

Abomination of Desolation: Explained! Part 1

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For many years -- centuries in fact -- Christian theologians, Bible teachers, church preachers and layman have contemplated and debated the precise meaning of a mysterious and esoteric phrase that finds its origin in the Old Testament Scriptures, and which is translated in two of the New Testament Gospels -- Matthew and Mark -- as "abomination of desolation", as we see here:

"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:)"

Matthew 24:15, KJV

"But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains:"

Mark 13:14, KJV

Exactly what is meant by the Abomination of Desolation? For many years -- decades in fact -- I was convinced that I had

a basic understanding of what it was. Due to the fact that since a rather young age I had embraced what is referred to as the Futurist point-of-view insofar as my personal beliefs were concerned, similar to so many other modern Christians, I erroneously assumed that a future world leader -- who is referred to as the Beast or the Antichrist by the majority of Christians -- was going to place some kind of idol in a rebuilt temple -- that is, in a third and final temple -- on the summit of Mount Moriah in East Jerusalem. At that point, the entire world would be required to worship the idol. This event is described in the following verses which are found in the Book of Revelation:

"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

Revelation 13:11-15, KJV

In my thinking at the time, this would be similar to King Nebuchadnezzar constructing a huge image of gold, which he set up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon, in Daniel chapter three. All the king's subjects were likewise required to worship the idol, or else face death, as we see here:

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the

rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up."

Daniel 3:1-7, KJV

The vanity of mere humans is really something else. As they say, power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. At any rate, while I wasn't exactly sure what the idol in the Book of Revelation might actually be, I entertained the possibility that it might be a large computer monitor which would display a live feed of the Beast, and that would allow him to dictate his commands to the world, with death being the price of disobedience. I also considered that it might be some kind of huge cybernetic replication of the Beast himself. After all, human-looking robots are becoming more and more popular with each passing year. The Japanese in particular are making great strides in this area. In short, due to my own confusion, I was equating Daniel's Abomination of Desolation with Revelation's description of the Image of the Beast.

However, as it now turns out, I was really off the mark in my personal understanding. In fact, in retrospect, I now see how ridiculous and nonsensical my previous ideas really were. I mean, seriously, folks. Think about it. We are living in the 21st Century. This is not Israel two thousand years ago, or ancient Babylon twenty-six hundred years ago. As such, no one is going to dare set up some kind of huge idol in a new temple in Jerusalem, and demand that the whole world worship it. The idea is ludicrous, and such a person would be laughed at and scorned. Furthermore, in recent years, I've also been leaning towards the belief that there will never be a third temple in Jerusalem, despite what so many modern Christians have been led to believe. This latter issue is addressed in a separate article.

To add to all of this, we need to consider in what area of the world these prophetic events are said to take place. As we already know, it is in Israel and the Middle East. This point alone exposes the foolishness of embracing some kind of future scenario where a great idol is set up in the city of East Jerusalem. It is a historical fact that the Jews and the Muslims are strongly opposed to idol worship. If we also consider the military might of the Israelis, I believe that it is safe to say that no idol will ever stand in any part of the city of Jerusalem; particularly not in a new temple, even if it was to ever be built, which I doubt.

Now, because of their futuristic leanings, some of my fellow Christian brethren may argue that this supposed future leader -- i.e., the Beast or Antichrist -- will invade, conquer and subdue Israel. As a result, because Israel is weakened, he will be able to do as he pleases; including setting up the Abomination of Desolation, or Image of the Beast, if you wish to call it that. However, even if that were true -- which I obviously don't believe it is -- no religious or secular Jew will ever bow down and worship it. The Jews are a hard-nosed and very stubborn people. Neither would any Muslim.

Believe me; I fully understand why so many modern Christians embrace the aforementioned futuristic scenario. Please don't forget that for many years I did too; so I know exactly which Bible verses are used to supposedly support such beliefs. As I have already said, I am now convinced that interpretation of the Scriptures is completely wrong. All of those verses which are used by some Christians to support what I have just explained to you, very clearly describe a much different time when Israel was in fact dominated by her enemies, when such events truly could have taken place. Do you understand what I am talking about yet? If not, please keep reading, and I am sure that everything will become perfectly clear to you.

So exactly what is this Abomination of Desolation which the Prophet Daniel tells us will "stand in the holy place", and which Jesus considered so vitally important that He warned His followers about it in three of the Gospels? In light of new Scriptural evidence which I have uncovered in more recent years, as I said earlier, I am convinced that it has nothing to do with our current time, and that it refers to something which occurred in the distant past. We find a clue regarding the actual nature of the Abomination of Desolation in Luke chapter twenty-one, which is a companion chapter to both

Matthew twenty-four and Mark thirteen, which I quoted from earlier. In Luke, Jesus states the following:

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 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. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Luke 21:20-22, KJV

As I explain in articles such as "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?", we know from the actual historical record that the Lord is referring to the armies of Rome, which were under the command of General Titus, who was the son of then emperor, Vespasian. Together with their local allies -- which included the armies of King Herod Agrippa II, who had fled from Jerusalem when the unrest intensified -- they utterly destroyed Jerusalem and the temple compound in 70 AD. This destruction occurred right in the middle of the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War, which began in 66 AD, and concluded seven years later in 73 AD. These dates and this time frame are extremely important to our proper understanding of some Bible prophecies -- such as those written by Daniel, quoted by the Lord, and repeated by the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation -- so please keep them in mind.

You will recall that at the very beginning of this series, I quoted Jesus' words from the Gospel of Mark where He states "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not." It should be evident to you then that all of these verses from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are talking about the very same historic events surrounding the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple compound in 70 AD. This act of great destruction followed a Roman siege which endured for several years before the outer walls of the city were totally breached. So Jesus is basically telling His followers, "Look; when you see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the Holy Place -- that is, the temple Mount -- you better get out quickly, because the city's destruction is imminent." I have mentioned the Prophet Daniel several times now, but what exactly did he write regarding these tragic events? Consider the following verses:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy

holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 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. 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. 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."

