ABOMINATION ASSOCIATED WITH DESOLATION... Only at the *es qes* ... time of the end! It may be one of the Bible's most frightening words! It describes how God ***feels*** about a behavior or a worship practice that He despises. When He calls something an ***"abomination,"*** you know He has raised His voice.

Solomon lists seven things that the Lord hates... *"Yea, seven are abomination[s] to him" (Proverbs 6:16-19). "Lying lips"* are an abomination to the Lord *(Proverbs 12:22).* He also hates heathen idols... they are an abomination *(Deuteronomy 12:29-32).* That is an especially sensitive issue with our sovereign God!

There are many deep religious issues that God addresses with this word. Even ***"new moons,"*** and church gatherings are abominations if the worship experience is filled with ***vain oblations*** or ***liturgical mysteries*** *(Isaiah 1:13).* Jeremiah noted that building edifices to worship Baal in *"high places"* and causing children to walk through fire to the god Molech (Jeremiah 32:35) was an abomination.

Molech was a heathen deity of the Ammonites. Babies were placed into the red hot hands of Moloch's statute and sacrificed. Baal had been adopted from the Phonecians. It morphed into many forms in different cultures. But everywhere its place of honor was on a hill or an elevated eminence so the *heavens* could be seen and worshiped, *especially the sun.* Many ancient records even equate Baal worship with sun worship.

An abomination always represents something God ***detests***. Frequently the issue relates to a ***substitute*** of Himself or something that tarnishes His character. The matters He abhors also include *changing what He has irrevocably instituted*. In the Bible, the word abomination is not only used in a cultural sense, it is used in a prophetic and spiritual sense.

Therefore, the common misconception that the word abomination can be used as a substitute for the word hatred is wrong. An abomination speaks to the conflicts between men's souls. Christians should use every opportunity to communicate in ways that will cause others to listen to the message that God has placed on our hearts.

Jesus Points Out *"the"* Abomination. The pivotal time Jesus addressed a detestable matter was in His depiction regarding the ***"end of time."*** The disciples had inquired what signs would tell them that the end of the world was about to arrive and what clue would reveal that His second arrival was imminent. They also asked the ***"when"*** question.

He unfolded crucial information in Matthew 24:15 *(cf. Mark 13:14)* that should rivet every Christian's attention. Those verses come right in the middle of other timing clues that tell ***"when"*** the end of time will occur. *"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.

Jesus revealed in literal and typological language that there would be two ends of time.

1. When ***physical*** Jerusalem would fall.

2. When ***spiritual*** Babylon would fall.

Each of those, He said, would be preceded by an ***"abomination"*** (*bdelugma*); the latter *had already been detailed* by Daniel. That tie is found in chapters 8–12 of his book. Then Jesus personified this abomination by saying, ***"It stands where it shouldn't be"*** *(Mark 13:14 – paraphrased).*

Matthew also said that the abomination is a sign of the end when it ***"stands in the holy place"*** *(Matthew 24:15).* Something God hates comes into the very precincts of the church. It will be specific and definable, and becomes a warning to God's true people... the remnant.

An additional clue to its meaning is... ***"Ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies"*** *(Luke 21:20).* That was a literal event in 68-70 A.D. A literal event often becomes a great spiritual metaphor for the very end of time! Often words or phrases illustrate deep truths which act like mini-prophecies. They become God's coded way of conveying, to a serious Bible student, wonderful messages about the future. The word ***"Jerusalem"*** is also in that category. It was literal.

But Jesus personified it in Matthew 23:37... *"**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"*** There, Jerusalem is a symbol of ***God's people.*** When enemies surround Jerusalem *(God's people),* they will soon stand where they shouldn't be and finally come right into the church.

The key introductory statement that begins Jesus' ***"abomination"*** message is that timing word ***"when." "When you see..."*** it will be apparent. It will be so obvious; it shouldn't be missed. ***"When"*** you are aware that something is detestable to God...

1. Takes its place among God's people where it shouldn't be;
2. Armies ready to impose their will or presence on them;
    a. You will know that a time of supreme danger has arrived.
    b. It is time for you to act.

We can historically see that when Jerusalem, now seen as an apostate city, was surrounded by armies *(beginning in 68 A.D.),* it was about to fall *(three-and-a-half-year period).*

To His faithful, that was the ***"when"*** sign that gave them a chance to escape, to ***"come out."***

In Revelation there is a message to another apostate ***"city" "Babylon is fallen, come out of her my people..."*** escape.

