WHEN YOU SEE STANDING IN THE HOLY PLACE ‘THE ABOMINATION THAT CAUSES DESOLATION,’ SPOKEN OF THROUGH THE PROPHET DANIEL...

–Matthew 24:15

THE GREAT ABOMINATION

“When you see standing in the Holy Place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel...”

–Matthew 24:15
When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.
(Luke 21:20)

He [European Beast Dictator-King of the North] will also invade the beautiful land [Israel], and many will fall. But these will escape from his power: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of the Ammonites.
(Daniel 11:41)

He will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful holy mountain [Mount Zion—site of the Temple Mount]. Yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.
(Daniel 11:45)
The Coming…

Great Abomination!

Christ specifically WARNS that you must understand this disturbing future event…

Because in the near future, a great “Abomination” to God will ignite terrible destruction leading to desolation in Jerusalem—This Abomination will stand in the holy place, where it ought not! What is this Abomination, and who will defile the holy place—why is it so important that you understand this alarming prophecy?

Jesus Christ describes this abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15-20. Beginning in verse 15 we read: “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation’ [a vile image], spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place… then let those who are in Judea [today known as the modern state of Israel] flee to the mountains.” The people in Judea are instructed, when they see this terrible abomination of desolation, to “flee to the mountains.”

“What Did Christ mean, “Abomination of Desolation”?

Christ’s stern warning about an “abomination of desolation” means, literally, “the abomination of the desolator.” An “abomination” is something God detests, and comes from the Hebrew word shakaz, for an idol: something or someone who is worshiped in place of the true God. Prophecy is clear—Jerusalem is again to be surrounded by armies (Zechariah 12:2) and an idol—some type of image—will be set up in a holy place. Notice Jesus Christ urges those who are in Judea to quickly flee when this desecration takes place: “Let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes” (Matthew 24:17-18). So dire is Christ’s warning, that if you linger and wait, it will be too late to escape destruction. Christ also warns: “But woe to those who are pregnant and to those with nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath [God’s people will be keeping the Sabbath]” (verses 19–20).

Why does Christ refer to this TRUE story of Jewish suffering?

Christ points to this agonizing event of Jewish history to reveal to his disciples, and God’s people today, what will take place just a few short years before His return. God often uses the principle of duality—a former and latter fulfillment—in prophecy, to help us understand end-time events. To put it simply: God gives a former type (historical event) to help us understand the latter end-time fulfillment. The former is not the primary fulfillment of a prophecy. It only points to the latter fulfillment, which is the main focus of the prophecy itself. Here is the story that serves as the model of the final end-time desecration of a Holy Place in Israel.
Daniel 11:21
In his place a despised person will arise; royal honors will not be given to him, but he will come during a time of peace and seize the kingdom by intrigue.

Daniel 11:22
A flood of forces will be swept away before him; they will be shattered, as well as the covenant prince.

Daniel 11:23
After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people.

Daniel 11:24
During a time of peace, he will come into the richest parts of the province and do what his fathers and predecessors never did. He will lavish plunder, loot, and wealth on his followers, and he will make plans against fortified cities, but only for a time.”

Daniel 11:28
The king of the North will return to his land with great wealth, but his heart will be set against the holy covenant; he will take action, then return to his own land.”

Daniel 11:29-31
At the appointed time he will return and come into the South...but ships from Kittim will come against him...he will become disheartened and will return—becoming enraged he will turn against the holy covenant [Jews]. Forces from him will arise desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifices. And they will set up the Abomination of Desolation

“He [Antiochus] flattered Eumenes, king of Pergamus, and Attalus his brother, and got their assistance. He flattered the Romans, and sent ambassadors to court their favor, and pay them the arrears of the tribute. He flattered the Syrians, and gained their concurrence.” (Clarke Commentary) Antiochus IV took the title “Epiphanes,” meaning “illustrious.” Others derisively called him “Epimanes,” meaning “madman.”