Daniel 9:24-27, KJV

As I point out in the aforementioned series entitled "Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?" and elsewhere as well, these verses are commonly referred to as the Prophet Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. In these verses, the word "week" is actually derived from the Hebrew word "shabuwa", or "shabua", which actually means "seven". In other words, in Hebrew, the previous verse really means "seventy sevens", or a total of four hundred and ninety. But four hundred and ninety what? As it turns out, these "seventy weeks" are not referring to seventy seven-day periods; rather, they really mean seventy seven-year periods, or a total of four hundred and ninety years.

So as not to be too repetitive in my articles, if you would like a more detailed explanation regarding how I arrived at this conclusion regarding years as opposed to literal days, please refer to the series I just mentioned. Suffice it to say that I am convinced that this 490-year Prophetic Age ended in 70-73 AD when the First Jewish-Roman War came to its conclusion. As you can see, Daniel's prophecy is neatly divided into three distinct periods of weeks, or seven-year periods. The first period consists of seven weeks, for a total of forty-nine years; the second period consists of sixty-two weeks, or four-hundred and thirty-four years -- and the last period consists of one week -- or seven years.

What this prophecy is clearly telling us is that at the end

of the first sixty-nine weeks -- or four-hundred and eighty three years -- the Messiah -- that is, Jesus Christ -- will be "cut off"; that is, crucified. The Angel Gabriel informs Daniel that this won't happen "for himself"; that is to say, Jesus will die for the sins of the world. Gabriel then tells Daniel that following the Crucifixion of the Messiah, "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary". From our previous discussion, it should be clear to you that this is describing how Titus and his Roman legions caused the daily sacrifice and the morning and evening oblations to cease -- from the Hebrew word "shabath" -- and then proceeded to destroy Jerusalem and the sanctuary; that is, Herod's temple.

As I explain in a few other articles, this "Seventy Weeks" prophecy did not begin to be fulfilled until years later during the reign of Persian king Artaxerxes I, who was the son of Xerxes. It was he who first gave the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, and to rebuild the street and the wall. However, due to troubles in Jerusalem, as well as political bureaucracy, it really wasn't until the reign of Cyrus the Great -- or Koresh -- that the Jews were really allowed to return to the city of Jerusalem and rebuild the wall. This too was in fulfillment of prophecy, with Cyrus even being mentioned by name, as we can easily determine by the following verses:

"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I

will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

Isaiah 44:24-45:4, KJV

"Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."

2 Chronicles 36:22-23, KJV

"Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem. Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of

Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem." Ezra 1:1-11, KJV

"But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and yet it is not finished. Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter. Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God." Ezra 5:13-6:5, KJV

"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered

through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king."

Ezra 6:14-15, KJV

"And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus."

Daniel 1:21, KJV

"So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

Daniel 6:28, KJV

When the Prophet Daniel writes "the end thereof shall be with a flood", please understand that he is not referring to an actual flood of physical water, even though this is what the Hebrew word "sheteph" means. Rather, Daniel is speaking in a metaphorical sense regarding the great flood of Roman armies which in fact surrounded and sieged Jerusalem. We find the word "flood" being used in similar fashion in other verses that are found throughout the Bible as well. Consider the following examples:

"So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."

Isaiah 59:19, KJV

"Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof."

Jeremiah 46:7-8, KJV

"The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza. Thus saith the LORD; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. At the noise of the stamping of the

hoofs of his strong horses, at the rushing of his chariots, and at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers shall not look back to their children for feebleness of hands; Because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines, and to cut off from Tyrus and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the country of Caphtor."

Jeremiah 47:1-4, KJV

"And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant."

Daniel 11:21-22, KJV

Thus far, we have seen the connection between what is stated by Jesus in three of the Gospels, and the amazing prophecies which were given to Daniel hundreds of years prior to that time. However, we still need to decipher exactly what this Abomination of Desolation is, or was, to be more precise. One fact which should already be clear to you is that whatever it was, the Abomination of Desolation was directly related to the armies which surrounded, sieged and ultimately destroyed Jerusalem and burned down the Jews' beloved temple compound. It was something which the Romans possessed, and which could in some way stand in the Holy Place; that is, on the temple Mount, and perhaps even in the temple itself, despite the strong objections of the Jews.

Before we begin to unravel this mystery, let's review the various words and phrases which are used to describe this mysterious object in both the Old and the New Testaments. They include the following:

- abomination of desolation
- overspreading of abominations
- he shall make it desolate
- poured upon the desolate
- the desolation thereof is nigh

To reiterate, I am convinced that all of the previous words and phrases are referring to the very same tragic events in ancient Jewish history; that is, to the invasion of Israel by Vespasian and Titus and their Roman armies and allies during the latter half of the First Century, and the utter destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple compound

in the year 70 AD. As we have seen, these events occurred during the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War from 66 AD to 73 AD, according to the historical record. Now we have to figure out what Jesus was telling His followers to look out for, so that they would know that it was time to flee to the hills of Judaea before it was too late to do so.

To begin, in the New Testament verses we have examined thus far, the word "abomination" is derived from the Greek word "bdelugma". This word signifies a foul thing, or something that is detestable, particularly to God. It can be used to refer to idols and other things pertaining to idolatry, as well as to things and people which are considered unclean, including certain animals and foods. Aside from the verses which we have already covered, following are two more where this same Greek word is used. This same meaning regarding something or someone which is foul, detestable and unapproved by God is clear in both of them:

"And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

Luke 16:15, KJV

"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Revelation 21:27, KJV

There are three other verses found in the New Testament where the word "abominable" is used. While in each case a different Greek word is used -- that is "bdeluktos", "athemitos" and "bdelusso" -- the general meaning of the words is still the same for the most part; that is, something or someone that is viewed as being foul, detestable and worthy to be abhorred. In the case of "athemitos", it is used to mean abominable when something is prohibited by law. Following are the verses where these words are used:

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Titus 1:16, KJV

"For the time past of our life may suffice us to have

wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:"

1 Peter 4:3, KJV

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
Revelation 21:8, KJV

So taking into consideration all of the New Testament verses where the words "abomination" and "abominable" are used, we can conclude that Jesus appears to be saying that when the Apostles witness something foul, detestable, unclean, worthy to be abhorred and idolatrous standing "in the holy place" -- that is, somewhere on the temple Mount -- they should take it as a sign that it is time for them to flee from Jerusalem.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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Abomination of Desolation: Explained! Part 2

