

Summary of the Sermon

In this sermon we tackled the complex topic of the abomination of desolation mentioned in Mark 13:14.

- "Abomination of desolation," likely refers to an idol brought into the temple that causes spiritual desolation.
- Jesus explicitly connects His teaching to Daniel's prophecies
 - Daniel 8:13 (ESV) — 13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?"
 - Daniel 9:26–27 (ESV) — 26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. 27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."
 - Daniel 11:31 (ESV) — 31 Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.
 - Daniel 12:11 (ESV) — 11 And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.
 - 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4 (ESV) — 3 Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.

The arguments of preterist and classic dispensational interpretations fall short of fully fulfilling the Biblical descriptions, particularly when considering the harmonisation of various passages. A better interpretation and harmonisation of various Biblical passages, including Daniel, the Gospels, 2 Thessalonians, and Revelation is to take a "progressive dispensational interpretation" that sees an "already but not yet" perspective (sample, taster, trailer) that recognises partial fulfillments in history while anticipating a complete future fulfilment.

Proposing that the abomination of desolation is a future event involves:

1. A person (the Antichrist) proclaiming himself as God in a rebuilt temple.
2. The cessation of sacrifices and initiation of a great tribulation period.
3. A direct connection to Christ's second coming.

Small Group Study Questions:

Opening Prayer:

- Read through the passage and highlight the main themes. Spend 10-15 minutes praying about those themes.

General Observation:

- What stood out to you most from the sermon's discussion of the abomination of desolation?

Understanding the Message:

- In the sermon, we discussed various views on the abomination of desolation. What are the main differences between the preterist and futurist interpretations?
- What is the connection between Daniel's prophecies and Jesus' words in Mark 13?
- What role does 2 Thessalonians 2 play in understanding the abomination of desolation?

Personal Application:

- How does studying complex prophecies like this impact your faith? Does it strengthen it, challenge it, or both?

- In the sermon we discussed the struggle of loving the world and yielding to pressure. Which of these do you find more challenging in your own life?
- How can we maintain a balanced approach to studying prophecy without becoming obsessed or dismissive?

Action Steps:

- How can you be bolder in sharing your faith, even in the face of potential social pressure or persecution?