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The Antichrist Before the Coming of Christ



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #359 ~

The coming of the Antichrist is before the coming of Jesus Christ. Now God’s word has much to say about the Antichrist, the most devilish man to ever live on earth. This wicked man hates all people, especially Christians and Jews. And he is called the Antichrist (1 Jn. 2:14) because he is against Christ and wants to take His place, to be in charge. He is also called the little horn (Dan. 7:13), a king (Dan. 8:23), the prince (Dan. 9:26), the Assyrian (Mic. 5:5), the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction (2 Th. 2:4), and the beast (Rev. 13:3-4).

God's word has much more to say about Christ, and His coming. And Matt. 24 contains critical information about what happens before His coming – and you need to know these things. There are *"birth pains"* affecting people in various parts of the world – deception, earthquakes, wars, famines, plagues, and hyperinflation (vss. 4-8). This describes the present condition of our world, this end-times' stage that leads to the end of this age and Christ's coming. These *"birth pains"* are to wake us up, to alert us to the fact that Christ will be coming soon. Then there is great tribulation, the world-wide hate, persecution, and martyrdom of Jews and Christians. Vss. 9-14

Today we are looking at Matt. 24:15-22, which focuses on the Jews. This is one of five side-by-side passages of Jews and Christians (Lk. 21:12-24, 2 Th. 2:1-10, Rev. 7:4-17, Rev. 12:13 – Rev. 13), evidence that God's end-times' work with the Jews coincides and is in conjunction with His end-times' work with the church. And what happens to the Jews, as described in vss. 15-22, leads to, precipitates the great, global persecution of Christians that is described in vss. 9-14.

Matt. 24:15 – *"Therefore when you see the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)…"* Jesus is referring to Daniel's prophecy in Dan. 9:24-27, and the prince, the person in vss. 26-27, is the Antichrist. It's at the beginning of what we call Dan. 70th week that this prince confirms a 7-year treaty with the Jews. Then there's the *"Abomination of Desolation"* and it occurs at the midpoint, at the 3½ year mark of this significant, prophecy-packed 70th week. That the Antichrist desolates the temple means that he has broken the treaty with the Jews, and that is very bad news for the Jews.

At this point in time, there is no temple in Jerusalem, and that it will be desolated tells us that a new one will be built in the near future, another sign that Christ is coming soon. I believe the holy place is referring to the most sacred part of the temple, the place of God's presence. Now an *"abomination"* is an object of disgust, of abhorrence and, Biblically, it means ungodly, idolatrous. And
this *"Abomination"* causes *"Desolation"*, the devastation, the desecration, the defilement of this holy place.

2 Thess. 2:3-4, speaking of the same event, says it this way, *"Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."* So the Antichrist is revealed and discerning Jews and Christians realize that this proud, godless person in the Jewish temple is this great enemy of God who had been prophesied by the prophets. They see that the Antichrist is strongly opposed to God, so much so that he openly defies God, and exalts himself above God, acting and speaking like he is God. *"He opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle."* Rev. 13:6

2 Thess. 2:1-4 also tells us that the Antichrist must be revealed and must desolate the temple before Christ's coming and the day of the Lord. That is, the coming and revealing of the Antichrist must occur before the coming and revealing of Christ. The phrase, *"With regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together with*

Him” (vs. 1), states that the rapture of the church occurs at Christ’s coming. Since the Antichrist is revealed before His coming, then he desolates the temple and is persecuting Jews and Christians before the rapture. Many Christians don’t want to hear this, but it’s true. And Paul emphasizes this truth by saying, *“let no one in any way deceive you.”*

Here are two more points from Matt. 24:15. We are informed that we will see the *“Abomination of Desolation.”* This doesn’t mean we will be in Jerusalem and be watching it happen but because of our present technology, we will see it on our TV’s, the internet, or our phones. And God wants us to see it for He wants to warn us that the Antichrist is alive and about to begin ruling this world, and about to begin persecuting and killing Jews, and then Christians.

Then there’s the phrase, *“Let the reader understand.”* The conclusion to vs. 15 exhorts us to not just read it but to understand it. Throughout history Christians have read this verse, but now that we are in the end-times, it’s imperative to understand the present-day relevance of these words. And it’s not just saying the Antichrist is alive but that he has been revealed for who he really is, and that he will be going on the warpath, he will be persecuting and murdering the elect (vss. 21-22). Do you see that God is alerting His people to the fact that life on earth will soon be extremely difficult? (Rev. 12:13, 13:3-10). The good news is that this tribulation won’t last long before Christ returns to rapture the church, which will happen within three years after the Antichrist is revealed.

Matt. 24:16-21 – *“Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains…”* What happens after the devil possesses this wicked man, this Antichrist? This devil, this God-hater, uses this evil man to do his devilish work. This godless Antichrist also hates God and His people, both Jews and Christians. Full of rage and wrath, he sends his armies after some of the Jews, those who are god-fearing and expecting the Messiah to come. But they are not yet true believers, ones who recognize that Jesus is the Messiah, and who repent of their sins and believe in Him.

