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On the Wings of an Eagle

*And to the woman were given **two wings of a great eagle**, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. - Revelation 12:14*

Introduction

*And he shall **confirm the covenant with many for one week**: and in the midst of the **week**³ he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. - Daniel 9:27*

What do we mean by our title 'On the Wings of an Eagle'? The prophet Daniel described the final seven year period before the consummation of this age. That week starts with the antichrist making a covenant with Israel. After the first three and a half years of this period, during which time the antichrist provokes God's wrath, he will set up the Abomination of Desolation. Jesus commands those in Israel, when they see this sign, to **flee to the mountains**⁴, without stopping to take anything with them. Those who believe in Jesus will obey Him. At this point Jesus will bring them, *on the wings of an eagle*, into the wilderness on the east side of Israel. He will provide for them there during the last three and a half years of this age, during which time He will also pour out His wrath on the world for all their abominations. This time of tribulation will culminate with the Battle of Armageddon.

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The Great Tribulation

The First Three and a Half Years

A seven year time period for The Great Tribulation is mentioned only once in the Bible (Daniel 9:27); most other references speak of two [3.5 year time periods](#)⁸. The Great Tribulation starts with the Antichrist making a seven year [covenant](#)¹ with Israel. While Daniel is not specific in this passage, the covenant may include:

[Protection](#)⁶ from Israel's neighbors. In light of all the terrorism in Israel, this alone would be a strong inducement to enter into this covenant.

Rebuilding of the Temple and allowing daily sacrifices. Since Daniel 9:27 says *in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease*, we can imply that these sacrifices are allowed at the beginning of the [seven years](#)³.

[Exemption](#)⁵ from taking the Mark of the Beast. When Jesus comes to fight for Jerusalem it does not seem likely that those in Israel will have taken the Mark. Once all those who have not taken the mark have moved to Israel, the antichrist may [break his covenant](#)⁰ with them. This may partly explain the antichrist's rage at this time.

Since the whole world will embrace this man, we would do well to be able to [recognize him](#)². Daniel and John mention at least three of his characteristics:

1. He will recover from a deadly wound.

*And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and **his deadly wound was healed**: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? - Revelation 13:3-4*

2. He will have a big mouth.

*And **he shall speak great words against the most High**, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. - Daniel 7:25*

AND

*And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. Rev 13:6 And **he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God**, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. - Revelation 13:5*

3. He will force everyone to worship his image.

*And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should **make an image to the beast**, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both*

...speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. - Revelation 13:14-15

AND

*And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, **to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads**: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. - Revelation 13:16-17*

The Abomination of Desolation

[The Abomination of Desolation⁷](#) will mark the middle of The Great Tribulation. As mentioned in the previous section, the antichrist has been provoking God for 3.5 years. The Abomination of Desolation will be his magnum opus. In his second letter to the Thessalonians, Paul speaks of the antichrist occupying the Temple of God:

*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that **he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God**. - 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4*

The antichrist occupying the Temple of God fulfills a longtime craving of Satan. Isaiah said,

*For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: **I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north**: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will be like the most High**. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms. - Isaiah 14:13-16*

As if his occupation of the Temple of God is not bad enough, the antichrist will then place an abomination in the Temple. What is the Abomination of Desolation? Its first mention in the New Testament is by Jesus.

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:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains. - Matthew 24:15-16

AND

But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, let (him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains. - Mark 13:14

Since Jesus defers to Daniel for the description of the Abomination, it seems that He wishes us to personally study the Book of Daniel. Daniel [repeatedly spoke of the Abomination⁹](#). In one passage he said,

*And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place **the abomination that maketh desolate**. - Daniel 11:31*

In brief, the antichrist, probably possessed by Satan, will sit in the Temple of God and demand worship. He will break his covenant with Israel, and will stop the daily sacrifices that are being offered. Then, in utter contempt for God, he will set up his Abomination of Desolation. The Book of Revelation mentions an *Image of the Beast* [seven times](#)¹⁰. The worst punishment mentioned in the Bible is reserved for those who worship the Image of the Beast.

