

The Altar, the Abomination,
and Armageddon



The Altar,
The Abomination,
and Armageddon.

Book One

The Altar, the Abomination, and Armageddon

Introduction

The Altar, the Abomination, and Armageddon is a pictographic teaching about future end time events associated with the end time prophecies of the Bible. This teaching will show the historic events and pattern that define our future based on the past.

According to scripture, there are three cardinal events that define an end time scenario. These events are at the beginning, middle, and end of the scenario.

Number one is the shutting down of the altar in Jerusalem.

Number two is the abomination of the sanctuary in Jerusalem.

Number three is the coming of the Lord to destroy His enemies at Armageddon.

God has revealed the signs of the end. It is our responsibility to watch and to understand the events of the world based on the signs that God is showing to His people.

Enjoy the teaching.

The Altar, the Abomination, and Armageddon.

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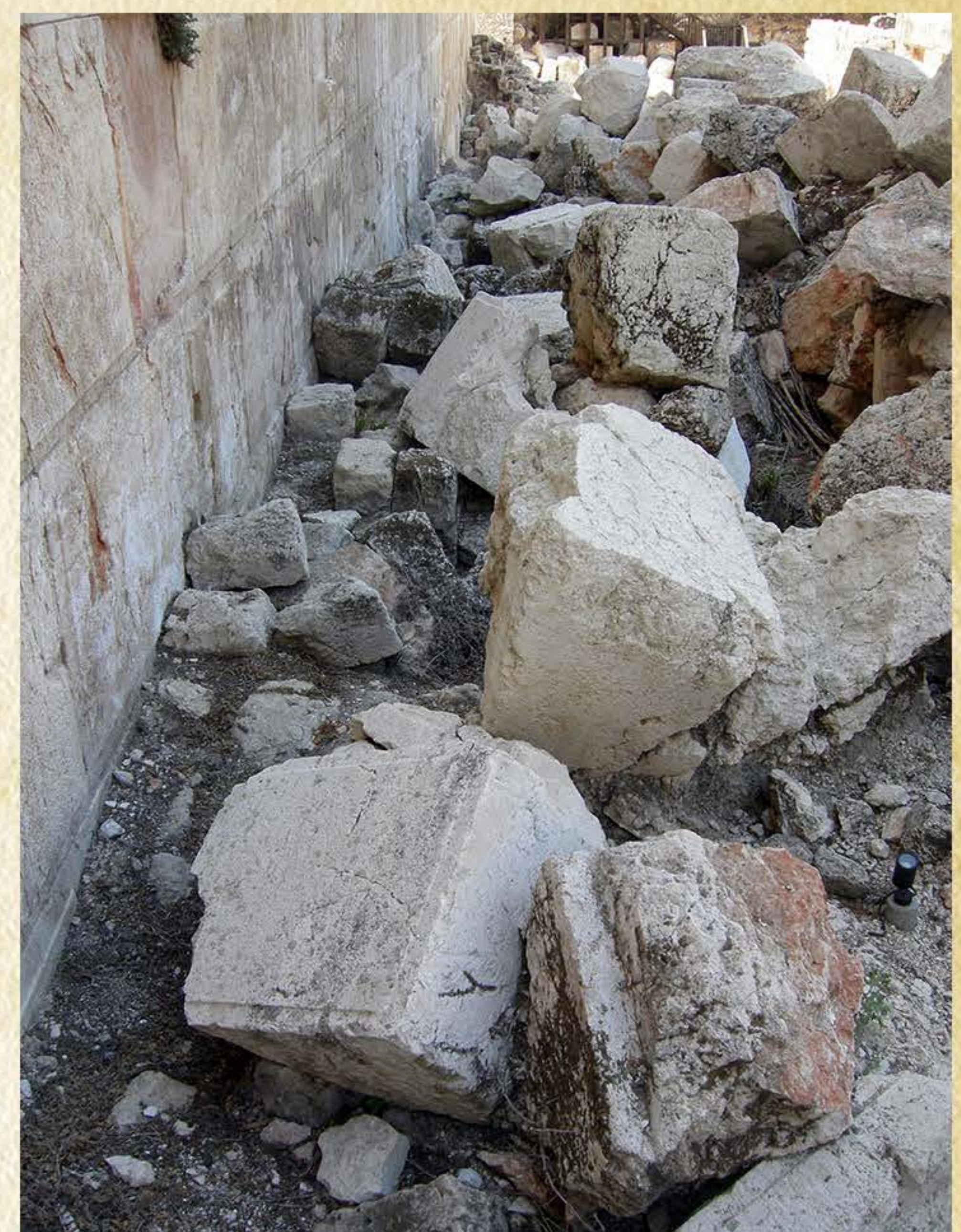
A QUESTION ABOUT THE END TIMES