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Desolation In Greek: Make Something Desolate Ruin It Lay It Waste So It's Uninhabited, Babylon The Great Is Jerusalem, Jesus Warns Jewish Enemies The Temple Will Become Desolate, Jesus Warns His Followers To Flee Jerusalem When They Behold Abomination Of Desolation, Paul: Not Appointed Us To Wrath, Abomination In Hebrew: Something Abominable Detestable Filthy And Idolatrous, Roman Armies Defile Jewish Temple, Sanctuary Of Strength, Zealots And Sicarii Take Over Temple, Old And New Testament Verses Describe Same People And Events, Midst Of The Week, Three And A Half Years Expressed Different Ways,

Desolate In Hebrew: To Make A Place Desolate Devastate Ravage Cause Ruin And Leave It Uninhabited, God's Fierce Judgments, Abomination Of Desolation Means The Same Thing In Hebrew And Greek, Aftermath Of Babylon The Great's Destruction, No More At All, Jerusalem: Utter Devastation By Titus And The Romans, "Overspreading Of Abominations", More Than One Abomination

Continuing our discussion from part one, in the three verses we examined earlier from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke where the word "desolation" is used, the original Greek word is "eremosis". This word itself is derived from another Greek word; that is, "eremoo". Thayer's Greek English Lexicon informs us that these two words mean to make something desolate, to ruin it, or to lay it waste, so that it is empty and uninhabited. There are four other verses found in the New Testament where the Greek word "eremoo" is used, and in all cases, it conveys the very same idea of being brought to ruin and falling, and left abandoned. The first two are the following:

"And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:"
Matthew 12:25, KJV

"But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth."
Luke 11:17, KJV

The other two verses where the Greek word "eremoo" are used are found in the Book of Revelation. Personally, I find this fact very interesting, because as I point out in my series "Who is Babylon the Great?", I have long believed that the mysterious city which John refers to as Babylon the Great is actually Jerusalem itself. So in my opinion, all of these prophetic verses regarding the destruction of Jerusalem fit together like a hand in a glove:

"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."
Revelation 17:16, KJV

"And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and

wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."

Revelation 18:19, KJV

Directly related to the Greek words "eremosis" and "eremoo" is the word "eremos". As with the first two words, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon informs us that it means to be lonely, solitary, deserted or uninhabited. It can refer to a desert or a wilderness area, or even to an abandoned position. It can also refer to the state of a person being abandoned or neglected by others. For example, the verse below describes how the position which Judas held as an Apostle was left empty or uninhabited following his betrayal and suicide:

"For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take."

Acts 1:20, KJV

Regarding women being neglected by their husbands, consider this verse where the same Greek word "eremos" is used:

"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband."

Galatians 4:27, KJV

However, for the purposes of our current discussion, the most important two verses where "eremos" is used are the following, both found in the Gospels, and both talking about the very same events which occurred in 70 AD:

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Matthew 23:38, KJV

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Luke 13:35, KJV

Following is a more complete copy of exactly what Jesus had to say to His unbelieving enemies. As you can see, He really blasted them with the truth regarding their miserable and murderous spiritual condition, before finally informing them

that their house -- which seems to mean the temple -- would be left unto them desolate:

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? 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: 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. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. 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! BEHOLD, YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE. 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."

Matthew 23:33-39, KJV

As should now be clear to you, the Jews' house -- the temple -- was indeed "left unto [them] desolate" when General Titus and his Roman armies utterly destroyed the temple compound and the city of Jerusalem itself right in the middle of the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War in 70 AD.

To reiterate my previous point, in those three verses which are found in the Gospels where the phrase "Abomination of Desolation" is used, Jesus appears to be saying that when the Apostles see something foul, detestable, unclean, idolatrous and worthy to be abhorred standing "in the holy place", they should view it as a warning signal of the coming destruction and desolation of the temple compound and Jerusalem, leaving it solitary and uninhabited. As two of those verses clearly state "whoso readeth, let him understand". Thus, if you are a Believer when that signal appears, it is time for you to get out of town and to flee to the hills to safety.

The reason why Jesus told the Apostles to flee from Jerusalem when they see the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy place of the temple where it ought not, is because they were His friends and His chosen, and they were not "appointed to wrath" -- that is, to the Wrath of God via the hand of the Roman legions, as the unbelieving Jews who betrayed Christ were -- as we see by the following verses:

"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."

Luke 21:23, KJV

"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the WRATH TO COME?"

Matthew 3:7, KJV

"Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the WRATH TO COME?"

Luke 3:7, KJV

"For the WRATH OF GOD is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;"

Romans 1:18, KJV

In the previous verse, when Paul writes "men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness", he is apparently referring to the unbelieving Jews who viewed the Gospel of Christ as a heresy against Judaism, or Pharisaism. Thus, as Paul also said in the Book of Acts:

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:"

Acts 24:14, KJV

Following are some additional verses regarding "the wrath to come", which befell the hard-hearted, unbelieving, murderous Jews in 70 AD:

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be SAVED FROM WRATH through him."

Romans 5:8-9, KJV

"For which things' sake the WRATH OF GOD COMETH ON THE CHILDREN OF DISOBEDIENCE: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them."

Colossians 3:6-7, KJV

"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from THE WRATH TO COME."

1 Thessalonians 1:10, KJV

"For God hath NOT APPOINTED US TO WRATH, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,"

1 Thessalonians 5:9, KJV

Having now thoroughly discussed how the words and phrases "abomination", "abominable", "desolation" and "desolate" are used in the New Testament, let us move on to the Books of the Old Testament. While we have not yet clearly identified what the Abomination of Desolation was, we have come to understand why it was called what it was called, and what it meant for the Apostles and Disciples of the late First Century. It was in fact their life line and green light to quickly flee from Jerusalem in order to escape God's Wrath, just as the Hebrews had to mark their doors with lamb's blood in order to avoid God's Wrath during the Old Testament period. The meaning and identity of the Abomination of Desolation will become even more evident as we continue to explore the Scriptures.