*And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.** - Revelation 14:9-11*

Every verse in Revelation that speaks of the Mark of the Beast also mentions the Image of Beast. Though few sermons are preached on the topic, the worshiping of an image is forbidden by the second commandment. God repeatedly warns Israel, throughout the book of Deuteronomy, not to fall into the sin of idolatry. When Israel worshiped the golden calf (Exodus 32), God gave Moses a cryptic remark.

*Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: **nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.** And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made. - Exodus 32:34-35*

My opinion is that the Abomination of Desolation is the antichrist setting up his Image in the Temple. The moment those in Israel hear of this transgression, they are to **drop everything** and flee into the mountains.

*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:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. **Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.** - Matthew 24:15-18*

The Abomination of Desolation is a test of allegiance to the Lord. Pharaoh thrust the children of Israel out of Egypt without giving them time to bake bread, but when the children of Israel who believe in Jesus see the abomination of desolation, they will not even take bread. This flight will seem crazy to the world, but the apostle Luke wrote,

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. - Luke 17:33

The Last Three and a Half Years

Referring to the time immediately after the Abomination of Desolation, Jesus said:

*For **then shall be great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. - Matthew 24:21-22*

During the previous 3.5 years, the antichrist will have persecuted the saints. During the last 3.5, years [God will avenge](#)¹² Himself on behalf of His saints. The Book of Revelation mentions seven trumpet plagues and seven vials of wrath. I believe that these are the same set of plagues. If we examine them closely, starting with the last first, we see:

The seventh trumpet and vial both speak of the end of the age, or the [Lord's second coming](#)¹¹:

*And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, **It is done**. - Revelation 16:17*

AND

*But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound [his trumpet], **the mystery of God should be finished**, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. - Revelation 10:7*

The sixth trumpet and vial both affect the Euphrates River in preparation for the Battle of Armageddon:

*Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great **river Euphrates**. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.
- Revelation 9:14-15*

AND

*And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great **river Euphrates**; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.
- Revelation 16:12*

The fifth trumpet and vial are both directed specifically toward those who worship the Beast:

*And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the **seat of the beast**; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.
- Revelation 16:10-11*

AND

*And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: [...] And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but **only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads**. And to them it was given that they should not*

kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. Revelation 9:1-6

The fourth trumpet and vial are both plagues on the sun:

*And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon **the sun**; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. - Revelation 16:8*

AND

*And the fourth angel sounded, and **the third part of the sun was smitten**, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. - Revelation 8:12*

The second and third trumpets and vials are plagues on the waters. While there are differences in their descriptions, these may be better understood when we realize that John may have been looking down from heaven on the trumpet plagues, while he saw the vision of the vials from earth.

Second vial and trumpet:

*And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the **blood of a dead man**: and every living soul died in the sea. - Revelation 16:3*

AND

*And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of **the sea became blood**; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. - Revelation 8:-9*

Third vial and trumpet:

*And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and **they became blood**. - Revelation 16:4*

AND

*And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and **many men died of the waters**, because they were made bitter. - Revelation 8:10-11*

The descriptions first trumpet and vial are different enough that, while I believe they are related, I do not understand their connection (this is why I compare the trumpets and vials in reverse order).

The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. - Revelation 8:7

AND

Rev And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image. - Revelation 16:2

These plagues are brought about by Two Witnesses, whose ministry lasts 3.5 years. These are spoken of in Revelation 11.

*And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and **they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days** [3.5 years], clothed in sackcloth. - Revelation 11:3*

AND

*These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood [plagues 2 and 3], and to **smite the earth with all plagues**, as often as they will. - Revelation 11:6*

(My study on [The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11](#) goes more in depth, for those who are interested.)

The Battle of Armageddon

In spite of the testimony of the Two Witnesses and the vials of wrath poured out on the earth, people will not [repent](#)¹³.