So, why did the question of end time events come up in the first place?

Well, in Matthew 23, Jesus makes a declaration that Israel's house would be left desolate because of the sins of the leaders. He listed eight sins that would lead to this destruction. These are known as the eight woes.

When the disciples were showing Jesus the beautiful temple, He let them know that the temple would be destroyed and not one stone would be upon another. The disciples were very alarmed and wanted more information. So they met with Jesus privately to discuss the matter. Their discussion lead to what became known as the Olivet discourse where Jesus explains the future end time events and gives them understanding about the devastating events that would rock their world.

Pictured are the Stones of the Temple that were thrown down by the Romans.



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The
Eight
Waes

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THE 8 WOES

Eight times in Matthew 23 Jesus says the phrase “Woe to you” to the scribes and Pharisees. To say that Jesus wasn’t happy with the leaders of Israel would be an understatement. Here is what He says they were doing that would devastate their city and the people for thousands of years.

- 1) **Shutting Up the Kingdom of Heaven Against Men.** The Message of Jesus was the Kingdom of Heaven. The message of Jesus is still a forbidden message in Judaism today.
- 2) **Devouring Widow’s Houses.** Widows who have no spiritual covering are to be taken care of by the community, not looted.
- 3) **Making a Proselyte a Two-fold Child of Hell more than they themselves.** Leadership is responsible for the correct training of the people they disciple. The souls of men and women are at stake.
- 4) **Respect for the Temple Gold more than the Temple.** Having respect for money more than the things of God is a terrible error and a form of idolatry.
- 5) **Omitting the Weightier Matters of the Law - Judgment, Mercy, and Faith.** The leaders followed the law to the letter but failed to understand the very purpose of its existence, knowing God and loving the people.

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THE 8 WOES CONTINUED

- 6) **Hypocrisy - The Cup and Platter.** The leaders pretended to be holy but were full of extortion and excess.
- 7) **Hypocrisy - The Whited Sepulchres.** The leaders pretended to be holy but were full of death, likened unto dead bones. They were full of uncleanness.
- 8) **Killing the Prophets.** Jesus would be put to death by the leaders of Israel like many prophets and holy men before. This would be the final act that would bring judgment upon God's people for thousands of years.

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 23:37-39 KJV

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The 8 Woes and 70 AD

You Shall Not See Me Again - No Promise of Armageddon

The disciples asked Jesus the question “When shall these things be?” in reference to the statement “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate”.

They asked the questions about the sign of His return and of the end of the world in reference to the statement “Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Historically, these two events, the desolation of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the Coming of the Lord at the end of the world, are a long time apart. We have to keep this in mind when we are reading the prophetic passages in Matthew 24. There are applications in His statements for both events. That is why many people have struggled to figure out what statements apply to what event. This is also why people who interpret Matthew 24 historically, and people who interpret Matthew 24 futuristically can both be right in their application. However, certain events prophesied to happen in Matthew 24 have not yet happened in their final form. The book of Revelation was given to help us understand future events with more clarity. It is a reliable source.

Israel was not promised an Armageddon event to save them after the events of 70AD. They were told that they would not see Him until they say “**Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord**”. That has not yet happened even to our day, but I believe it is beginning to happen and we could see it in our day.

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The
Three
Questions

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The 3 Questions of Matthew 24

The Disciples were so distraught by the words of Jesus that they came to him privately and asked Him three specific questions about His statements.

