

Signs Of The Lord's Return Matthew 24:9-21

The signs of Matthew 24 serve three (3) purposes – see Olivet Discourse Diagram.

Signs we have studied thus far:

The first - destruction and desecration of the Temple and Jerusalem.

The second - the sign of deception. – God allows the lost to believe the lie of the Antichrist

The third - the sign of war – rampant worldwide killing and war

The fourth - the sign devastation – worldwide pandemics, famine, wild animals; millions die through these and are cast into hell.

5. The sign of martyrdom.

Worldwide martyrdom, not just localized.

Matthew 24:9 - *Then they shall deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you and you shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake.*

Notice on your diagram of the Olivet Discourse, where this sign falls under.

According to Matthew 24:9, why does the Antichrist persecute and kill Tribulation believers?

Revelation 6:9 - *When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.*

Revelation 6:10 - *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'*

Revelation 20:4 - *... Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

Revelation 17:6 - *I saw the woman (Babylon), drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.*

6. The sign of declaration.

Matthew 24:14 - And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached (declared) in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come (the Millennial kingdom and then eternity with the New Heaven and New Earth).

Have you ever heard Matthew 24:14 misquoted?

Revelation 11:7, 11-12 - When the two witnesses have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will wage war with them, and will overpower and kill them...But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God entered the two witnesses, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell upon those who saw them. And the witnesses heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched them.

Revelation 7:9, 14 - After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands... And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

The book of Revelation is a book that is filled with the mercy of God, amidst the wrath of God.

When the Lord returns and sets up His kingdom, the calling of anyone to salvation is over. In fact, with the bowl judgments, there is indication at that point of no one having an opportunity for salvation any longer. It should be a frightening thought of the door being shut that is now open to whosoever will when the Holy Spirit calls.

7. The abomination of desolation.

Matthew 24:15-21 - Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter, nor on the Sabbath day. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

In Matthew 24:15, Jesus is speaking of an event that occurs at the halfway point, or mid-point, of the Tribulation. It is the beginning of what Jesus called The Great Tribulation. This period goes by many different names in Scripture. It's called in Jeremiah 30:7, *the time of Jacob's Trouble*.

The abomination of desolation is the last sign given by the Lord Jesus that points to His Second Coming. When the people in the Tribulation, especially believers and Jews, see this sign they know the time of the earthly kingdom is at hand.

The word *abomination* is a Greek word which speaks of *disgust, of repulsion, abhorrence*.

Now the prophet Daniel, who is referenced here in Matthew 24:15 by the Lord, uses that term *abomination* three (3) times in his book (Daniel 9:27, Daniel 11:31, and Daniel 12:11).

As I stated before, biblical prophecy has a recent fulfillment and a future fulfillment. It's called the Law of Double Fulfillment.

a. Past fulfillment.

Daniel 11:31 - *And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.*

The abomination of desolation was committed by a man by the name of Antiochus IV, the Syrian king who ruled over Palestine from 175 to 164 B.C. (when he died). He took the name Antiochus Epiphanes and claimed to be The Manifest God. Epiphanes means "manifest."

The abomination that took place under him occurred in 167 B.C. – desecrated and looted the Temple. Placed a statue of Zeus in the Holy of holies and sacrificed a swine on the altar and demanded that all Jews worship Zeus and eat swine.

Now, we don't have time for it here, but history records that a group of Jews under the leadership of Judas Maccabees fought back and defeated the Greeks and took back the Temple and cleansed it and rededicated it.

b. Future fulfillment.

Daniel 9:27 – *He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.*

Daniel 12:11 - *And from the time the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation set up, there will be 1,290 days.*

The Lord tells us definitely in Matthew 24:15 that the abomination of desolation is one of the last signs for people in the Tribulation to look for concerning His return the second time the establish His earthly kingdom.

Compare what Antiochus did with the Temple versus what the Antichrist will do with the Temple in the following verse.

2 Thessalonians 2:4 – *He opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

Revelation 13:5-7 - *And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.*

Matthew 24:21 - *For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

Matthew 24:15-20 - *Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (Holy of holies) (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter, nor on the Sabbath day*

This is when the mark is given to all those who bow to the Antichrist. Those who don’t bow and worship the Antichrist and take his mark, will not be able to purchase food and will soon after be killed by decapitation, as we have already studied.

8. The temple.

How are sacrifices going to be stopped in the Temple when there isn't a Temple in existence today in Jerusalem? It's interesting, because where the Temple is supposed to be stands the Islamic Mosque. But Scripture states there will be a Temple for the Antichrist to desecrate, so we can believe that there will be a Temple constructed.

Daniel 9:27 – *He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation...*

Daniel 11:31 - *And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.*

You say, "How can a Temple of this size be constructed and operational for the beginning of the Tribulation?" Don't you think a group of truly committed zealot Jews, with the technology we have today, can build the Temple in a few months' time? There is no question about it, and it will be there in place and functioning when the event that Jesus talked about takes place, the abomination of desolation, which will trigger the Great Tribulation.