

## THE SPARK THAT SETS OFF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

There has been a mystery that has puzzled me for quite some time regarding Bible prophecy. It has to do with the timing of the end-time abomination of desolation referred to in **Daniel 12:11**. What has puzzled me is why, when one puts all the verses together, it seems that the abomination of desolation occurs 30 days before the conquest of Jerusalem by the beast power and not at the same time or soon thereafter.

In **Daniel 12:11** we read: "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days." The abomination of desolation will be set up and then there shall be 1290 days – presumably this means it occurs 1290 days before the return of Jesus Christ.

In **Daniel 12:7** we read that the power of the holy people will be completely shattered for a time, times and half a time. "...*It shall be* for a time, times, and half a *time*; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished."

If a time refers to a year as we have interpreted it, times refers to two years and half a time refers to half a year then this fits the 3 ½ years that we are told the Great Tribulation will last in the Book of Revelation (**Revelation 11:2, 12:6, 13:5**). A prophetic year is 360 days (the original length of the year – compare **Genesis 7:11, 24 & 8:4**). If we multiply 3 ½ by 360 days we get 1260 days which is the length of the Great Tribulation mentioned in **Revelation 12:6**.

It would appear that there is a month between the abomination of desolation and when the power of the holy people will be completely shattered. At first, the phrase "completely shattered" indicates that it may take a bit of time for the King of the North to subdue Palestine. This interpretation, at first, seems to fit well with **Hosea 5:5-7** where it says: "Therefore Israel and Ephraim stumble in their iniquity; Judah also stumbles with them...They have dealt treacherously with the LORD, for they have begotten pagan children. Now a New Moon shall devour them and their heritage."

Is there a month between the beginning and end of the conquering of Palestine? Another possibility that I have heard is that the conquering of Jerusalem and the abomination of desolation both occur 1290 days before Christ's return and that the shattering of the holy people 1260 days before Christ's return refers to the conquest of America and Britain by the beast power.

**Revelation 11:2**, however, clearly tells us that the conquering of Jerusalem and Palestine does not begin at the same time as the abomination of desolation (1290 days before Christ's return) but a month after.

It says in **Revelation 11:2**: "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months." Now if we multiply 42 by 30 days we come up with 1260 days, not 1290 days (1290 / 42 = 30.7 so this doesn't match).

So here we have a mystery. How is it that the beast power will set up some kind of abominable thing in Jerusalem a month before they actually come in and conquer Jerusalem?

First of all, we need a little background. History has a pattern of repeating itself (**Ecclesiastes 1:9**). This is an important point to remember when it comes to prophecy. For so many prophecies that were spoken by the major and minor prophets of ancient Israel there is a dual fulfillment. Many of the

prophecies had a fulfillment in ancient times which served as a model for a similar but greater fulfillment to occur in the end time (**Isaiah 41:22**).

Some prophecies however have multiple fulfillments and have and/or will occur more than twice. The prophecy of the abomination of desolation is one such prophecy. There have already been two fulfillments which have served as models for a greater fulfillment to occur in the end time. We can learn much about the greater end-time fulfillment by understanding how the prophecy was fulfilled anciently. We have not just one but two such models to learn from with the prophecy regarding the abomination of desolation. Most of the key details will be similar while some details may be a little different.

The first ancient fulfillment occurred in **168 B.C.** when a crazed Antiochus Epiphanes, who was the Greek ruler who controlled Syria at the time, entered Jerusalem and killed 80 000 men, women and children (2 Maccabees 5:11-14). He then desecrated the temple by offering a sacrifice of swine or pig flesh to a pagan god, Jupiter Olympus.

The second ancient fulfillment of the “abomination of desolation” occurred in **70 A.D.** when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple that stood in Jesus' day. At this time Titus captured Jerusalem and erected an idol on the devastated altar according to Josephus in his book “Wars of the Jews” (Book IV, Chapters 5-6).

We can see the principle of duality (or multiplicity) of prophecy in the Olivet prophecy of Jesus Christ gave that is recorded for us in **Matthew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21**. After Jesus prophesied that the Temple would be destroyed “the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’” (**Matthew 24:3**).

They thought the end of the age and the destruction of the Temple would occur at the same time. Jesus then proceeded to give a detailed prophecy of events that would occur in **70 A.D.** when the Romans conquered Jerusalem as well as the events that would proceed His second coming and the end of the age. Some of the details would occur both in **70 A.D.** and the end time. Most of the other parts of the prophecy only refer to the end time.

It's also possible that some details may have only occurred in **70 A.D.** An example of this may be **Luke 21:20** where it says: “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.” Jerusalem was surrounded by armies for a time threatening it before the attack began, yet in the future **Daniel 11:40-41** indicates that in the end time the conquest of Palestine and Jerusalem will be with lightning speed without any gradual build-up to it.