And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying,

**Tell us, when shall these things be?
and what shall be the sign of thy coming,
and of the end of the world?**

Matthew 24:1-3 KJV

Jesus answers their questions and gives us the foundational teaching on end times. This teaching, known as the Olivet discourse, has been examined over the millennia and is a fantastic summary of the book of Revelation.

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*The Events
of
Matthew 24*

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The Events of Matthew 24

Prophecy is easier to understand if you divide it into 5 categories.
Events, Timeline, Character Development, Context, and Theme.
We will be looking the events and timeline of Matthew 24.

The Events of Matthew 24:3-31 are as follows.

- 1) **The Beginning of Sorrows**
- 2) **The Abomination of Desolation**
- 3) **The Great Tribulation**
- 4) **The Coming of the Lord/Armageddon**
- 5) **The Gathering from the Four Winds**

These events are connected in Matthew 24. Jesus begins by talking about the Beginning of Sorrows. The Beginning of Sorrows is not an event but describes a period of time when Nation will rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom. It is a period that precedes the Abomination of Desolation.

And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

All these are the **beginning of sorrows.** Matthew 24:6-8

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The Events of Matthew 24

The event following the period known as the **Beginning of Sorrows** is the **Abomination of Desolation**. It is connected to the **Great Tribulation**.

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:) ...

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Matthew 24:15, 21

The **Great Tribulation** is connected to the **Coming of the Lord**.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, **and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

Matthew 24:29-30

The **Gathering from the Four Winds** happens at the **Coming of the Lord** with the great sound of a trumpet.

And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, **and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,** from one end of heaven to the other. Matthew 24:31

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The Events of Matthew 24

The Coming of the Lord is connected to Armageddon.

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; **so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Matthew 24:27-28

Matthew 24:28 is making a reference to “The Supper of the Great God” that happens at the completion of Armageddon when the birds clean up the dead bodies left from the great battle.

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. Revelation 19:17-18

We can see a progression of events in Matthew 24. It starts with the period described as the **Beginning of Sorrows**, leads to the **Abomination of Desolation**, followed by the **Great Tribulation**, ending with **The Coming of the Lord** to fight at Armageddon and **Gather the Elect from the Four Winds**.

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The Progression of Events of Matthew 24

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 **All these are the beginning of sorrows. ...**

15 **When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation,** spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) ...

21 **For then shall be great tribulation,** such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ...

29 **Immediately after the tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 **And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, **and they shall see the Son of man coming** in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 **And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet,** **and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,** from one end of heaven to the other.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 **For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.**

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*The Historical
Abomination
of Desolation
and the
7 Year Period*

