

# Matthew 24:15 → Daniel 11:31 (12:11)

## A Simple Connection for Students of Prophecy

by Anthony Buzzard

In the records of Jesus' teaching he only once used the name of Daniel, though he bases his teaching about the Kingdom of God on Daniel 2:44, 7:14, 18, 22, 27 and derives his favorite self-designation — Son of Man — from Daniel 7:13. When Jesus spoke of Daniel by name he was in the midst of a long discourse on the signs leading up to the end of the age and his coming to establish the future Kingdom on earth. The reference to Daniel is found in Matthew 24:15. Jesus had just declared that “this Gospel of the Kingdom” would be proclaimed worldwide and that this would be a definite indication that the end of the age was not far off (Matt. 24:14). Then he said:

**“When you therefore see the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains” (Matt. 24:15-16).**

### A Vital Connection Overlooked

Strangely, Jesus' simple instructions have often been overlooked. There ought to be little difficulty in tracing the Abomination of Desolation to Daniel's prophecies. If we look for the *precise expression* used by Jesus — the Abomination of Desolation — we find it in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. In Daniel 9:27 the *exact* expression “Abomination of Desolation” does not occur, but there is an obvious reference to the same event in which a wicked ruler “carries on desolation” on “the wing of abominations.” This latter passage is clearly linked with the event described in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. Jesus refers us to this extraordinary episode which signals the end of the age.

### The Final Evil Tyrant

Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 give us the precise term used by Jesus in Matthew 24:15 (cited above). He instructed us to find out what is meant by the Abomination of Desolation by going back to the description of it given by Daniel. In Daniel 11:31 we find ourselves in the midst of a detailed prediction (part of a long vision beginning in Dan. 11:2) about a **King of the North** (not therefore a Roman power) whose career begins in Daniel 11:21. He is introduced as a “contemptible person” who rises to power by devious means (v. 21), and sets his face “against the covenant” (v. 28). Then “at the appointed time” (i.e., “of the end,” v. 27) he is destined to return “and come into the South” (v. 29). In verse 31 “forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will **set up the Abomination of Desolation.**”

The chapter continues with a description of this same evil King of the North. Paul tells us that he is none other than the “man of sin,” the final antichristian figure whom Jesus will destroy at his arrival in glory (2 Thess. 2:8):

**“And the King [of the North] will do as he pleases; and he will exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods, and will prosper until the indignation is accomplished; for that which is determined will be done” (Dan. 11:36, quoted by Paul in 2 Thess. 2:3-4).**

We see from Paul's use of Daniel 11:36 that the final King of the North who sets up the Abomination of Desolation (Dan. 11:31) is the “antichrist” of 2 Thess. 2:3-4. This evil king “comes to his end” at the time of the resurrection (Dan. 11:45; 12:1-2). The resurrection of the dead occurs in close

connection with the terrible time of Tribulation. (*Jesus quotes Dan. 12:1 in Matt. 24:21.*)

Additional critically important information about the Abomination of Desolation is supplied by Daniel 12:11. In this verse an angel gives us a *precise time-frame* for the final activity of the King of the North: **“From the time the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up there will be 1290 days” (Dan. 12:11).**

It is important to note that this additional data is given in a postscript to the long vision which began in Daniel 11:2 and continued to 12:4. The whole vision is preceded by a long preparatory section in Daniel chapter 10. In Daniel 10:14 we are told specifically that the vision of 11:2-12:4 (with the additional chronological data which follows in Dan. 12:6-13) concerns “what will happen to your people *in the last days*, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.”

Daniel 12:11 (cited above) gives us a clear statement about the length of time between the appearance of the Abomination of Desolation and the end of the age when “all these things will be completed” (Dan. 12:7). From the moment that the Abomination of Desolation is set up until the end there will be some  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years. The fact is stated again in Daniel 12:7. It will be “a time, times and half a time” during which the holy people will be “shattered.” At the end of this period “all these things will be finished.”

### Summarizing Our Findings

1. Jesus instructs us in Matthew 24:15 to search out Daniel’s information about the Abomination of Desolation.

2. We find this Abomination of Desolation in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 (with another very similar reference in Dan. 9:27). It is to be placed in the temple and the sacrifices are to be stopped (Dan. 11:31; 12:11). Jesus speaks of the Abomination being placed in the Holy Place (Matt. 24:15). His information is derived from Daniel 11:31. Mark adds the interesting additional fact that the Abomination is a person

— standing where **HE** ought not (Mark 13:14, see New English Bible, etc.).

3. The postscript to the vision of Daniel 11 explains that 1290 days are to elapse from the appearance of the Abomination in the temple until the end of the age (Dan. 12:6, 7, 8, 11).

4. Jesus sees the placing of the Abomination as the trigger for the awful time of tribulation (Matt. 24:15, 21) after which he will return **immediately** (Matt. 24:29-31).

5. From Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 we learn that the King of the North, a ruler from Syria or Iraq (prefigured in history by Antiochus Epiphanes of the 2nd century BC) will interfere with a restored sacrificial system in the temple and persecute the saints for some  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years.

6. The time period for the final tribulation is fixed by the statement of the angel (under oath, Dan. 12:7): There will be 1290 days from the setting up of the Abomination of Desolation until the end. At that point all these things (including the tribulation and the resurrection, Dan. 12:1-2) will be completed (Dan. 12:7).

Both Jesus and Paul read Daniel 11:21ff as a prediction of an end-time tyrannical ruler who is destined to be destroyed at Jesus’ return. They do not consider the prophecy fulfilled in history since the revealing angel places the final ruler’s activity *in a period  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years from the end*. This ruler is to arise from the area *north* of Israel (in biblical terms this suggests Assyria, i.e., modern Iraq or Syria). He will persecute the people of God for a terrible period of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years. The time of the death of the final tyrant (Dan. 11:45) coincides with the tribulation and **the resurrection** (Dan. 12:1-2).

A challenge is presented by this information to systems of prophecy which confine the tribulation to AD 70. Following the arrival of Jesus in power, the glorious Kingdom of the Messiah will bless the earth with permanent peace and security.