Turning to the Old Testament, in the Book of Daniel, the word "abomination" is derived from the Hebrew word "shiqquwts", or "shiqquts". Just like in the New Testament, the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon informs us that this word signifies a detestable, abominable thing, or an idol. Out of the twenty-eight times this Hebrew word is used in the Old Testament, it is translated as "abomination" a total of twenty times. In one verse it is translated as "abominable filth". Following are the two verses in the Book of Daniel where it is used:

"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."

Daniel 11:31, KJV

"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."

Daniel 12:11, KJV

As you can see, these are the very same events that the Lord spoke about in the Gospels, and the very same events that we

read about before in an earlier chapter of Daniel. Remember that the word "arms" in the previous verse is referring to military might, or armies. It is derived from the Hebrew word "z@rowa" or "z@roa". The word "pollute" is derived from the Hebrew word "chalal" which means to defile or to profane. The word "sanctuary" is of course referring to the Jewish temple, and is derived from the Hebrew word "miqdash". It is referred to as "the sanctuary of strength" because the word "strength" is derived from the Hebrew word "ma`owz", which signifies a place or means of safety and protection; that is, a refuge or stronghold. Not only did the ancient Jews believe that God would protect them from their enemies inside the temple, but during that particular time period, historical records also inform us that the Zealots and the Sicarii took over the temple compound -- turning it into a military stronghold -- locked down Jerusalem, and foolishly defied the Romans.

Anyway, to refresh your memory, and to show you the clear connection between all of these verses, here are two verses from the ninth chapter of the Book of Daniel once again:

". . . 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. 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 . . ."

Daniel 9:26-27, KJV

So it should be clear to you that all of these verses we have examined thus far in the Old and New Testaments are actually describing the same people -- General Titus and the Romans -- the same war -- the seven-year First Jewish-Roman War -- the same Jewish temple in First Century Jerusalem, the same daily sacrifice and oblation being ceased, and the same Abomination of Desolation. All of these events were prophesied to occur sometime during the 70th week -- the last seven-year period -- of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. Some of them took place during the first three and a half years, while others occurred during the final three and a half years. That is why in Daniel the phrase "in the midst of the week" is used. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple compound in the middle of the week marked a turning point in that first war.

In fact, let me point out that there are a number of other places in the Scriptures where this very same war and its outcome are mentioned and described to different degrees. One

reason why it is difficult for some Christians to connect the Scriptural dots, is because this very same time period is described in various ways in different parts of God's Word. Following are all of the ones of which I am currently aware:

- forty-two months
- 1,260 days
- time and times and the dividing of time (3 1/2 years)
- time, times, and an half (3 1/2 years)

If you do the math yourself, you'll discover that forty-two months is the same as Revelation's and Daniel's 1,260 days, and equates to three and a half Jewish years. The reason for this is that a Jewish year consists of twelve thirty-day months, for a total of 360 days. That is why Daniel's 70th week is divided into two equal periods of that same length.

The Prophet Daniel also mentions a 1,290 day period, as well as a 1,335 day period. This latter time span is the same as 44.4 Jewish months at thirty days each, while the 1,290 days equals exactly forty-three Jewish months. Following are the specific verses where these time spans are mentioned in both Daniel and Revelation. I have added a few words in brackets in order to clarify what is being said:

"And he [the Beast] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time."
Daniel 7:25, KJV

"And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he [the Beast] shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished."
Daniel 12:7, KJV

"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. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."
Daniel 12:11-12, KJV

"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and

measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."

Revelation 11:2-3, KJV

"And the woman [the First Century Church] fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

Revelation 12:6, KJV

"And there was given unto him [the Beast] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations."

Revelation 13:5-7, KJV

While I have mentioned that the word "abomination" is used two times in the Book of Daniel, and that it means the very same thing as its New Testament Greek equivalent, let me add that while the word "abomination" is only used four times in the New Testament, it is used seventy-two times in the Old Testament. Furthermore, it is not always derived from the Hebrew word "shiqquwts" or "shiqquts". There are other words which are translated as "abomination" as well. These include "towebah", "pigguwl", "sheqets", "shaqats" and "ba'ash". The last one even means to stink, smell bad, or to become odious and abhorred by one's enemies. But regardless of which Hebrew word is used, they all generally mean the same thing -- that is, abominable, detestable, filthy, disgusting or a foul and idolatrous thing -- and they agree with how "abomination" is used in the New Testament as well. So insofar as the phrase "abomination of desolation" is concerned, we can safely say that the first part of the phrase means basically the same thing no matter where we look in the Scriptures.

So what about the latter half of the phrase? In the Book of Daniel where the phrase "abomination that maketh desolate" is used, the word "desolate" is derived from the Hebrew word "shamem". According to the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon, this word has a variety of

meanings. The ones which best fit with what we've discovered thus far include to be desolated or to be made desolate, to devastate, ravage, or to cause oneself desolation or ruin. As we learned earlier, its New Testament Greek equivalent means the very same thing. The word "shamem" is translated a total of forty-nine times as "desolate", three times as "destroy", five times as "waste" and seven times as "desolation". A few places outside of the Book of Daniel where "shamem" is also used include the following:

"I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate . . . And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it."
Leviticus 26:22, 31-32, KJV

"For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have laid the land most desolate because of all their abominations which they have committed."
Ezekiel 33:28-29, KJV

"And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."
Amos 7:9, KJV

"Therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee, in making thee desolate because of thy sins."
Micah 6:13, KJV

"I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant."
Zephaniah 3:6, KJV

With this word "shamem", what we are witnessing in all of the previous verses -- and in many others which aren't even listed here, is a judgement so strong from the Lord, that a place is not only left destroyed, but it is left deserted, abandoned, empty, without inhabitant. It basically returns to being a wilderness area again for some period of time.

That is how fiercely God's judgments fall on it and on its people. This word "shamem" can also mean to appall, stun, stupefy, amaze, astonish, or to show or cause horror, which is precisely what happens when the Lord's judgments do fall. A few other words in the Old Testament which are translated as "desolate" include "yasham", "charab", and "asham".