The *"Holy Place"* (Matthew 24:15), when apostasy comes in, refers to the sanctuary, temple or Church... at the very center of religious activity. That ***"abomination"*** is what His people are to urgently distance themselves from... ***"come out of her."***

What detestable ***element*** comes into God's church that destroys its purity? In Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus doesn't say. He only urges us to... ***"Go to Daniel."***

Originally, the Jewish phrase ***"abomination of desolation"*** was an expression of contempt towards the heathen deity Zeus or Baal. The pagans referred to Zeus as ***"Lord of Heaven."***

The Jews referred to him as *siqqus somem...* the ***"abomination which desolates."*** The sky, celestial bodies, especially the sun were part of that worship.

We will find that worship in a way God didn't command, tied to worship, is the abomination He is referencing.

Daniel Picks Up the Story.

The word ***"desolation"*** *(sōmen or shaman)* is found in seven places in Daniel. It simply means *nothing is left.* Except for one *(9:27),* all the references *relate to* the consequences of an *abomination* or *sin*. This word is a helpful key in our quest to understand this ***"abomination."***

It all begins when Gabriel asks Jesus about the little horn vision that Daniel just saw *(8:13)* ***(that relates to the end-time antichrist).***

His key question relates to the little horn and its behavior.

The Little Horn of Daniel 8... Daniel was told *in this vision setting...*

1. Came from the north *(vs 9)*

2. Had power against the **host** of heaven *(vs 10)* mighty power not of himself *(vs 24) (it came from Satan)* - ***"Host"*** is God's people.

3. Persecuted them *(vs 10)* even destroyed the holy people (vs 24)

4. Magnified himself to the prince of that host *(vs 11*) Shall magnify *(become arrogant over another)* himself *(vs 25)*

5. Then he stood up against the Prince of princes *(Jesus) (vs 25)*

6. This all caused the ***"place"*** of the sanctuary to be cast down. *(vs 11)* The place God's church held in the world was tarnished. Gabriel now describes how!

7. Because of a ***"transgression,"*** truth was cast to the ground. *(vs 12)* Now comes the *clue...* That ***"transgression"*** is what led to ***"desolation"*** *(vs 13)!*

8. All this occurs by a fierce-looking king *(vs 23; cf. 11:40) (vicious in heart... another way to describe that* ***"little horn"****)* at a time when ***"transgressors"*** *(those promoting this abomination)* are come in full. *(vs 23)*

This description relates to the antichrist, who sets himself against God and sits *"in the temple of God* ***(the Christian church),*** *showing himself that he is God." (II Thessalonians 2:4)* There it is again.

He ***"stands"*** or occupies a place where he shouldn't be. He lords over the church in some remarkable way.

An antichrist, the ***"little horn,"*** not only tries to displace God, but Daniel alludes to how this is done! There is a ***"transgression"*** that casts truth to the ground. The church is filled with transgressors.

More than that, in Gabriel's follow-up timing question *(8:13),* he asked Jesus ***"when"*** this ***(the "transgression of desolation")*** would happen. Gabriel uses a very specific word to render its meaning more precise... transgression or ***pesha*** results in desolation. As we will see, ***pesha is*** the abomination.

Pesha is one of several Hebrew words for sin. It has a special connotation, describing man committing a willful deed to spite God. It symbolizes rebellion, defiance by resisting God's authority.

It represents an act that goes ***"beyond the limits"*** of God's law. It also describes sin against His covenant. All this was acknowledged as one of Israel's great failures in Daniel's prayer. In Daniel 9:24 it is the first ***"sin"*** that God's people must address.

We have the misdeeds of the little horn of Daniel 8 defying Jesus, His people and truth, taking over and destroying what the sanctuary or church really represents. Now Gabriel tells us how, in arrogance, that is done *through* his questions. *(8:13)* The ***"sin"*** or **"transgression" *(pesha)*** challenges...

1. God's authority;
2. God's covenant;
3. God's law.

Gabriel notes... that is the transgression that leads to ***"desolation."*** The next important use of ***"desolation"*** is in Daniel's prayer... ***"O my God, incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations."*** Isn't that thought-provoking?

Daniel, in great humility, acknowledges their sin and now appeals to God to rescue his people from its desolating consequences. ***"Look God, how desolate our people and land are. Respond to this plea!"***

How does God respond...? Through Gabriel... while Daniel was yet praying. He outlined several steps that would bring ***restoration.*** Amazing, amazing, the very first issue that God's people must address is ***pesha*** or ***transgression*** against God! We must discover even more what that refers to!

This is so vital! It ties directly to Jesus' counsel regarding the end of time! Let us see more verses in this chapter where ***"desolation"*** is used.