In both **168 B.C.** and **70 A.D.** in the two earlier models of the “abomination of desolation” prophecy Jerusalem was conquered and then at the same time or soon thereafter the abomination of desolation occurred. By comparing **Daniel 12:11** with **Revelation 11:2** we have established that it will be different in the end time fulfillment of this prophecy.

So back to our mystery. How is it that the beast power will set up some kind of abominable thing in Jerusalem a month before they actually come in with armies and conquer Jerusalem?

In both our ancient models “the King of the North” attacked Jerusalem and then set up an idol and desecrated the Temple of God in Jerusalem. In the end-time could it be another party that causes the abomination of desolation such as the Arabs? I don't think so for two reasons.

Firstly, Islam is a monotheistic religion that doesn't use or tolerate idols in its worship of Allah. Secondly, it didn't happen in the past and **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** infers that it will again occur at the hands of the beast power and the religious power that will work alongside with it. In those verses we read: “Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself

above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

The Pope’s official title means “Vicar [or in place] of Christ” and he is called “Holy Father”. Is a future pope’s exultation of himself in Jerusalem “the abomination of desolation”? No, it appears to be something else though what’s described in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** probably happens at the same time.

**Daniel 12:11** says that the abomination of desolation is something that is “set up”. **Matthew 24:15** says that the abomination of desolation is something that is “standing in the holy place”. Anciently in both prior fulfillments, which serve as models for the future, an idol was set up in the Temple of God.

One alternate interpretation is that the abomination of desolation in the end time merely refers to the desolation of the holy place or holy city – Jerusalem - based on **Luke 21:20**. The armies could be standing in the holy place but how does one explain the term “set up” in **Daniel 12:11** if the abomination of desolation is merely the desolation of Jerusalem?

The word “temple” in **2 Thessalonians 2:4** can also be rendered “sanctuary” so the false prophet sits in the sanctuary of God – the Holy Land as it mentions in **Daniel 11:45** where he sets up his tabernacle. There is, according to this interpretation, no need for a Temple to be built and no need for sacrifices that have to be stopped. Why? Because the word sacrifice in **Daniel 12:11** is in italics and therefore not in the original Hebrew. It merely says the daily will be stopped and this could refer to the daily worship at the Wailing Wall.

The only problem with this interpretation is that it doesn’t explain the clear timing differential we have already proven from comparing **Daniel 12:11** with **Revelation 11:2** to show that the abomination of desolation occurs a month before the Gentile armies of the King of the North move in and conquer Jerusalem.

So let’s now lay out all of our clues before we come up with a scenario that could possibly tie them all together.

**Daniel 12:11** tells us that the daily sacrifices will be stopped. Even though the word sacrifices is not in the original Hebrew we know from our two past models of this future event that the daily sacrifices were stopped so let’s assume it does literally refer to daily sacrifices. So, this would mean that at some future point there will be a resumption of daily sacrifices in Jerusalem before they are stopped for some reason, presumably by the beast power and / or the false prophet.

**2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** says that the false prophet will enter the Temple of God and proclaim himself to be as God. This indicates a literal Temple, not just an altar, will be set up when the daily sacrifices are resumed.

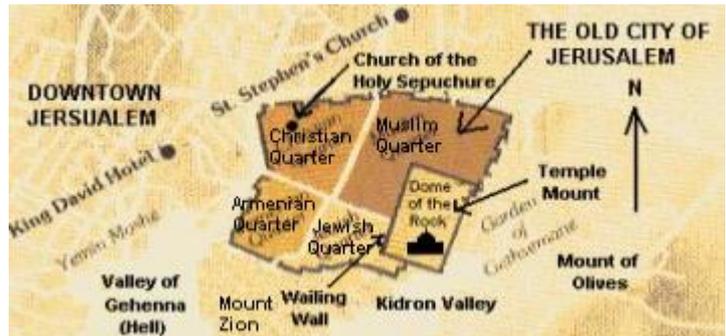
**Daniel 11:40** tells us that the King of the South will attack [or push] the King of the North. The King of the South represents some Arab power south of Jerusalem, possibly including representatives from several Arab countries since many countries will be overthrown when the King of the North counterattacks.

**Daniel 12:11** tells us the daily sacrifices will be stopped and the abomination of desolation will be set up 1290 days before the return of Jesus Christ.

**Daniel 12:7** and **Revelation 11:2** tell us that 1260 days (42 months) before Christ’s return (30 days after the abomination of desolation) that the Gentile armies of the United Europe – the future King of the North will conquer Jerusalem.

**Zechariah 14:2** tells us that half the city of Jerusalem will be taken. Currently the old city is fully controlled by Israel yet Zechariah says only half of the city will be taken captive. Europe and the Vatican are much more sympathetic to the cause of the Palestinians who want complete control of part of Palestine than they are to Israel's cause.