Other Hebrew words which are translated as "desolation" in the Old Testament include "show'ah", "chorbah", "sh@mamah", "shammah", "shod", "she'th" and "m@show'ah". In looking at the various definitions for each of these words in the BDBG Lexicon, we discover that generally, they can all be used to refer to a place which has been laid waste, to a place of ruin, devastation, destruction and desolation. It is a place without inhabitant, or at least with very few of them. Thus, clear across the Scriptures, we plainly see that the phrase "Abomination of Desolation" means the same thing. It was some detestable, filthy, idolatrous thing which was abhorred by the Jews, which would serve as a warning sign, and mark the coming destruction of Jerusalem and the Jews' beloved temple, leaving the place pretty much deserted.

You may recall that earlier in this series, while discussing the meaning of the word "desolate" in the New Testament, we also examined a few verses which describe the desolation of the mysterious, proud, sinful city which John the Beloved referred to as Babylon the Great. I briefly mentioned to you how I have long believed that Babylon the Great was just a coded name for the city of Jerusalem itself. Let me remind you again that this is a topic which I discuss more in depth in the article "Who is Babylon the Great?". At any rate, keeping in mind what the words "desolate" and "desolation" actually mean in the Holy Scriptures, consider now how the aftermath of Babylon the Great's destruction is described:

"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her . . . And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all . . . And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more

in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Revelation 18:8, 14, 21-23, KJV

We are told six times that Babylon's destruction would be so complete, that she would be found no more at all. All of the things which made her so popular, so rich and so powerful, would all be gone. They would be found no more at all. She would become uninhabited. She would be desolate. She would be an empty, ruinous place of utter devastation once God's judgments fell upon her. In so many words, this is also what Jesus and the Prophets said would happen to Jerusalem during the completion of the 70th week of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. The temple would be utterly destroyed, leaving not one stone upon another, and Jerusalem would be burned and brought to her knees by the armies of Rome, under the cruel command of General Titus, the son of Emperor Vespasian.

At this point in our discussion, we are going to return to some of the verses which are found in the Book of Daniel. The reason why we are doing this, is because they contain some vital information which will assist us in finally discovering exactly what the Abomination of Desolation was. Those verses are the following:

". . . 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. 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."

Daniel 9:26-27, KJV

I began this series by sharing with you some of my former, misguided ideas regarding what I thought the Abomination of Desolation might have been. Not only was I wrong about the actual time frame, but I was wrong about something else as well. While I erroneously assumed that this detestable thing was one great, singular object, please notice carefully what the previous verses actually say: "and for the overspreading

of abominations he shall make it desolate".

As you can see, the verse says "abominations" and not just "abomination". In other words, there appears to be more than one Abomination of Desolation. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the prophecy was not just referring to some kind of great idol or statue standing in a futuristic third temple, or at any other time in history for that matter. In this case, the word "abominations" finds its origin in the Hebrew word "shiqquwts" or "shiqquts". As we learned before, this implies that it was something that was viewed by both God and the Jews as being unclean, utterly detestable, and idolatrous. So what was it?

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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Abomination of Desolation: Explained! Part 3

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Hebrew Word "Kanaph" Means Wing Wings Winged Feathered, Why Did KJV Translators Translate Hebrew "Kanaph" As "And For The Overspreading"? "Overspreading" Is Not Used Anywhere Else In The Old Testament, In Hebrew "And For The Overspreading Of Abominations" Suggests "The Detestable, Unclean, Abominable Winged Or Feathered Idol", Jesus Clearly Referenced Daniel In Speaking Of Armies Which Would Destroy Jerusalem, Slow Death Behind A Roman Siege Wall, Great Destruction Until War Ended, Abomination Of Desolation Was A Roman Flag Called An "Aquila" That Had A Metal Eagle On Top Of The Pole, Importance Of The "Aquila" In Roman Military Life, "Aquila" Created Great Fear Because It Signaled The Coming Destruction Of Rome's Enemies, High Priest Caiaphas Said Jesus Must Die So Jerusalem Would Be Spared Roman Wrath, God Prohibited People From Eating Meat That Still Contained Blood, Eagle Was An Abomination To Eat

Because It Consumed Animals Still With Blood, Aquila Was Also An Abomination To The Jews Because It Was A Molten Idol Which God Prohibited, Apostle Paul Mentions Bird-Shaped Roman Gods In Epistle To The Romans, Overspreading: Outstretched Wings Of The Aquilas?, Romans Instilled Fear And Horror With Their Aquilas, Eagle Was A Very Fitting Symbol For Rome Which Tore Apart And Devoured Its Enemies, Standing Where It Ought Not, Abominations Overspread Everywhere, Abomination Of Desolation Not Related To Our Modern Times, Nonsense And False Doctrines

Continuing our discussion from part two, in that same verse, the word "overspreading" is derived from the Hebrew word "kanaph". According to the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon, out of the one hundred and eight times that "kanaph" is found in the Old Testament of the King James Version of the Bible, this Hebrew word is translated seventy-four times as "wing" or "wings", two times as "winged", and twice as "feathered". In other words, more than seventy-two per cent of the time that "kanaph" is used, it is used to describe something that has wings and is feathered. For example, it is used to describe the wings of both cherubs -- such as the two cherubs that were placed in Solomon's temple -- as well as of regular birds. This is made evident by verses such as the following where the Hebrew "kanaph" is used:

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself."
Exodus 19:4, KJV

"And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive tree, each ten cubits high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one measure and one size. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubims within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubims, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and their wings touched one another in the midst of the house."
1 Kings 6:23-27, KJV

"And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image

work, and overlaid them with gold. And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub. And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub. The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward."

2 Chronicles 3:10-13, KJV

"Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?"

Job 39:13, KJV

"And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind."

Psalms 18:10, KJV

"He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea:"

Psalms 78:27, KJV

"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler."

Psalms 91:4, KJV

"Beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl:"

Psalms 148:10, KJV

"And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped."

Isaiah 10:14, KJV

"In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell."

Ezekiel 17:23, KJV

"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every

side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood."