Antiochus attacked Ptolemaic Egypt, and after feigning friendship, he caught the Egyptians off-guard and attacked. On more than one occasion Antiochus offered “friendship” only to turn upon his “friends”—this was a favorite tactic of Antiochus.

Yet again, Antiochus used deceit to achieve his political ambitions. In an Egyptian struggle for the throne, Antiochus developed an alliance with Ptolemy VI over Ptolemy VII—using the alliance, he gained control of Memphis and much of Egypt down to Alexandria.

After his military victories, Antiochus used the plunder to bribe and seduce leaders throughout his kingdom.

Antiochus encountered a revolt in Israel after he returned from plundering Egypt—He dealt ruthlessly with the Jews killing 80,000 men, women and children—he plundered the Jews. Infuriated at Antiochus, the Jews began a full-fledged revolt referred to as the Maccabean Revolt.

Antiochus moved against Egypt again but was not successful. When he arrived with his army, the Roman consul, Popillius Laenas, met him at Alexandria and prevented him from invading Egypt. Antiochus was angry that the Romans blunted his plans.

Antiochus ordered an image of Zeus to be set up in the temple, and a pig to be offered as sacrifice on the altar.

Both Daniel and Jesus Christ said this was only a preview of what would happen later under the final Beast Dictator (Matthew 24:15)
Antiochus Epiphanies sets up the Abomination in the Temple

Some 160 years before the First Coming of Christ, a Greek Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes did great harm to the Jewish nation—all Jews of Christ’s day knew about this man. Today, religious Jews looking back at this period of history view Antiochus as a type of “Hitler” of his day.

Antiochus Epiphanes came to power in about 175 BC. He was one of the Selucids, who in succession to Alexander the Great, built a kingdom in Syria. He controlled parts of Egypt and ruled over Judea. Epiphanes’ name means, “God made manifest,” but others called Him “Epimanes” (madman). He resolved to force Greek custom on the Jewish people. He was a particularly brutal dictator, a Hitler-like despot, who obtained rule through deceitful lies and flatteries. Daniel 11:21 said he would “come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries”—he did exactly that. He paid off various influential men and rulers to gain control of the realm.

In 167 B.C., with the support of apostate Jews, Antiochus issued a decree that prohibited Jews from making sacrifices in the Temple. Not only did he stop the twice-daily sacrifices as commanded in the law (Exodus 29:39-42; Numbers 28:4-6), he erected in the temple a statue of Zeus. In the historical book of 2 Maccabees 6:2 he renamed God’s temple as The Temple of Zeus Olympus. Magnifying this blasphemous act, he then had a pig sacrificed upon the altar of the Temple. All this was done as an aggressive move to wipe out the worship of God altogether in Judea. All Jews were to stop circumcising their children; stop keeping the Sabbath, and they were to burn the books of the Law. Jews were commanded to become “Greeks” by worshiping Zeus. As Antiochus’ megalomania grew, he claimed divine honors for himself on every major coin that he minted.

Remember, Daniel’s prophecy warned of Antiochus: “And they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation” (Daniel 11:31).

The book of 1 Maccabees gives us the details of horrific persecution of the Jews: Antiochus proclaims an edict that all nations in his empire should abandon their own customs and become one people. All the Gentiles and even many of the Jews obeyed this decree. They adopted the official pagan religion of the Greek world, offered sacrifices to idols, and no longer observed the Sabbath and refused to circumcise their children.