*And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and **they repented not to give him glory**.
- Revelation 16:8-9*

Rather, the world will come up to Jerusalem to fight against God. Unfortunately for the next few days in Jerusalem, Israel will have lost the battle. Zechariah prophesies:

*For I will gather **all nations against Jerusalem** to battle; and **the city shall be taken**, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. - Zechariah 14:2*

Isaiah and Joel also describes this terrible day.

*And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; **when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it**. From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night: and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.
- Isaiah 28:18-19*

AND

Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth

*before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. **Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness.** They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. **They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.** - Joel 2:1-9*

The Book of Revelation gives the same bad report:

*And when they [the two witnesses] shall have finished their testimony, **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.** And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. - Revelation 11:7-10*

The world will not understand that there is a living God; rather, it will believe that these Two Witnesses have harnessed some cosmic power. They think that, by killing the Witnesses, they will stay the plagues. Many in Israel that did not believe Jesus earlier, will now come to their senses.

*Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise; Because of the voice of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked: for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me. My heart is sore pained within me: and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and horror hath overwhelmed me. And I said, **Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest. Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go about it upon the walls thereof: mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets.** - Psalms 55:2-11*

It is not His [imminent return](#)¹⁷, but the antichrist's victory in the Battle of Armageddon that caused Jesus to say,

*Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
- Matthew 24:44*

On the Wings of an Eagle

*And to the woman were given **two wings of a great eagle**, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, **where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time**, from the face of the serpent. - Revelation 12:14*



God Carries His People

Those in Israel who believed in Jesus at the time of the Abomination will escape this time of tribulation, as well as the heavy losses at the beginning of the Battle of Armageddon. The Lord first referred to upholding His people on the wings of an eagle when He carried the children of Israel out of Egypt.

*Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how **I bore you on eagles' wings**, and brought you unto myself. - Exodus 19:4*

At the beginning, the start of their flight out of Israel will be very difficult. Therefore Jesus said:

And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day. - Mat 24:19 -20

But God will provide for those who flee into the mountains at His command, just as He provided for Israel in the wilderness. In Revelation 12:14, John concurs: *she is nourished* for three and a half years. Other passages also refer to this event:

*But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; **they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.***
- Isaiah 40:31

AND

The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. - Habakkuk 3:19a

The prophet Habakkuk did not speak of wings, but if you read this passage in context, he appears to be confirming what Isaiah said. Once in the wilderness, the Lord will protect and shelter his people during this time of trouble, of which both Matthew and Mark both say:

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 24:21

AND

For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. - Mark 13:19

When David wrote the Psalms, was he only narrating his own experiences, or was he also prophesying about the flight of God's people into the wilderness at the end of the age?

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock - Psalm 27:5

AND

Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for a house of defense to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. I have hated them that regard lying vanities: but I trust in the LORD. I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities. - Psalm 31:2-7

AND

*From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle forever: **I will trust in the covert of thy wings.***
Selah. - Psalm 61:2-4

AND

He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. [...] He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.
- Psalm 62:2, 6-7

The prophet Nahum uses the same words in prophesying of the last days.

The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies. What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time. - Nahum 1:7-9

God Hides His People

*Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.** For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up. - Zephaniah 2:3-4*

AND

*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: **hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.** For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. - Isaiah:26:20-21*

AND

*They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, **and consulted against thy hidden ones.***
- Psalm 83:3

God Dwells With His People

God used a pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, and to protect them from the Egyptian army.

And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.
- Exodus 13:21-22

AND

*And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And **it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel;** and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. - Exodus 14:19-20*

It's not unreasonable to assume that, in the last days, God will protect those who flee from Israel in the same way. In fact, Joel may be referring to this in the following verse.

And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. - Joel 2:30

Isaiah also speaks of [Mount Zion](#)¹⁹ and a pillar of protection.

*And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a **cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night**: for upon all the glory shall be a defense. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. - Isaiah 4:5-6*

I mentioned earlier that, during this time, there will be a number of plagues poured out on the world. The Book of Revelation says:

*And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. **And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.** - Revelation 16:8-9*

It's just speculation, but God may use a cloud to shield His people from the scorching sun at this time.