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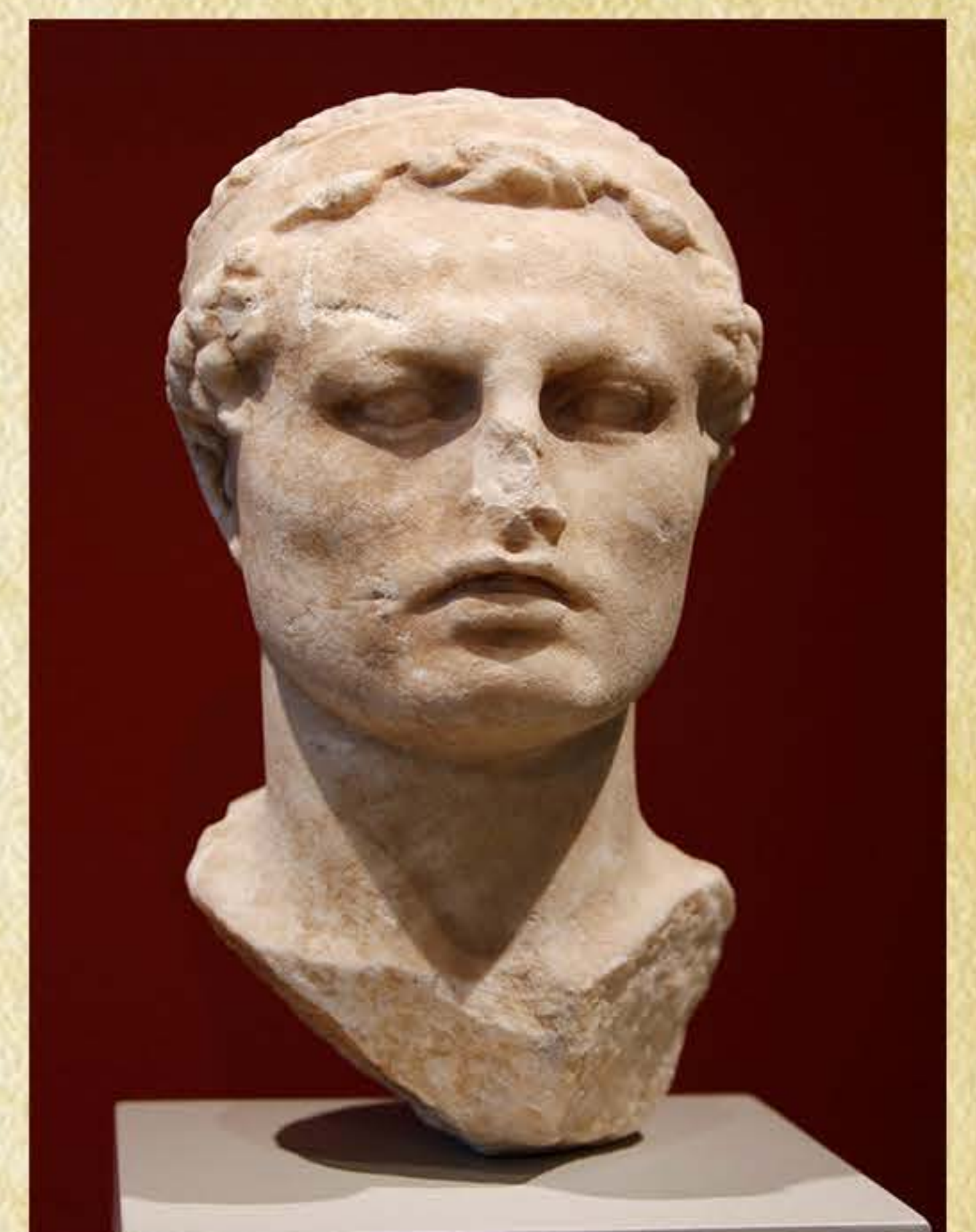
The Historical Abomination

When we look at the book of Daniel, we must realize that multiple stories are being told at the same time. One very important prophetic story in the book of Daniel is the story of the little horn. If you look close at Daniel, you will realize that there are two little horns. The little horn of Daniel Chapter 7 that arises from the fourth beast and the little horn of Daniel Chapter 8 that comes from the third beast of Daniel Chapter 7.

The historical Abomination of Desolation was committed by the little horn of Daniel Chapter 8. His identity is very clear in the book and history records his deeds. His name is Antiochus IV Theos Epiphanes.

Just as prophesied in the book of Daniel, he was a descendant of Selucus I. Selucus was one of the four generals that ruled upon the death of Alexander the Great. Here is the prophecy in the book of Daniel.

Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.



Daniel 8:8-9

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The Historical Abomination

Therefore the he goat waxed very great:

And the rough goat is the king of Grecia:
and the great horn that is between his eyes
is the first king. Daniel 8:21



Alexander the Great

and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.



Lysimachus



Cassander



Ptolemy I



Seleucus I

And out of one of them came forth a little horn,
which waxed exceeding great, toward the south,
and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.