Ezekiel 39:17, KJV

So in all of the previous verses, the words "wing", "wings", "feathered" and "flying" are derived from the word "kanaph". This same Hebrew word is also used to a much lesser extent to refer to the skirt or border of a garment, or to the end, border or corner of something else. However, as you can see by our previous example verses, its primary definition is in fact the feathered wing of a cherub or bird. This definition of the word "kanaph" provides us with a major clue regarding exactly what the Abomination of Desolation -- or according to the Archangel Gabriel's actual words, Abominations -- really were.

Please take note of the fact that in the previous verse from the Book of Daniel, the phrase "and for the overspreading" is derived from this one Hebrew word "kanaph". In other words, in the original Hebrew text, there are no separate words for each of the other three words in the phrase. What I find very odd here, is that Daniel 9:27 is the only verse in the entire Old Testament where "kanaph" is translated in this manner. In fact, stranger still, this is the only verse in the entire Old Testament where the word "overspreading" is used at all.

This begs the question: If the primary meaning of "kanaph" is wings or feathered, why would the translators not only decide to not use this translation, but in fact translate it as an English word that is found nowhere else in the entire Old Testament? Is it possible that it was simply a translational oversight on their part? Should we consider that they didn't quite know what it meant so they just translated it the best they could? Or is it possible that they did grasp what this Hebrew word means, and decided that "overspreading" was a very appropriate translation, considering what these verses are discussing? As you will come to understand momentarily, there is an important reason why I am highlighting the odd way this verse has been translated.

Just as the English phrase "and for the overspreading" finds its origin in one Hebrew word, in the very same fashion, the phrase "of abominations" is derived from the one Hebrew word "shiqquwts". In other words, the entire phrase "and for the overspreading of abominations" is really translated from just two Hebrew words; that is "kanaph shiqquwts". Thus, based on

the definitions that are provided by the BDBG Lexicon, what these two words suggest in a literal sense is "a detestable, unclean, abominable winged or feathered idol". Now, in order to obtain a clear idea of what Daniel is talking about in the verse, let's review what Jesus said in the Gospel of Luke:

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 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. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."

Luke 21:20-22, KJV

So while Daniel writes "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary", "with the arms of a flood", and "arms shall stand on his part", Jesus says "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." It is quite evident that Jesus is saying the same thing, because He is in fact referencing Daniel.

As we learned earlier, after subduing the rest of the Jewish country, General Titus' forces finally engulfed Jerusalem in a great siege wall. A common tactic in its day, a siege wall meant that no one could get in or out; and neither could any other thing, including food, water, military supplies, etc. The result was that people who were trapped within a siege wall slowly starved to death, turned on each other, died from different diseases, etc. According to historians Tacitus and Flavius Josephus, somewhere between 600,000 and 1,000,000 Jews were trapped inside Jerusalem during that war.

According to the information I read in one source, this siege wall was so wide on top, that a Roman chariot could run along the course of the wall. Furthermore, being as the siege wall surrounded Jerusalem, it probably made the "overspreading of abominations" all that easier. The historical record also indicates that many thousands of Jews were crucified on the wall when they tried to escape from Jerusalem during the course of the siege. On a side note, I have wondered if the KJV translators chose the word "overspreading" because the Roman siege wall spread around Jerusalem, and perhaps was even higher than Jerusalem's own retaining walls, of which there were three. However, there is a better possibility regarding why they chose to use "overspreading", which I'll

be discussing in just a little bit.

So again we see that there is clearly a direct association between these Roman armies which compass Jerusalem about and ultimately destroy it, and these Abominations of Desolation; that is, these winged or feathered detestable, unclean idols, which would even "stand in the holy place" as the Lord had warned. It was obviously very important for the Jews of First Century Jerusalem to fully grasp the meaning of this ancient prophecy, because as we have seen, that verse said "whoso readeth, let him understand".

The Prophet Daniel likewise tells us "and unto the end of the war desolations are determined" and "he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation [or end], and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." In other words, Daniel is informing us that once the war has begun, there will be continuous great destruction in Jerusalem until it ends, and that the city will be left desolate, or uninhabited for the most part. As we have already clearly established, he is writing about the First Jewish-Roman War, which lasted from 66 AD to 73 AD.

For those of you who may be history buffs, particularly Roman history buffs, the mystery regarding the actual nature of the Abomination of Desolation may already be solved. After all, I have pretty much already told you what it was, but without saying so directly. However, for those of you who have not yet figured it out, and who may need a little more help, let us proceed to the conclusion of this matter.

The Romans had something in their possession which the Jews viewed as being filthy, unclean, abominable, detestable and idolatrous. We have seen that it would surround Jerusalem -- and in fact stand on the temple Mount itself -- just prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Furthermore, whatever this mysterious object was, it would also be quite visible to the Jews of that time period, and serve as a warning sign to get out of Jerusalem as quickly as possible.

From my personal study of the Scriptures, I am now convinced that these Abominations of Desolation were nothing less than the Roman standards. Referred to as "aquilas", they were in fact the military flags which were borne by Roman legions as they marched to war, and surrounded their enemies. This flag was mounted on a pole, on top of which was an eagle crafted out of silver or bronze. The Wikipedia website informs us of

the great importance which was assigned to the "aquila" by the Roman military:

----- Begin Quote -----

"An aquila was the standard of a Roman legion formed in the shape of an eagle, which was carried by a special grade legionary known as an Aquilifer (aquila-bearer). One eagle standard was carried by each legion."

"The eagle standard was extremely important to the Roman military, beyond merely being a symbol of a legion. A lost standard was considered an extremely grave occurrence, and the Roman military often went to great lengths to both protect a standard and to recover it if lost."

----- End Quote -----

While Roman military men greatly honored and respected the "aquila", to anyone else -- such as the Jerusalemites of the First Century -- it was greatly feared. Being surrounded by Roman legions with their "aquilas" signified one thing, and only one thing: you were about to be destroyed! It is obvious then that the Jews of Jerusalem knew that their end was near. The end of that age, as had been prophesied by Jesus Himself, and in full agreement with Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy, was upon them. In fact, as I mention in other articles, forty years earlier, during the time of Jesus Christ, they already saw the handwriting on the wall. Thus, as Caiaphas the high priest stated:

"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

John 11:47-52, KJV

The question we need to ask ourselves is why the Jews would

view the Roman "aquila" as a filthy, detestable, unclean and abominable thing. Utilizing our tried and proven method of comparing Scripture with Scripture -- and thus allowing God's Word to speak for itself -- we find the answer in the pages of the Old Testament. For example, consider the following verses that are found in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

"For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD."