*For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, **a shadow from the heat**, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. - Isaiah 25:4-5*

AND

*Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. **The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.** - Psalm 121:4-6*

Another plague will be a drought. During the last three and a half years of this age there will be no rain. Joel and Revelation both speak of this.

*Alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. **The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.** - Joel 1:15-20*

AND

*And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. [...] **These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy:** and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. - Revelation 11:3, 6*

However, while the world will be in turmoil, Jeremiah speaks of God's care for those who trust in Him.

*Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, **and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.** - Jeremiah 17:7-8*

Both Isaiah and David continue this thought.

*Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert. The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because **I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen.** - Isaiah 43:18-20*

AND

*Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; **To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.** Our soul waiteth for the LORD: he is our help and our shield. - Psalm 33:18-20*

AND

*The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: **and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied.** But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. - Psalm 37:18-20*

Where Will They Flee?

If you look at Israel on a map, you will see that Israel is small, with limited options. The Mediterranean Sea lies to the west, so to escape from Israel on foot, a person would have to head east. In Biblical times the countries to the east of Israel were Edom, Moab & Ammon. Today this region is Jordan. What is the



Biblical evidence that this is where the saints will be sheltered by God? In chapter 11, Daniel gives us a hint as he describes the invasion of Israel at the end of this age.

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. - Daniel 11:41

Daniel does not say that this is where the saints will flee to, but it is interesting that this area just east of Israel will escape the antichrist's rage. Isaiah and Micah also seem to touch on the topic.

*Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; betray not him that wandereth. **Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler:** for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.
- Isaiah 16:3-4*

AND

*Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel [just west of the dead sea]: **let them feed in Bashan [Edom] and Gilead [A mountainous region east of Jordan], as in the days of old.** - Micah 7:14*

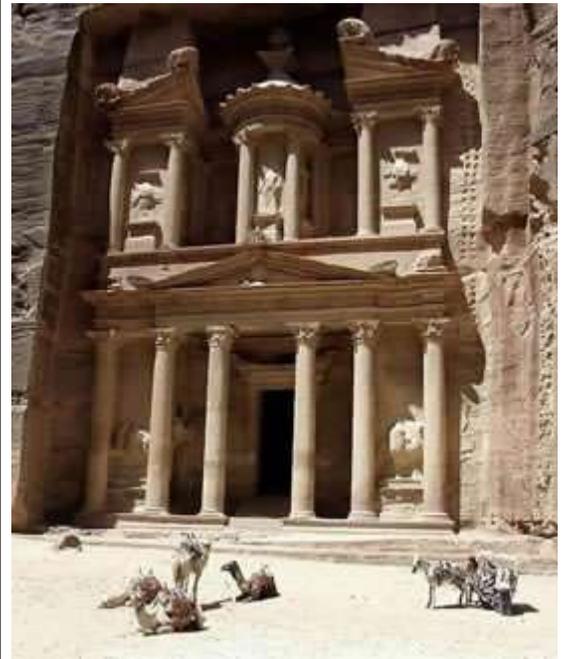
It is also interesting to note that, when Jesus returns at His second coming, He will come from the direction of Edom, where He has taken care of His saints for the last three and a half years. He will not walk from the mountains towards Armageddon as a man, of course. The Scriptures are clear on this point. He will appear at Armageddon as God, in great glory, and in the presence of all his angels and saints.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah [in Edom] this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine vat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. - Isaiah 63:1-4

AND

God came from Teman, [in Edom] and the Holy One from [mount Paran](#)²¹. Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise.

Petra - an ancient city carved out of the mountains in Edom.



And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. - Habakkuk 3:3-7

What Happens to The Jews Who Remain Behind?