Daniel 8:8-9

Antiochus IV Theos Epiphanes
(from Seleucus I, the Selucid Empire)



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The Historical Abomination



A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE HISTORICAL ABOMINATION

175 BC - Antiochus Comes to Power

170 BC - Antiochus Destroys Jerusalem and Shuts Down the Altar

169 BC - Antiochus Returns and Spoils the Temple

168 BC - Antiochus Forced to Withdrawl from Egypt by Rome and Terrorizes the Jews (The Line in the Sand)

167 BC - Antiochus Sets Up the Abomination of Desolation

164 BC - A New Altar is Dedicated (The First Hanukkah)

163 BC - Antiochus is Slain by the Lord

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE HISTORICAL ABOMINATION

- 137 = 175 BC** And there came out of them a wicked root Antiochus surnamed Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king, who had been an hostage at Rome, and he reigned in the **hundred and thirty and seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks.** 1 Maccabees 1:10
- 138 = 174 BC** **(170 BC)** AT the same time that Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, had a quarrel with the sixth Ptolemy about his right to the whole country of Syria, a great sedition fell among the men of power in Judea, and they had a contention about obtaining the government; while each of those that were of dignity could not endure to be subject to their equals. However, Onias, one of the high priests, got the better, and cast the sons of Tobias out of the city; who fled to Antiochus, and besought him to make use of them for his leaders, and to make an expedition into Judea. The king being there to disposed beforehand, complied with them, and came upon the Jews with a great army, and took their city by force, and slew a great multitude of those that favored Ptolemy, and sent out his soldiers to plunder them without mercy. **He also spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation for three years and six months.**
- 139 = 173 BC**
- 140 = 172 BC**
- 141 = 171 BC**
- 142 = 170 BC** Josephus - The Jewish Wars Chapter One
- 143 = 169 BC** And after that Antiochus had smitten Egypt, **he returned again** in the **hundred forty and third year**, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, And entered proudly into the sanctuary, and took away the golden altar, and the candlestick of light, and all the vessels thereof, And the table of the shewbread, and the pouring vessels, and the vials. and the censers of gold, and the veil, and the crown, and the golden ornaments that were before the temple, all which he pulled off. He took also the silver and the gold, and the precious vessels: also he took the hidden treasures which he found. And when he had taken all away, he went into his own land, having made a great massacre, and spoken very proudly. Therefore there was a great mourning in Israel, in every place where they were; 1 Maccabees 1:20-25
- 144 = 168 BC**
- 145 = 167 BC**
- 146 = 166 BC** **Now the fifteenth day of the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and fifth year, they set up the abomination of desolation** upon the altar, and builded idol altars throughout the cities of Juda on every side; 1 Maccabees 1:54
- 147 = 165 BC**
- 148 = 164 BC** **Now on the five and twentieth day of the ninth month, which is called the month Casleu, in the hundred forty and eighth year, they rose up betimes in the morning, And offered sacrifice according to the law upon the new altar of burnt offerings, which they had made.** 1 Maccabees 4:52-53
- 149 = 163 BC** So king Antiochus died there in the **hundred forty and ninth year.** 1 Maccabees 6:16

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THE KING OF THE NORTH, THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE LINE IN THE SAND

Daniel chapter 11 tells the story of the battle between the King of the North and the King of the South. Historically, Antiochus IV was the King of the North and Ptolemy VI was the King of the South.



Antiochus IV

Put simply, Syria, in the north, was ruled by Antiochus and Ptolemy VI ruled Egypt in the south. Antiochus also ruled the land of Israel and Jerusalem. A conflict between Ptolemy and Antiochus led to a major conflict in Jerusalem that resulted in the Abomination of Desolation. There were some Jews in Jerusalem who were beholden to Ptolemy in Egypt and some were vassals of Antiochus.

In 170 BC, the vassals of Antiochus lost control of Jerusalem and went to Syria to ask Antiochus to reinstate them as leaders. Antiochus took an army and reconquered Jerusalem. He reinstated his leadership but he also persecuted the Jews. He started the process of turning the Jews into Greeks. It was at this point that he shut down the daily sacrifice.



Ptolemy VI

This was the Transgression of Desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel in Daniel chapter 8. The 2300 evenings and mornings day count started at this point. God is counting the number of sacrifices stolen from Him.

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THE KING OF THE NORTH, THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE LINE IN THE SAND

In 169 BC, Antiochus spoiled the temple at Jerusalem on his way home from his victory in Egypt. It was devastating to the Jews. In 168 BC, Antiochus takes his army back to Egypt to finish conquering Egypt and in particular, the City of Alexandria.