Isaiah 66:16-17, KJV

As you can see, the Lord tells us by way of the Prophet that He is going to consume these particular people. In those two verses, the word "consumed" is derived from the Hebrew word "cuwph", which means to cease or to come to an end. In other words, the Lord is going to destroy them. Why will this be their awful fate? Because they have chosen to eat things God has declared to be unclean. This includes pork, the flesh of mice, and something else which the verse simply describes as "the abomination". But exactly what is this abomination? If we examine the Book of Leviticus, we discover that this can represent many different types of animals. However, we can understand one of the rules which the Lord applies when He classifies something as being unclean simply by reading what He said to Noah after the Flood waters had receded. In the ninth chapter of the Book of Genesis we find the following verses:

"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."

Genesis 9:2-4, KJV

What we see then, is that God has forbidden man to eat flesh which still contains the blood. It is considered unclean and an abomination to Him. As we all know, there are many beasts and birds which do eat flesh which still contains the blood in them. In fact, there are certain scavengers which even eat rotten, putrid flesh. As it turns out, in the verses below,

the eagle is the very first fowl that is mentioned by God as being an abomination that should not be eaten:

"And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray, And the vulture, and the kite after his kind; Every raven after his kind; And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind, And the little owl, and the cormorant, and the great owl, And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier eagle, And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat."

Leviticus 11:13-19, KJV

Thus we see that the eagle was considered an abomination to the ancient Jews, because it is a scavenger which eats the flesh of other animals by tearing them apart, while it still contains the blood. Of course, there is another strong reason why the Jews would find the Roman "aquilas" to be abominable and detestable. It has to do with the simple fact that they were graven images. As we have seen, the Roman "aquilas" were molten images atop their standards, which the Roman military prized, respected, honored and protected. They treated it as a god, and Roman soldiers would even sacrifice their lives in order to recover one which had been stolen or lost.

We all already know what God thinks of idols, but here are some verses for your consideration. How ironic that Paul is writing to the Roman brethren regarding Roman idolatry in the very first verse below. Notice how Paul includes "and to birds" in his remarks. Surely he must have been thinking about the Roman "aquilas":

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, AND TO BIRDS, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

Romans 1:22-23, KJV

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto

thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."
Exodus 20:3-6, KJV

"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

Psalms 115:4-8, KJV

"The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them."

Psalms 135:15-18, KJV

"They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions."

Psalms 106:34-39, KJV

"They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it a god: they fall down, yea, they worship. They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble."

Isaiah 46:6-7, KJV

"For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not. They are upright as the palm tree, but speak not: they must needs be borne, because they cannot go. Be not afraid of them; for they cannot do evil, neither also is it

in them to do good."

Jeremiah 10:3-5, KJV

"A drought is upon her [Babylon's] waters; and they shall be dried up: for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols."

Jeremiah 50:38, KJV

"Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them, And say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys; Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. And your altars shall be desolate, and your images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your idols. And I will lay the dead carcasses of the children of Israel before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round about your altars. In all your dwellingplaces the cities shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate; that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and your idols may be broken and cease, and your images may be cut down, and your works may be abolished. And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel 6:2-7, KJV

"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols; That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to enquire of him concerning me; I the LORD will answer him by myself: And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of

my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD."
Ezekiel 14:2-8, KJV

By this time, in light of this preponderance of Scriptural evidence, I hope it is clear to you why the Angel Gabriel would refer to the Roman standards -- or "aquilas" -- as being "the abomination that maketh desolate" when he gave his message to Daniel. Perhaps you also now understand why I made such an issue out of the KJV translators translating "kanaph" as "overspreading", instead of as "wings", "wing", "winged" or "feathered". Just unlocking the full meaning of that one Hebrew word has revealed the truth to us.

However, at the same time, as I also said, having looked deeper into this matter, I now have a better idea regarding why the KJV translators may have chosen to use the word "overspreading" in the phrase "and for the overspreading of abominations", instead of wings, feathers, etc. According to the Wikipedia website, the "aquila" was made of silver, or bronze, with outstretched wings. Thus, it may very well be that when the translators used "overspreading", they were referring to the fact that the "aquilas" had outstretched wings.

You may recall that while the Hebrew word "shamem" is often translated as "desolate" or "desolation", it can also mean to stun, cause horror, stupefy, appall, amaze or astonish. By proudly displaying their molten eagles on top of their poles which bore their military flags, the Roman military purposely instilled fear and horror in their subjects and their enemies, just as that Hebrew word also means. It was the ancient version of "shock and awe".

As I have said, the appearance of Roman legions with their standards meant only one thing: desolation, destruction and the end of life for the recipients of Rome's wrath. I find it very fitting that Rome would abandon all other animals, and select only the eagle; because just like the eagle, the leaders of Rome would use their military might to attack, mercilessly tear apart, and devour their enemies. So it is indeed very appropriate. You will also recall that the Lord Himself had said about forty years earlier "there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword" and "who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

As we know, these molten eagles of the ancient Roman legions

were placed on the very temple grounds, where they were not supposed to be. As Jesus said "standing where it ought not". They were an abomination to the Jews. There were probably also flags which bore the images of eagles in some of the chariots of the upper-tier Roman leadership as well. If we consider the size of the siege wall which surrounded the city of Jerusalem for several years, I think it is possible that there were "aquilas" stationed on top of the wall as well. These no doubt caused the trapped Jews additional horror and dread, because they knew that their days were numbered. These abominations must have been overspread everywhere in some form.

