

Mark 13:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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 Judaea flee to the mountains:

Analysis

When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not—the Greek *bdelygma tēs erēmōseōs* (βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως) quotes Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11. Daniel prophesied pagan desecration of temple. Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled this typologically (167 BC, sacrificing pigs on altar, erecting Zeus statue). Jesus prophesied another fulfillment: **standing where it ought not** (Greek *hestēkota hopou ou dei, ἑστηκότα ὅπου οὐ δεῖ*)—the holy place.

This likely refers to AD 70 when Roman standards (bearing emperor's image, idolatrous) entered temple, or to events preceding (AD 66-70 Zealot atrocities in temple). Some interpret futuristically—Antichrist entering rebuilt temple (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). **(Let him that readeth understand)**—parenthetical aside urging interpretive discernment. **Then let them that be in Judaea flee to the mountains**—urgent escape commanded. Church tradition says Jerusalem Christians fled to Pella (Transjordan) before Rome destroyed city, heeding Jesus' warning.

Historical Context

Daniel's prophecy had initial fulfillment under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167 BC), who desecrated temple, banned Judaism, triggered Maccabean revolt. Jesus prophesied another fulfillment. AD 70, Roman legions under Titus besieged Jerusalem. Josephus records zealots committed atrocities within temple—murder, defilement. When Romans breached city, legionary standards entered temple precincts—idolatrous images in holy place. Church historian Eusebius (4th century) recorded that Jerusalem Christians, remembering Jesus' words, fled to Pella before siege tightened, escaping destruction. Modern futurist eschatology anticipates final fulfillment—Antichrist defiling rebuilt temple during tribulation. Jesus' prophecy thus has near (AD 70) and possibly far (future) fulfillments, typical of prophetic perspective.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's 'abomination of desolation' having multiple fulfillments (167 BC, AD 70, possibly future) illustrate prophetic texts' complexity?
2. What does the parenthetical '(let him that readeth understand)' teach about interpreting prophecy—requiring discernment, application, obedience?
3. How did early Christians' obedience to Jesus' command to 'flee' demonstrate that understanding prophecy should produce action, not just speculation?

Interlinear Text

Ὅταν	δὲ	ἴδητε	τὸ	βδέλυγμα	τῆς	ἐρημώσεως	τὸ
when	But	ye shall see	G3588	the abomination	G3588	of desolation	G3588
G3752	G1161	G1492		G946		G2050	
ῥηθὲν	ὑπὸ	Δανιήλ	τοῦ	προφήτου,	ἐστός	ὅπου	οὐ
spoken	of by	Daniel	G3588	the prophet	standing	where	not
G4483	G5259	G1158		G4396	G2476	G3699	G3756
δεῖ	ὁ	ἀναγινώσκων	νοεῖτω	τότε	οἱ	ἐν	τῇ
it ought	G3588	(let him that readeth	understand	then	G3588	that be in	G3588
G1163		G314	G3539	G5119		G1722	
Ἰουδαία	φευγέτωσαν	εἰς	τὰ	ὄρη			
Judaea	flee	to	G3588	the mountains			
G2449	G5343	G1519		G3735			

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 9:27 (Parallel theme): 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 12:11 (Parallel theme): And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Daniel 11:31 (Parallel theme): 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.

Revelation 1:3 (Prophecy): Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Revelation 13:18 (Parallel theme): Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

1 Corinthians 14:20 (Parallel theme): Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

Ezekiel 44:9 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.

Lamentations 1:10 (Parallel theme): The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things: for she hath seen that the heathen entered into her sanctuary, whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation.

Daniel 8:13 (Parallel theme): Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

Matthew 13:51 (Parallel theme): Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.