Daniel 9:26... Gabriel states that the end of resistance against Jesus and the ***"church"*** or ***"holiness"*** is ***desolation.***

Daniel 9:27... The covenant will be confirmed by the Prince and God's people. The last week of the seventy weeks is split into two. One half is set aside for God to complete His part of that covenant. The other is set aside for His people to finish the covenant obligation *(a separate timing study).* Then a distinct thought is introduced *(really like a separate paragraph).* Paraphrased... ***"Because abominations have spread everywhere, God is going to make everything desolate (shaman) at the time Jesus comes again."*** *(The Second Coming is distinctly alluded to.)*

That information is astounding. The Hebrew word there for ***"abomination"*** (*shiqquwts*) is the Greek equivalent of *bdelugma,* which Jesus talked about in the gospels when He said, ***"Go to Daniel!"*** It represents something detestable or abhorrent in God's sight.

Now that we have brought together numerous clues from the gospels to the word ***"transgression"*** and ***"desolation,"*** we know that some abominable sin will become universal, associated with the antichrist and against God's authority, law and covenant.

In Gabriel's question of 8:13, he noted that it ***"cast truth to the ground."*** We will discover that it relates to a worship issue that ***substitutes*** a false worship, something in place of God's directive.

"Desolation" will become a focus later in 11:31 related to the antichrist and in a stunning timing prophecy that describes the very end of all things *(12:11).*

Background to the *"Abomination".* The word *shiqquwts* is a very strong Hebrew word. It is meant to illustrate the *extreme* seriousness and wickedness of a particular sin. God is appealing to all to see it from His perspective and not man's. *(Deuteronomy 7:26)* There's more in Daniel that we will visit, but we have come to a point where we must discover what God specifically means by transgression/abomination. What exactly makes it so detestable?

A Defining Look at Abomination. God's throne relates to the *"north"* in direction... *"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the* ***north,*** *the city of the great King" (Psalm 48:2).* Satan, once Lucifer, said in his heart (*when he began to act on his passions)* that he would ascend into heaven, exalt his throne above the stars, to be like the Most-High and sit on the *"mount of the congregation" (representing Zion),* which is on the sides of the *"north"* (Isaiah 14:12-14).

Apostasy leads to displacement of God from His rightful place. It ***stands where it ought not be.*** A false leader or standard is set up symbolically in the ***"north,"*** trying to either represent God or be God. This is referred to as an ***abomination****. [towebah (Ezekiel) or shiqquwts (Daniel)]*

Ezekiel was given additional insight into the meaning of abomination. It began by his going into vision, associated with a dramatic encounter with God *(Ezekiel 8:1-4).* He was about to ***see*** and ***hear*** examples of things that God despises. Actions of individuals that violated the fundamental principles of a covenant relationship... ***"You shall have no other gods before me"*** and ***"You shall not make any idolatrous images for yourselves to worship and serve"*** *(Exodus 20:3-6; Deuteronomy 4:1-20, 5:7-12).*

Ezekiel is brought in vision to Jerusalem, symbolic of the center of God's people. He was initially brought to the north gate of the inner temple court. The glory of God was supposed to be in that area. But in that gate was a seated statue, ***"an image of jealousy."***

That begins the story of things God detests. God's glory is contrasted with this pathetic statue. Yet, the statue guarded the gate that led to the inner court and temple! The Hebrew message seems to describe the statue from God's viewpoint... *"The outrageous statue of jealousy."* Its appearance provoked His jealousy, thus, the *"statue of jealousy."* Amazing! In the northern gate... trying to be like God is a detestable idol!

God takes Ezekiel on a temple tour, introducing him to what ***"drives Him out of the sanctuary."*** These are things that ***stand where they ought not be.*** Verse 6 begins by God asking him to ***"look up."*** This is an eschatological phrase. Whatever historic application it might provide, there is a greater end-time typological meaning. He was to look up to the north at the statue and ***then contemplate the abomination*** of the people in the temple he was about to see.

God then said, ***"You're going to see even greater abominations."*** The flow of thought at the onset of this vision creates an anticipation of reprehensible activity. It envisions a remarkable picture of what God is extremely emotional about! Maybe we should say, ***"things He hates!"*** Ezekiel is then shown seventy elders or leaders of God's people, each with an incense censer, worshiping crawling creatures, beasts and idols.

Scene one was an idol at the north entrance to the inner court and temple. Scene two is where church leaders are worshiping idols and creatures in the temple. They were doing it in the ***"dark"*** and declared that ***"God won't see us."***

But He does. He calls this another abomination *(towebah).* The number seventy recalls the number of leaders who assisted Moses in guiding the affairs of His people *(Exodus 24:1, 4; Numbers 11; 16, 24-25).*

Symbolically, it represents all of the key leaders of God's church here in apostasy. In the center of this group was another individual whose name was Jaazaniah, meaning *"Yahweh listens."* He apparently was a civic leader, suggesting a bond in apostasy between church and state.