To reiterate, personally, I am convinced by both historical evidence, as well as Scriptural evidence, that this is what Jesus meant when He used the well-known phrase "abomination of desolation" in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. In my view, contrary to what I long believed, and what many other Christians still believe, the Abomination of Desolation has absolutely nothing to do with our current times. It has no connection whatsoever to what modern Christians refer to as Endtime Prophecy, or to a speculated Third temple being built on the summit of Mount Moriah in East Jerusalem. It has nothing to do with a modern idol, or with some kind of modern "image of the Beast".

In my view, such thinking is misguided Futurist nonsense, which I likewise embraced for far too many years, due to my ignorance of what the Scriptures really have to say about this issue. It is a false doctrine which has been promoted by Futurists for many years, decades in fact. Sadly, this is not the only false doctrine which is being promoted by these misguided people who wish to foist their warped theological perspective on the modern Body of Christ. In a number of my other articles, I will be exposing -- or have already done so -- some of the other modern doctrinal deceptions. Sadly, many of the members of the modern Church do not have a very strong foundation in God's Word, so they easily accept some of these erroneous doctrines.

Please go to part four for the conclusion of this series.

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Abomination of Desolation: Explained! Part 4

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Antiochus IV Epiphanes And The Maccabean Revolts, Temple Was Defiled In 2nd Century BC, Jews Were Forced To Worship Pagan Grecian Gods, Problems With Antiochus Interpretation Of The Abomination Of Desolation, Jesus Clearly Said That It Was A Future Event, Historical Figures And Historical Events Place Jesus Squarely In The First Century AD, Similarities Between Antiochus's Temple Defilement And Romans' Temple Defilement, 70 AD Was The Real Abomination Of Desolation, Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part three, before concluding this series, I would like to address one more topic which is directly related to our discussion about the Abomination of Desolation. It concerns a misguided belief which has likewise circulated in Bible prophecy circles for many years now, and involves King Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Maccabean revolts.

If you are a student of Biblical history, you may possibly know that insofar as Jewish history is concerned, the first and second centuries BC coincided with the various Maccabean revolts against the Seleucid kings of Syria. These revolts were instigated in large part when Jewish religious worship in the temple -- and throughout Israel -- came to an abrupt end, and was replaced by forced Hellenistic idol worship, by Antiochus IV Epiphanes during the mid-2nd Century BC. In the First Book of the Maccabees, after explaining how Antiochus came to power, conquered and destroyed much of Jerusalem, defiled the temple and stole many sacred things from it, the writer describes how this heathen king then forced the Jews to forsake the God of Israel, and to worship the pagan gods of Greece, as we see here:

"Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, and that each should give up his customs. 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. And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane sabbaths and feasts, to defile the sanctuary and the priests, to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and unclean animals, and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, so that they should forget the law and change all the ordinances. 'And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die.' In such words he wrote to his whole kingdom. And he appointed inspectors over all the people and commanded the cities of Judah to offer sacrifice, city by city."

1 Maccabees 1:41-51

Only a few verses later, this same writer informs us of an event which occurred in the temple at Jerusalem, which some Bible scholars believe may have been a direct fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation. Consider the following verses:

"Now on the fifteenth day of Chislev, in the one hundred and forty-fifth year, they erected a desolating sacrilege upon the altar of burnt offering. They also built altars in the surrounding cities of Judah, and burned incense at the doors of the houses and in the streets. The books of the law which they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire. Where the book of the covenant was found in the possession of any one, or if any one adhered to the law, the decree of the king condemned him to death. They kept using violence against Israel, against those found month after month in the cities. And on the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the altar which was upon the altar of burnt offering."

1 Maccabees 1:54-59

Personally, the problems I have with embracing this Antiochus IV Epiphanes interpretation is fully explained in the series you have just read. It should be very obvious to many of you that if we believe that Jesus Christ lived during the early part of the First Century AD, and was crucified around the year 30 AD, then we cannot accept the Antiochus IV Epiphanes interpretation concerning the

Abomination of Desolation. As this article has made perfectly clear, Jesus was prophesying a future event, and not a past event which occurred almost two hundred years before His time.

If, on the other hand, you accept that the Prophet Daniel was prophesying about the defilement of the holy temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes, when his people offered swine and other unclean animals on the altar in the temple, amongst all of the other evil things that they did, then how do you resolve the obvious conflict with what Jesus stated in the Gospels about the Abomination of Desolation being a future event?

Another very big problem with accepting the Maccabean period interpretation, is that we clearly know who all of the Roman and Jewish political leadership were, and the Jews' religious leadership as well, from the time of Christ up to the time that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 70 AD. Those people, and all of the events which occurred during that same period, serve as historical markers. None of those people had even been born yet at the time of the Maccabean revolts. So because we know who these people were, as well as what events transpired, we can place Jesus Christ at a specific point in history, and that is squarely in the first half of the First Century AD. Thus, when Jesus talks about the Abomination of Desolation being a future event, we know without a doubt that it could not possibly have occurred two hundred years before that time. It is totally out of the question as far as I can tell.

When I first considered this doctrine a few years ago, the only way I could think of in which we could try to bring harmony between what both Daniel and Jesus prophesied, and what the First Book of the Maccabees reports, was by making Jesus' lifetime considerably earlier than what Christians have supposed during the past two millennia. In other words, we would have to move Jesus' life to the very early part of the Second Century BC, so that His future prophecy regarding the Abomination of Desolation could have been given before the events that were perpetrated by Antiochus IV Epiphanes and his followers, in the mid-2nd Century BC. But you see, we run into the very same problem, and we just can't do it, because we know who was alive and ruling during the time of Christ, and they certainly weren't alive during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

The most that I personally am willing to say is that there are some similarities between Antiochus' defilement of the temple compound, and what occurred with the Romans hundreds of years later. However, they are two very separate events, and Jesus was clearly talking about the one in 70 AD. That was the true Abomination of Desolation, I believe. At any rate, if you are interested in learning more about these events which occurred before the time of Christ, please consider reading my article entitled "Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas?".

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. I trust that you have enjoyed it, learned something from it, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thank you so very much! May God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which contain topics which are related to this series. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics website:

Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas?
Jesus Christ's Return: Have We Been Deceived?
Who is Babylon the Great?
The Great Tribulation and the Rapture
Tradition or Truth? Old Wine or New Wine?

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