Antiochus IV

In 168 BC, Antiochus led a second attack on Egypt and also sent a fleet to capture Cyprus. Before he reached Alexandria, his path was blocked by a single elderly Roman ambassador named Gaius Popillius Laenas who delivered a message from the Roman Senate directing Antiochus to withdraw his armies from Egypt and Cyprus or consider himself in a state of war with the Roman Republic.

Antiochus said he would discuss it with his council, whereupon the Roman envoy drew a line in the sand around Antiochus and said: "Before you leave this circle, give me a reply that I can take back to the Roman Senate." This implied Rome would declare war if the King stepped out of the circle without committing to leave Egypt immediately. Weighing his options, Antiochus decided to withdraw. Only then did Popillius agree to shake hands with him.

Polybius 29.27.4, Livy 45.12.4ff.

Antiochus is humiliated in front of his troops. The man who refers to himself as "God Manifest" is defeated by a single Roman Senator.

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THE KING OF THE NORTH, THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE LINE IN THE SAND

A false rumor was started in Jerusalem that Antiochus had been killed. This led to a revolt against his vassals. Upon his withdrawal to Syria, he gets word that there is rejoicing over his death in Jerusalem. Antiochus goes to Jerusalem once again and devastates the Jewish people.



Antiochus IV

2 Maccabees 5 tells the story.

When these happenings were reported to the king, he thought that Judea was in revolt. Raging like a wild animal, he set out from Egypt and took Jerusalem by storm. He ordered his soldiers to cut down without mercy those whom they met and to slay those who took refuge in their houses. There was a massacre of young and old, a killing of women and children, a slaughter of virgins and infants. In the space of three days, eighty thousand were lost, forty thousand meeting a violent death, and the same number being sold into slavery

2 Maccabees 5:11-14

Ultimately, this led to the Abomination of Desolation in 167 BC when the statue of Zeus Olympus was set up in the temple. All things holy to the Lord were outlawed. All things unholy were forced upon the Jews including sacrifices of swine upon the altar to Zeus, and temple prostitution. Anyone caught with a copy of the Torah was killed. All copies of the Torah found by Antiochus were destroyed.

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THE KING OF THE NORTH, THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE LINE IN THE SAND

Observance of sabbath was outlawed. Mothers who circumcised their children were crucified and their slain children hung around their necks as they died the death of crucifixion. Worship of Antiochus in the form of the god Zeus was mandated. It was a terrible time for the Jews in Jerusalem and all of Israel.



Antiochus IV

This led to the Maccabean revolt by Mattathias the Priest and his five sons. Judas Maccabee forever being the hero of Hanukkah. Antiochus and his vassals were defeated by 164 BC and the temple cleansed just as prophesied by Daniel.

Antiochus was slain by the Lord in 163 BC, bringing to an end one of the most terrible times in Israel's history. His death is recorded in 2 Maccabees 9:5-9.

But the all-seeing Lord, the God of Israel, struck him with an incurable and invisible blow. As soon as he stopped speaking he was seized with a pain in his bowels, for which there was no relief, and with sharp internal tortures and that very justly, for he had tortured the bowels of others with many and strange inflictions. Yet he did not in any way stop his insolence, but was even more filled with arrogance, breathing fire in his rage against the Jews, and giving orders to drive even faster.

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THE KING OF THE NORTH, THE KING OF THE SOUTH AND THE LINE IN THE SAND

And so it came about that he fell out of his chariot as it was rushing along, and the fall was so hard as to torture every limb of his body. Thus he who only a little while before had thought in his superhuman arrogance that he could command the waves of the sea, and had imagined that he could weigh the high mountains in a balance, was brought down to earth and carried in a litter, making the power of God manifest to all. And so the ungodly man's body swarmed with worms, and while he was still living in anguish and pain, his flesh rotted away, and because of the stench the whole army felt revulsion at his decay.



Antiochus IV

2 Maccabees 9:5-9



Punishment of Antiochus,
engraving by Gustave Doré