Then Shall be Great Tribulation

*Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before **the day of the LORD's anger** come upon you. - Zephaniah 2:1-2*

After the first half of the Great Tribulation (during which time the Antichrist will have persecuted the saints) God will avenge His people. Matthew and Mark both imply that the real terror of the Great Tribulation will begin after the Abomination of Desolation. Those who have disobeyed Jesus, and refused to flee when they saw the Abomination of Desolation, will suffer the consequences.

*Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. [...] **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 24:16, 21*

AND

*But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, let (him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains. [...] **For in those days shall be affliction**, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. - Mark 13:14, 19*

This time of tribulation will culminate with the Battle of Armageddon. As already mentioned, for a short time it will appear that Israel has lost the war.

*For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and **the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity**, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. - Zechariah 14:2*

Those who have remained will suffer the devastation of this battle. After *great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time*, and their utter defeat at the Battle of Armageddon, many of the Jews who did not recognize their Messiah at the time of the Abomination of Desolation will turn back to their Messiah. When that happens, the Lord will go up and fight for Israel. Zechariah said,

In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the

*angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, that **I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.** And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and **they shall look upon me whom they have pierced,** and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. - Zechariah 12:8-10*

One Shall be Taken, and the Other Left

I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. - Luke 17:34-37

Some Christians mistakenly believe that this passage teaches a pretribulation rapture. However, Jesus' reply to the disciples' question, *Where Lord?* included not only where they would be taken, but who would be taken. According to the interpretation of those who teach the pretribulation rapture, those taken are the [eagles](#)¹⁴. Since eagles do not usually go in quest of carrion, it's probably that this word may actually be better translated 'vultures.' Is it likely that God would refer to His church as vultures?

A more careful look at this passage will show that Jesus is describing the saints who, in obedience, head for the mountains. You may wish to get your Bible and read all of Luke 17:20-37 before we start.

*And when [Jesus] was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.
- Luke 17:20*

Skipping ahead to verse 28, Jesus compares these days to the flight of Lot.

*Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. **Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.** - Luke 17:28-30*

***In that day,** he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. **Remember Lot's wife.** Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. - Luke 17:31-33*

Now we look at the two verses in question:

***I tell you, in that night** there shall be two men in one bed; the **one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body [or carcass] is, thither will the eagles [or vultures] be gathered together. - Luke 17:34-37*

This last section of Scripture (vs. 34-37) begins with *in that night*, which refers to the previous verses (vs. 31-33) that command us to drop everything and flee . On the night of the Abomination of Desolation, some will be taken and others will be left.

In order to confirm this, we need to look at the definitions of the words *taken* and *left*. Let's look at these words in the original Greek:

Taken¹⁵: *par-al-am-ban'-o* - To receive near, that is, associate with oneself

Left¹⁵: *af-ee'-ay-mee* - To send forth, in various applications

If you look at other passages in the New Testament, you will see that *to receive near* is an accurate definition of the word *taken*, and *to send fourth* is an accurate definition of the word *left*.

If we apply these definitions to the passage in Luke, we we can see that those who obey and flee to the hills will be taken (received near), and those who disobey will be left (sent forth). The eagles being gathered to the body is not referring to the pretribulation rapture; it is referring to the left behind (sent forth) being gathered to the antichrist. "*Wheresoever the body [carcass] is, thither will the eagles [vultures] be gathered together.*"

Passages in the Old Testament to challenge Israel to Obey the Lord

For the LORD shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, [1 Chronicles 14:8-17] that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act. Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth. - Isaiah 28:21-22

AND

Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord GOD of hosts. For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot. - Jeremiah 2:19-20

AND

Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. - Jeremiah 7:27

AND

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. - Jeremiah 17:7-8

Didn't the "Abomination of Desolation" Happen in 70AD?

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. - Luke 21:20-21

Many people, especially amillennialists, teach that the events described in this study took place in 70 AD, when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem. They first surrounded Jerusalem in 69 AD, and then retreated for a short season, only to return the next year. The historian [Josephus²⁰](#), hinted that the Christians who were in Jerusalem thought that the prophecies of Luke were being fulfilled, and fled during the Romans' brief absence. Because of their obedience, they avoided drinking from the cup of God's wrath when Jerusalem was completely destroyed.