Europe is mainly interested in the Christian and Armenian quarters and will probably give control of the Arab and Jewish quarters over to the Palestinians if they don't win it through negotiation before the Great Tribulation.



**Daniel 11:40-43** tells us the beast power will conquer Palestine along with many Arab nations such as Egypt and Libya. It also tells us that the people of Edom, Moab and Ammon will escape from his hand. Ammon and Moab are the Jordanians while Edom are the Palestinian Arabs. Since they are spared being conquered by Europe while the other Arab nations are, it appears as if the Palestinians and Jordanians side with Europe and are not a part of the King of the South's attack on the King of the North.

**Jeremiah 30:3-9** tells us that there both Israel AND Judah will go into captivity in the end time. We see here that both the Jewish nation of Israel and the American and British peoples will go into captivity. That the captivity of the American and British peoples will be at the hands of the coming United Europe is seen by comparing the following passages – **Isaiah 10:5-13 & 20, 11:11-16, 47:5-9 (compare with Revelation 18:7-8), Hosea 5:13-6:2, 11:5 and Ezekiel 6:1-11.**

We also have **Hosea 5:5-7** that implies that there might be a month between the conquest of the House of Judah (the Jewish nation of Israel) and the House of Israel (America and Britain). According to **Isaiah 9:14** the conquest of the House of Israel (America and Britain) may occur in a single day which, if we compare that to **Ezekiel 6:1-11**, seems to indicate a surprise nuclear attack.

Those are our clues. So what kind of scenario can we come up with to put them all together and explain all these clues? The following scenario represents my best guess that is consistent with all the clues we have just gone through.

The Jews have longed to rebuild the Temple of God where they believe it stood on the Temple Mount where the Dome of the Rock is now. There is evidence to suggest it was where the Dome of the Rock stands and there is also evidence to also suggest that it may have stood just to the south of the Temple Mount directly above the Gihon spring.

I have heard that there are less publicized Jewish settlements that surround east Jerusalem and that the Israelis are planning to more completely take control of the east half of the old city of Jerusalem, possibly even take over the Temple Mount complex to rebuild the Temple where the Dome of the Rock stands.

Such a drastic action may not be necessary for a Temple to be rebuilt. Prior to the conquest of Jerusalem by David the tabernacle of God was in Shiloh for many centuries. The presence of God is symbolized not by Mount Moriah on the Temple Mount but by the Ark of the Covenant. Were the Ark of the Covenant to be found then a Temple of God could, in Jewish eyes, be built wherever the Ark is. The last time the Ark of the Covenant is mentioned in the Bible is in **2 Chronicles 35:3** in the days of King Josiah of Judah.

Traditions abound that one of the prophets (possibly Jeremiah) buried the Ark in one of the hundreds of caves underneath the city of Jerusalem shortly before Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians. There have been reports that amateur archaeologist Ron Wyatt found the Ark of the

Covenant in a cave underneath the skull hill just north of the city walls of Jerusalem and that he was pressured by the Israeli government to abandon any attempts to bring it out for fear of a major Arab-Jewish conflict.

If the story is correct and a future Israeli government has a change of heart can one imagine the impact the discovery of the lost Ark of the Covenant might have on the Jewish people. If it was found do you think that the Israelis would put it in a museum? Highly unlikely. Surely given all the religious instructions regarding its treatment that include placing it in a holy place within a tabernacle they would construct some structure to house the Ark.

If a temple structure (even just a modest one at first) is constructed would not the Jews begin offering sacrifices just as it was in ancient times? If there is no drastic action to remove the Dome of the Rock from the Temple Mount the next most logical place to construct the Temple would be in the large courtyard in front of the Wailing Wall.

In **2 Thessalonians 2:8-9** we read: "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders."

We are told here that the false prophet will have great miracle working powers given to him by Satan. Imagine a pope with magical powers and the impact that such a pope would have on the world. This lawless one appears to be the same person as the man of sin who presents himself as God in the Temple of God.

Now if this pope does enter the Temple of God and this happens in conjunction with the abomination of desolation how might he do so a month before the armies of Europe conquer Jerusalem and for what purpose – under what pretext might he do such a thing? We are told that he has miraculous power to do just about anything he wants to.

Now think about the impact of the Ark of the Covenant being found and the Jews setting up a Temple in Jerusalem. The Jews will be on a great high feeling that God is with them again. Many of the Arabs will be upset at their good fortune. It won't be for supporting the Jews that Arab anger will lead to the attack of the King of the South upon the King of the North.

That Europe leaves the Jordanians and Palestinians alone in their Middle East invasion shows they are supportive of the Palestinian cause, not the Jews. So what might lead to the violent anger of the King of the South (Arabs minus Jordan and the Palestinians) upon the King of the North?