What are the books of the Maccabees?
The apocryphal books of 1 & 2 Maccabees, although not Scripture, provides us with history of the Jewish Nation between the Old and New Testament period. Originally written in Hebrew and surviving in a Greek translation, they relate the history of the Maccabees from 175 BC until 134 BC. The Maccabees were the leaders of a Jewish rebel army that took control of Judea, which at the time had been a province of the Seleucid Empire. They overthrew the rule of the despot King, Antiochus Epiphanes.
Now quoting from the Book of 1 Maccabees beginning in verse 41 (Revised Standard Version):

41 Then the king [Antiochus] wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, 42 and that all should give up their particular customs. 43 All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath. 44 And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, 45 to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane sabbaths and festivals [emphasis mine], 46 to defile the sanctuary and the priests, 47 to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and other unclean animals, 48 and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, 49 so that they would forget the law and change all the ordinances. 50 He added, “And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die.” 51 In such words he wrote to his whole kingdom. He appointed inspectors over all the people and commanded the towns of Judah to offer sacrifice, town by town. 52 Many of the people, everyone who forsook the law, joined them, and they did evil in the land; 53 they drove Israel into hiding in every place of refuge they had.

History tells us that Antiochus massacred 80,000 men, took 40,000 prisoners, sold 40,000 as slaves, set up an image of Zeus in God’s Temple, forbade Sabbath observance, and ordered books of God’s law to be burned. It was a type of Holocaust of that day.

Then the unspeakable occurred: “On the fifteenth day of the month Kislev in the year 145,” which corresponds to 168/167 B.C., “they set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar” of the temple (verse 54). This was an image representing the Greek chief god Zeus, as 2 Maccabees 6:2 tells us that Antiochus defiled the Jewish temple “by dedicating it to the Olympian god Zeus.” Zeus was the chief god in the Greeks’ pantheon.

We are further told: Pagan sacrifices were offered in front of houses and in the streets, any books of the Law which were found were torn up and burned, and anyone who was caught with a copy of the sacred books or anyone who obeyed the Law was put to death by order of the king. On the 25th of the month, these same evil people offered sacrifices on the pagan altar erected on top of the altar in the Temple; pigs declared unclean by God (Deuteronomy 14:8) were offered over His own altar.

Continuing…

54 Now on the fifteenth day of Chislev, in the one hundred forty-fifth year, they erected a desolating sacrilege on the altar of burnt offering. They also built altars in the surrounding towns of Judah, 55 and offered incense at the doors of the houses and in the streets. 56 The books of the law that they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire. 57 Anyone found possessing the book of the covenant, or anyone who adhered to the law, was condemned to death by decree of the king. 58 They kept using violence against Israel, against those who were found month after month in the towns. 59 On the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the altar that was on top of the altar of burnt offering. 60 According to the
decree, they put to death the women who had their children circumcised, and their families and those who circumcised them; and they hung the infants from their mothers’ necks. But many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. Very great wrath came upon Israel.

It is important to note many zealous Jews refused to comply with Antiochus’ orders. 1 Maccabees 1:62-63 asserts: “But many in Israel stood firm…They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. Very great wrath came upon Israel” (New Revised Standard Version).

The account continues with the rise of the Hasmonean priestly family of Mattathias, including his son and successor Judas Maccabeus, who would not compromise with paganism. In the end, God honored the efforts of Jewish patriots and their followers. They were responsible for eventually pushing out the Syrians (See our box on Feast of Dedication).

History tells us that Antiochus massacred 80,000 men, took 40,000 prisoners, sold 40,000 as slaves, set up an image of Zeus in God’s Temple, forbade Sabbath observance, and ordered books of God’s law to be burned. It was a type of Holocaust of that day.

Simon Schama, in his book The Story of the Jews, reveals further the atrocities committed by Antiochus: “He threw circumcised infants from the walls of Jerusalem, along with their mothers” (page 88-89). The second Book of Maccabees is more sensational in its catalogue of Greek atrocity. Clandestine Sabbath observers are burned alive in their caves. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus details the sadism even more horrifyingly. Those who persisted with the observance of God’s law were “whipped with rods and their bodies torn to pieces and were crucified while still alive and breathing.” British Author Karen Armstrong writes this about Antiochus’ persecution of the Jews:

Antiochus issued an edict which left an indelible impression on the Jewish spirit and made it emotionally impossible for many Jews to accommodate the Gentile world. The decree revoked the charter of 200 and outlawed the practice of Jewish faith in Judah. This was the first religious persecution in history. The Temple liturgy was forbidden, as was the Sabbath rest, circumcision, and the observance of the purity laws. Anybody who disobeyed the edict was put to death. Women who circumcised their sons were paraded around the city and flung with their babies from the walls to the valleys below. A mother watched all seven of her sons die; in her zeal for the Law, she cheered each of her sons to their deaths, before being executed herself. A ninety-year old-man called Eliezar went to his death rather than swallow a morsel of pork. (Jerusalem, One City, Three Faiths by Karen Armstrong, © 1996, pages 113-114).

There is much to be learned about this end-time prophecy from the original abomination of desolation Daniel speaks of. Note that Antiochus is also a forerunner of the end-time king of the North, the brutal dictator that Revelation calls the “beast”—a despot who will be supported by 10 leaders from Europe (Revelation 17:12-13). This future European dictator will employ deceit and subterfuge, just as Antiochus did, to advance his global agenda. It should not surprise you when this modern day “Antiochus” feigns overtures of peace and friendship to influence leaders in Israel. When this final “Hitler-like” figure emerges on the world stage, you will know that the return of Jesus Christ is very close!

- Steven LeBlanc
End-Time Dictator attacks those who keep the Sabbath and God's Law

Turn to Daniel 7:23-27 and NOTICE what this end-time dictator will do to those who obey God, and how he changes times and law:

The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth [the Roman Empire—the end-time European Beast power], which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it to pieces. The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the first ones, and shall subdue three kings. He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.

Notice this all occurs at the very end-time, right before Christ returns. The terms, “times and law” are not precise in the New King James Version, but they are in other translations. The Amplified Bible defines the real meaning based upon the historical events that took place during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, “He shall...think to change the time [of sacred feasts and holy days] and the law.” The Holman Study Bible says; “He will speak words against the Most High and oppress the holy ones of the Most High. He will intend to change religious festivals [God’s Festival Days] and laws, and the holy ones will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time.”

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible states:

The word “times”...would seem to refer properly to some stated or designated times - as times appointed for festivals, etc. Gesenius, “time, specially an appointed time, season...Lengerke renders the word Fest-Zeiten - “festival times,” and explains it as meaning the holy times, festival days, Leviticus 23:2, 4, Leviticus 23:37, Leviticus 23:44.

The Expositor’s Bible Commentary explains, “His program will include a revision of the calendar; this seems to be implied by ‘to change the set times’ (zimnin , lengths or periods of time).” The Jerome Commentary translates the phrase “shall intend to change times and law” in Daniel 7:25 as, “thinking to change the feast days and the law.” And then continues to comment, “On Antiochus IV Epiphanes’ efforts to do away with the Jewish feasts, the Sabbath, and the whole Mosaic Law, see 1 Maccabees 1:41-64.”

Since Antiochus Epiphanes is a model of the end-time dictator, it follows that in the last days, the new leader patterned after him shall also attack the saints who keep the Sabbath and the Commandments of God. We find at the end-time that the SAINTS are those who endure, and continually keep the Commandments of God—Revelation 14:12. God’s end-time church is a Commandment-keeping church.
Maccabees Defeat Antiochus  
(Daniel 11:32-35)

In 168 BC, the Jewish Temple was seized by Syrian-Greek soldiers and dedicated to the worship of the god Zeus. This upset the Jewish people, but many were afraid to fight back for fear of reprisals. Then in 167 BC, the Syrian-Greek emperor Antiochus made the observance of Judaism an offence punishable by death. He also ordered all Jews to worship Greek gods.

