

Matthew Chapter 24-25 – The Olivet Discourse – Part 9  
Matthew 24:15-22 – Run...

## Review

Matthew 24:4-31 is about the seven-year tribulation (Jacob's trouble; Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week). Verses 4-14 are a general timeline for the entire seven years. Verse 15 steps back to the halfway point of the seven-year period and refers to the main prophetic sign of that time.

The abomination of desolation is fully explained in Daniel 9-12. This section informs the readers about what will happen in the last days between the prince that is to come (the king that does what he pleases, the false messiah, the man of lawlessness), unbelieving Israel (the many), and believing Israel (the Remnant, those who have insight)

- The false messiah will set up a treaty with Israel for seven years (one set of seven).
- The false messiah will convince the Nation of Israel to turn to godlessness. But there will be some who will recognize what is happening. They are referred to as those who have insight, the Remnant.
- The Remnant will try to convince the many (Nation of Israel) that this false messiah is evil, but they will be betrayed by the many and will be martyred.
- The false messiah will be confronted by ships from Kittim, and he will be enraged and violate the treaty halfway through the seven-year period.
- The false messiah will bring his people and invade Israel and Jerusalem; then they will set up the abomination of desolation.
- The abomination of desolation is signified by the false messiah who sets himself up as god; he is the epitome of an idolator, and he is an immoral person beyond all measure. He will cause all to honor and worship him and will kill those who oppose him. He will parcel out Israel and Jerusalem for a price.
- Some of the Remnant will fall into corruption, but the remaining part of the Remnant will either be martyred or flee to survive.
- This period of time will refine the Nation of Israel. The many will be destroyed, the fallen Remnant will be martyred, some of the Remnant will also be martyred, and there will be a portion of the Remnant that will survive until the Lord returns.
- The Remnant is told how long this period of great distress will be so they can endure until the end. Once they see the abomination of desolation, there will be 1290 days until the desolation is over. Then there will be another 45 days until the true Messiah inaugurates His kingdom.

## Matthew 24:15-22 – Run

When you see the abomination of desolation, flee to the mountains.

*Flee*

Φεύγω pheugō – escape, seek safety in flight, elude danger and seek safety.

What do *mountains* mean?

ὄρος – oros – some have tried to interpret this as reflecting the idea of mountains being a symbol of nations. However, this cannot be because all the nations will be against the Jews, especially the Remnant. So, we take this literally and can easily demonstrate this.

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Notice that this instruction is for *those who are in Judea*. This is not for all the Jews; this is particular to those who are in Israel at the time of the abomination of desolation.

What about the Remnant who are not in Judea? I believe they will either be preserved by Gentile believers (Matthew 25:31-40), or they will be martyred. Remember, this study does not cover the fate of Gentile believers during this time; this passage is about the Remnant.

The urgency of this instruction is captured in verses 17-18 – When you see the abomination of desolation, do not pack, do not hesitate, do not wait, go immediately to the mountains. There is also a strange warning about the difficulty of this fleeing (19-20).

Jesus takes the time here to emphasize to not hesitate to flee when they see the abomination of desolation. Do not take the time to collect a few personal belongings like your cloak in the field or a few items from your house for the journey.

He warns that the trip will be difficult. Navigation of mountainous terrain if pregnant or nursing a newborn is nearly impossible. Jesus does not say that it will be impossible; He said it will be difficult.

The difficulty will be compounded if this event occurs in winter. Winter in Israel is the rainy season which increases the hazards of travel in the Judean hills because the creeks and rivers provide obstacles that are not as complicated as in other seasons.

Why does the Sabbath create more obstacles? Some think that Jesus is speaking hyperbolically here; some think that the Sabbath is a time of fasting, so they will be running on an empty belly. Others indicate that the Sabbath imposes a travel restriction that is not in force on the other six days of the week which poses a conflict for observant Jews.

I think that the overall message should be emphasized. First, run; second, it will be difficult.

So why is the Jewish Remnant supposed to be aware of a special event that triggers their escape into the Judean wilderness, yet they are told to not go back for any supplies or resources? The reason is that those who flee will be supernaturally sustained by God.

Isaiah 41:5-20

Is there a specific location where Israel is to run? There is a mountainous region called Bozrah in Edom that has come under judgment but is perhaps the place of solitude for the Remnant.

Isaiah 34:6; Jeremiah 49:13-22; Isaiah 63:1-3; Micah 2:12-13 (in the fold - Bozrah).

With all of this understanding, we can now look at Revelation 12:1-17 and complete this picture with more vibrancy – pictures of the potential flight to Petra.

Why must they flee? Matthew 24:21-22