The assumption that amillennialists make is that the event mentioned in Luke 21 is the same event that is mentioned in Matthew 24. However, a comparison of these two passages will show that Jesus spoke of two different events: the Roman invasion in Luke, and end of the world in Matthew. Let's look at some of the differences:

The End of the World

Tell us, when shall these things [the destruction of the temple] be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? - Matthew 24:3

Master, but when shall these things [the destruction of the temple] be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass? - Luke 21:7

☺ Matthew: the disciples asked the end of the world.

☹ Luke: the disciples did not ask about the end of the world.

In Matthew, Jesus answered questions about the end of the age; in Luke, Jesus warned the saints about the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in 70 AD.

The Gospel is Preached to all Nations

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. - Matthew 24:14

☺ Matthew: Jesus said the Gospel would be preached to all nations.

☹ Luke: There is no mention of this prophesy.

It makes sense that this verse is missing from Luke. It was not necessary for the gospel to be preached to all the nations before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.

The Abomination of Desolation

*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:) - Matthew 24:15*

*And when ye shall see **Jerusalem compassed with armies**, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. - Luke 21:20*

☺ Matthew: Jesus said to look for the *abomination of desolation*.

☹ Luke: Jesus said to look for *Jerusalem compassed with armies*.

In 69 AD, Vespasian surrounded Jerusalem. But he left off his siege to become the emperor of Rome. This was the Jews' opportunity to escape. In 70 AD Vespasian sent his son Titus back to Jerusalem to finish the job. By the time the Romans finally entered the city and defiled the temple, it was too late to escape, and Jews inside the walls came to a terrible end. It would have been too late for those waiting to see the Abomination of Desolation to escape. Therefore, the advice Jesus gave in Matthew's account was not for 70 AD.

Do Not Take Anything out of the House

Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. - Matthew 24:17-18

☺ Matthew: Jesus commands to leave our personal belongings behind.

☹ Luke: There is no mention Jesus' warning not to take personal belongings.

It will be essential for those in Israel, at the end of the age, to obey this command. However, this was not so in 70 AD. Those in Jerusalem had months to escape out of Israel. It was wise not to dawdle, but it would have made sense to take along a wallet and some provisions for the way. It appears that Jesus did not give the command to *not come down to take anything out of his house* for the exodus in 70 AD.

They Shall be Led Away Captive Into all Nations

*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, **and shall be led away captive into all nations**: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. - Luke 21:24*

☹ Matthew: There is no mention of being led captive.

☺ Luke: Jesus warns that those who remain in Jerusalem will be lead away captive.

History has sadly documented that the prophecy in Luke was accurately fulfilled. After the Abomination of Desolation there will be the time of the Great Tribulation, but the Jews will not be led away captive into other nations.

While these two accounts refer to separate events, they also have a lot of similarities. In fact, because Luke's account goes on to address the end of the age it is still essential for us to study today.

Woe Unto Them That are With Child ...

And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
- Matthew 24:19

Should we bring children into an uncertain world? This question has been discussed by Christians for years. Jesus warned about having children *in those days*, so many wonder if it is okay to have children now. However, Jesus' warning was for the time of the Abomination of Desolation. To heed this warning, Christians should stop having children at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. If we do this, we will avoid being with child or having nursing babies when the Abomination happens.

I propose that before the Tribulation, unless God convicts you otherwise, Christians should continue to [raise up](#) Godly children.

Lo, children are a heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.
- Psalms 127:3

What Happens to the Christians Who Are Not in Israel?

What happens to the Christians who are not in Israel at the time of the Abomination? Those who believe in a pretribulation rapture believe that we will be taken out of the world, so we do not have to worry. If you read the scriptures used to support the pretribulation rapture in context, you may be surprised to find how poorly it is documented. If you are open to looking at the errors in eleven of their most common proofs, go to [Does the Bible Teach a Pretribulation Rapture?](#)

So, what about those Christians? It appears the antichrist will take many Christians by surprise. These people will be completely unprepared for the Great Tribulation.