Jewish resistance began in the village of Modiin, near Jerusalem. Greek soldiers forcibly gathered the Jewish villages and told them to bow down to an idol, then eat the flesh of a pig – both practices that are forbidden to Jews. A Greek officer ordered Mattathias, a High Priest, to acquiesce to their demands, but Mattathias refused. When another villager stepped forward and offered to cooperate on Mattathias’ behalf, the High Priest became outraged. He drew his sword and killed the villager, then turned on the Greek officer and killed him too. His five sons and the other villagers then attacked the remaining soldiers, killing all of them.

Mattathias and his family went into hiding in the mountains, where other Jews wishing to fight against the Greeks joined them. Eventually they succeeded in retaking their land from the Greeks. These rebels became known as the Maccabees, or Hasmoneans.

Once the Maccabees had regained control they returned to the Temple in Jerusalem. By this time it had been spiritually defiled by being used for the worship of foreign gods as well as by practices such as sacrificing swine. Jewish troops were determined to purify the Temple by burning ritual oil in the Temple’s menorah for eight days. But to their dismay, they discovered that there was only one day’s worth of oil left in the Temple. They lit the menorah anyway and to their surprise the small amount of oil lasted the full eight days.

This is the miracle of the Hanukkah oil that is celebrated every year when Jews light a special menorah known as a hanukkiyah for eight days. One candle is lit on the first night of Hanukkah, two on the second, and so on, until eight candles are lit. The Jewish Community calls this: Feast of Dedication - Jesus Christ observed the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22-23).

Taken from the website: www.judaism.about.com
The Horrific Persecution of the Saints

Revelation 12 speaks of a coming persecution of God’s Church by “…the dragon [Satan] that is enaged with the woman [God’s Church], and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (verse 17). Did you notice? God defines HIS church as those who keep the TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The true people of God, in the end time, are commandment-keepers—which includes the Sabbath command; also God’s people do not practice or approve of homosexuality, same-sex marriages, abortion and many other abhorrent behaviors that certain mainstream Christian churches increasingly embrace under a false banner of Grace. Those who observe God’s commandments will never tell you that Christ did away with the law:

“Here is the endurance of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”

Revelation 14:12

In Matthew 24:9 God tells us of this future persecution of His saints:

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.”

In the near future a tyrant will “persecute the saints of the Most High” (Daniel 7:25). We see in Revelation 13:7 a description of a leader who will “make war with the saints and...overcome them” (see also Revelation 17:6). We will discuss two end-time leaders (the Beast and the False Prophet) in a future booklet.

Speaking of the end time, Jesus Christ said: “And because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold” (Matthew 24:12). This is a defining trend found at the time of the End. By definition love includes observing God’s commandments—the polar opposite of lawlessness. “For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.” (1 John 5:3).

The Good News is that when Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God on earth He will enforce the Commandments of God as the established code of behavior for the whole world. God gives us details about the eternal and everlasting city of God in the Kingdom of God, the Bible says: “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14). Clearly commandment-keeping is very important to God and Jesus Christ!
“And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath”

In Christ’s “Olivet prophecy” recorded in Matthew 24, Jesus’ disciples asked Him, “And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Within His answer, He said, “And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath” (Matthew 24:20). This is important! Why be concerned about the day of the week?

In this Prophecy of the End-Time, Jesus Christ foretold that true Christians would be observing the Sabbath. And in the Bible, the weekly “Sabbath” always means the 7th day of the week.

The Prophets tell us that God’s people, and the whole world will be observing the Sabbath during Christ’s rule on earth. See Isaiah 56:1-7; Isaiah 66:22-23; Ezekiel 46:1; Ezekiel 46:4; Ezekiel 46:12.

To Learn more about why the Sabbath is of crucial importance to God, order our free booklet:

Order Toll Free: 1.877.449.6753

THE BIBLE WARNS OF AN END-TIME EUROPEAN BEAST POWER THAT WILL DOMINATE WORLD TRADE AND EVENTUALLY MOVE TROOPS INTO ISRAEL

Order our free booklet below to find out more.