Now most Jews are ungodly and deceived and stay in Israel, for they don’t realize that this sharply dressed, smooth talking, *“super”* man is the Antichrist. But he is a fake, the most evil man to ever live on earth. These Jews may even think he is the Messiah, but he can’t be, for he is a Gentile and not a true Jew, not a descendant of Abraham. And his desire is to usurp the throne of the rightful King, and be worshiped by the world. Matt. 4:8-9, Rev. 13:4-5

So God instructs the Jews to run for their lives, and to not go back home, for that would mean certain death at the hands of the enemy. Rev. 12:12-13 describes this time of terror: *“Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time. And when the devil saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman* (the Jews)*who gave birth to the male child* (Jesus)*.”*

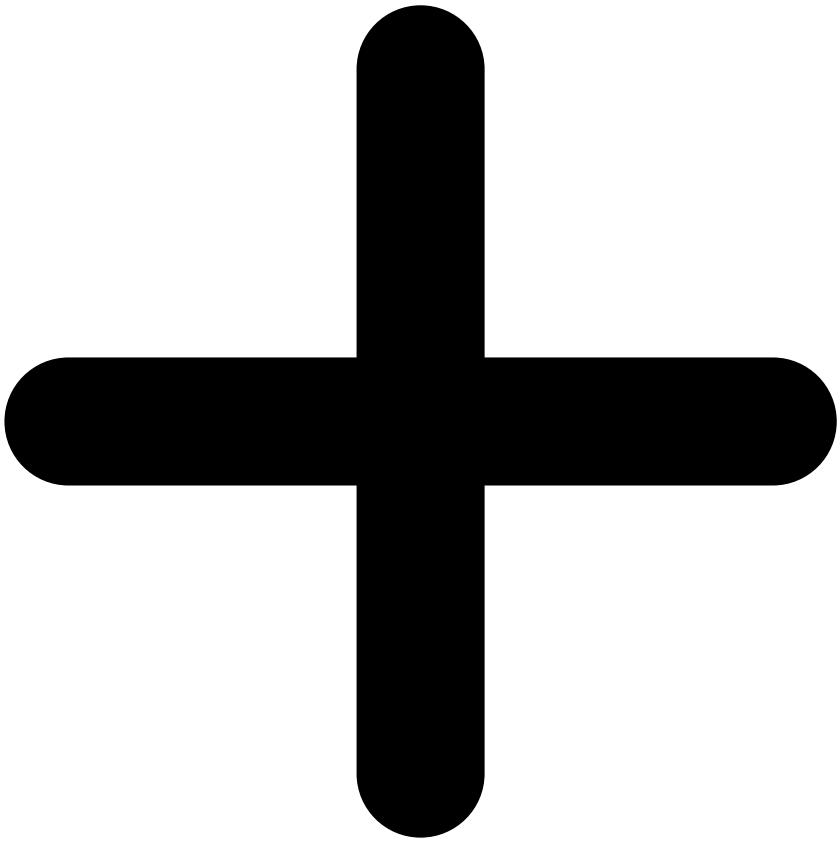
God tells us that the flight of the Jews will be extremely difficult,

especially for women and children, and some will die. But a good-sized remnant will escape and be protected from this great tribulation, a persecution *“such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will”* (Matt. 24:21, Zech. 13:7-9). And those who escape, those whom God physically saves from the Antichrist will be spiritually saved at the end of Daniel’s 70th week. Is. 45:17, Jer. 31:31-34, Dan. 9:24, Rom. 11:25-27

I must say it again – this persecution of Jews leads to the persecution of Christians. The great tribulation we learn about in Matt. 24:21-22 is followed by the great tribulation of Christians that we read about in Matt. 24:9. Rev. 12:17 tells us the exact same thing – *“The dragon was enraged with the woman* (the Jews), *and went to make war with the rest of her children* (the Christians),*who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”*

In summary, the coming of the Antichrist (vs. 15) and great tribulation (vss. 9, 21-22) take place before the coming of Christ (vss. 27: 30-31). Now Matt. 24:22 tells us that this great tribulation caused by the Antichrist is cut short, and Matt. 24:29-31 then states that Christ comes after this tribulation is cut short, at which time He raptures the church. *“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened… the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky… they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds… and He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”* Amen! Amen! Amen!

P.S. This Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the victory of God over sin, death, and hell. And it is the resurrection power of God that results in our justification, sanctification, and glorification. Here are three posts on this most important subject: *“Christ’s Resurrection Means the Best is Yet to Come”*, *“The Answer to Death is Christ’s Resurrection”*, and *“The Life-and-Death-Changing Results of the Resurrection.”*



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