.		Mat 24:29-30 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: (30) And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.		
2Th 2:1-2 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our		2Th 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for <i>that day shall not come</i>, except there come a falling away first, and that man		2Th 2:8 ... the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with		

	<p>Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.</p>	<p>of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.</p>	<p>the brightness of his coming:</p>
<p>Notice how the apostle Paul refutes the mistaken notion of the Thessalonian believers that the 'Day of the Lord' was then imminent. He introduces the prophetic material between Daniel 11's 'abomination of desolation' and the second coming, Jewish deliverance, and the Resurrection; namely that the 'man of sin' must come first. Paul's material is drawn from Daniel 11:36-39. Thus Paul shows that a proper understanding of Daniel 11 proves that Jesus' return would not be imminent even when Rome was desolated in 70 AD simply because the prophecies of Daniel 11:32-45 would still need to take place after that, and before the resurrection.</p>			