Well, I have a theory that could kill two birds with one stone. It could explain why the false prophet comes to the Temple of God the Jews have built and what might arouse the anger of the Arabs against the Europeans.

Here is my theory. What if the false prophet, some future pope, was to use his miracle-working powers and seize it as a golden opportunity to show the ascendancy of Christianity (Catholicism) over the Jewish religion? What if he were to come down to Jerusalem and use his powers to take over the Temple of God? It would be an incredible PR victory for the Catholic Church if he were to take over the Temple. It would "prove" that Christianity supercedes the Jewish religion and that the church are the true inheritors of the things of God such as the Ark of the Covenant since the Jews killed and rejected Christ. Why stop the sacrifices? Well, Christ died once and for all and therefore animal sacrifices are no longer necessary.

So what is the abomination of desolation? It's described as something that is "set up" that is "standing in the holy place". The false prophet will exalt himself in the Temple as it says in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**. What would he set up in the Temple to desecrate it? The most likely objects he might place inside the holy place that would be offensive to God might be a Catholic cross or Catholic statue.

Surely the leader of the United Europe will tap into the influence that the false prophet will have if he has miracle working powers and work with the Vatican and the church and the European state will be closely working together like in centuries past. Those kind of miracles by a future pope will undoubtedly shake Europeans out of their spiritual complacency and a religious revival will sweep through Europe.

A takeover by the pope of the Temple in Jerusalem would be seen by many Arabs as merely the first step towards a full takeover of Jerusalem by Europe and another crusade. What if the false prophet to all the world watching on TV were to say the following after this hypothetical takeover of the Temple – “It’s now time for Christianity to assert itself as the world’s dominant religion and be the instrument to bring God’s kingdom and peace to the world”? Would that not be like a red flag to a bull for the Arabs who would see it as a declaration of holy war? It would also help put European people into a frame of mind to accept the coming conquests as being the will of God.

In “The Middle East in Bible Prophecy” Melvin Rhodes writes: “What is evident, however, is that this end-time leader from the south will attack the north in such a way as to warrant a major military invasion of the Middle East. Considering the ways Islamic extremists have attacked the Western powers in recent years, something like a series of major terror attacks against European targets could be the ‘push’ referred to here” (p. 29).

The United Europe will feel justified in taking over the Middle East to neutralize the terrorist threat once and for all. Europe will conquer the Middle East but will leave the Jordanians and Palestinians alone (at least, for a little while in their mind).

After such a drastic takeover of the Middle East and conquest of Israel how will America and Britain react? America have long been Israel’s most staunch ally. One would think that they would take a stand against Europe on this matter.

Possibly a month later (**Hosea 5:5-7**) this United Europe, the beast power, launches the unthinkable – a surprise nuclear attack on every major American city at the same time. America has nuclear submarines that can detect the presence of other nuclear submarines under water on nearly the other side of an ocean and have around 15 SBLM’s each that can launch 10 separate warheads each – enough to destroy 150 separate cities. France, which is in the EU, also possesses such nuclear submarines.

How might the Europeans get a nuclear submarine close enough to America to launch its full arsenal without being detected? Perhaps by loading it within a cargo ship and dropping it into the ocean when close enough. America’s military superiority is truly astounding. America has an astounding capability of withstanding an invasion from any nation. America has underground facilities like the NORAD facility at Cheyenne Mountain that can withstand most aboveground nuclear attacks and still fire its arsenal back if a nuclear nation launched nuclear weapons upon America.

Following the World Trade Center tragedy America also has a backup power structure in the event of an attack which would kill all federal politicians based in Washington D.C. If a nuclear attack from another nation was launched on America, the attacking nation would almost certainly be known and a government power structure would be protected to authorize retaliatory action.

As effective as the NORAD facility at Cheyenne Mountain is, it is not 100% capable of withstanding nuclear attack. Should it be destroyed effectively, along with America’s major military bases and Washington D.C. the Europeans would only have to contend with America’s Polaris nuclear submarines to nullify America.

The attack on America will probably be justified by pointing out the degree to which it has poisoned the morality of the world with its movies, television shows and pornography that have been undermining traditional Christian values.

After such an attack one can see how **Revelation 13:3-4** will be fulfilled where it says: “And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?’”

Following the conquest of the Middle East and North America and presumably with Catholic Latin America supporting it and Africa at its heels, world domination will be in sight for the beast power. Only one great continent stands in its way – Asia (**Daniel 11:44, Revelation 9**).

Over the next three years the battle for world domination will lead to the battle that the world refers to as Armageddon (**Revelation 16:12-16, Joel 3**). At that critical point in world history when mankind stands at the brink of annihilation Jesus Christ will return to put an end to the age of man’s misrule of our planet (**Zechariah 14**) and bring the Kingdom of God to earth and finally bring peace to this world.