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.- Luke 21:34-36

If the antichrist appears tomorrow, are you prepared to be a restrainer of evil? If there is no pretribulation rapture, will your church remain faithful, even when it can no longer [buy or sell](#)?¹⁶ Though their expectations of being taken will be dashed, many Christians will continue to be faithful to Jesus. But not all will. Both Daniel and Jesus said.

And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.
- Daniel 11:35

AND

And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. - Matthew 24:12-13

Church history has been full of troublous times, and those troubles will come again. Daniel spoke this.

*And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. **I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;** Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. - Daniel 7:20-22*

The antichrist will command us to worship the image of the beast and to receive his [Mark](#). By refusing to submit to him, we will demonstrate our belief in God, and thereby glorify Him. Yet, as Daniel said:

*And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: **yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.** - Daniel 11:31-33*

Conclusion:

Those of us who are not in Israel at the time of the Abomination of Desolation should cling to these three promises:

*Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: **it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.***
- Zephaniah 2:3

AND

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but **God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;** but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. - 1 Corinthians 10:13*

AND

*For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then **he shall reward every man according to his works.** - Matthew 16:27*

So, in answer to the question of what happens to the saints who are not in Israel:

*And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of [the]¹⁸ great tribulation,** and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne*

*of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: **and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.** - Revelation 7:13-17*

Written by [Jeff Barnes](#).

My Prayer:

*Dear Lord,
Where I interpreted scripture rightly, reveal it to my readers.
Where I interpreted any scripture wrongly, reveal that to my readers also.*

Footnotes:

- [0] *And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. - Isaiah 28:18*
- [1] *Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves. - Isaiah 28:15*
- [2] *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.** - Matthew 24:24*
- [3] "In Hebrew, 'week' and 'seven' are the same words. Israel counted years in increments of seven, rather than in decades. This reference to 'a week' is speaking of a seven year time period, as the rest of this passage implies.
- [4] *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:) Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. - Matthew 24:15-16'*
- [5] As a side note, when the Christians were martyred for not burning incense to Ceazer, the Jews who paid a special tax were exempted from this requirement.
- [6] *For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. - 1st Thessalonians 5:3*
- [7] *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in **the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of **abominations** he shall make it **desolate**, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. - Daniel 9:27*
- [8] Verses that speak of 3.5 years: Daniel 7:25; 12:7 and Revelation 11:2-3; 12:14; 13:5
- [9] The Abomination of Desolation: Daniel 8:11-14; 9:27; 11:31 & 12:11

- [10] Other references to the Image of the Beast: Revelation 13:14-15; 14:9 & 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4
- [11] *Hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: **For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?** - Revelation 6:16b-17*
- [12] *Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people. - Deuteronomy 32:43*
- [13] *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet **repented not** of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: **Neither repented** they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts. - Revelation 9:20-21*
- [14] Since eagles do not usually go in quest of carrion, this may actually be a reference to vultures.
- [15] *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*
- [16] *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that **no man might buy or sell**, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. - Revelation 13:16-17*
- [17] Jesus did not teach that He would return at any moment. Not only did He tell Peter that he would die an old man (John 21:18-19), He also used many parables to teach that He would delay His second coming (Matthew 25:5, Matthew 25:19, Mark 13:34, Luke 12:45).
- [18] In the original Greek, the definite article "the" is present in this passage
- [19] The Bible applies the term "Mount Zion" to the Temple Mount or the City of David. The term "Zion" can refer to the entire city of Jerusalem or to the Land of Israel.
- [20] *The Wars of the Jews or History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*
by Flavius Josephus, Book 2 Chapter 1.
- [21] The wilderness of Paran is traditionally located on the Sinai Peninsula. However, there is archeological evidence to support that Biblical references to Mt. Paran may actually be referring to the wilderness to the south-east of Israel.

Beth-Haran Ministries

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