That is fascinating and has thematic ties to Revelation 13 and 17. God said, once again, that worse abominations were to come.

In the next scene, number three, Ezekiel comes toward the entrance of the north gate. He apparently had been inside the temple and now moves outside. The inner court is in full view.

There are women sitting facing the temple ***(God's house),*** crying over the heathen god Tammuz. This god was raised to life annually. Their cry is for her virility and life to return once again. The nature of the Hebrew expression, *"the Tammuz,"* suggests that it is a chant for Tammuz, who is now dead. This means that these women are lamenting or even praying for or to the dead.

God again told Ezekiel that he would see even greater abominations. Though all are hideous and detestable to God, the last is worse than the previous! He now is ushered into the east temple court and observes a ritual, a religious drama between the porch and altar of sacrifice. There are twenty-five men *(not characterized)* with their backs towards the temple. These individuals were prostrating themselves towards the sun. This represented physical homage to a celestial object.

The imagery is specific... rejecting Yahweh, they gave homage to the sun *(god)*. Solar or astral cults were strictly forbidden in Deuteronomy 4:19 and 17:2-5. Yet, these are God's people worshiping the sun.

Suddenly God says, ***"Does this all seem trivial to my people? This, along with violence occurring in the land, has now provoked me to anger. Mercy is ended, probation closed"*** *(Ezekiel 8:17-18 paraphrased)*.

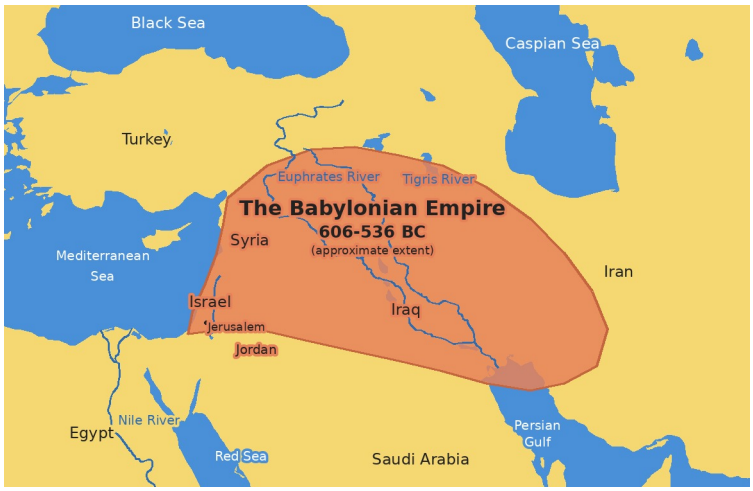
What does this collectively state regarding God's hatred of all this specific behavior abominations?

1. Man-made forms of worship are detestable... though it may be a tradition or even cultural;

2. Worship of nature, relics, and idols causes God to flee;

3. Prayer for and to the dead is abhorrent;

4. Worshiping the sun or any sun symbol disconnects man from God;



Abomination in the Cup... The harlot named *"Mystery," "Babylon the Great"* of Revelation 17 had a golden cup in her hand. Gold suggests purity, perfection or flawlessness. At least that was its veneer. It was in her hand so that it could be offered to others.

The Word says that it was *"full" (geno – unable to fit in anymore)* of abominations. What abomination (*bdelygmia... hatred of a person, through a series of criticisms*)? Jesus used the same word to relate, once again, to significant end-time issues. He referred us to Daniel *(which we will once more visit)*.

It has led us now to the end-time harlot, the apostate church, with abominations she spreads around the earth. This time another clue is added to the meaning of *"abominations."* It is described as the *"filthiness of her fornication."* The Greek word for *"filthiness"* or *"unclean thing"* is *"akatharta."*

This is cultic and implies an illicit relationship and/or religious blasphemy. In Revelation 16:13 John saw three *unclean* spirits going out to deceive the nations. Some deceptive or illicit religious teaching enamors the world.

The saints clearly reject it because the harlot is there depicted as drunk with the blood of the saints. The abomination refers to a religious *"rite"* she idolizes. *Akatharta,* with fornication (*porneras*), reveals that she is intimately relating with others over this *"rite,"* belief or action.

What deceptive religious teaching or philosophy does the harlot bring to the world? The clues we have reviewed regarding the abomination, desolation and uncleanliness all point to a false worship related to the beast ***"false profit."*** God's sacred seventh is rebelled against. As ancient Israel broke that *"sacred seven,"* the *shemita*, and brought desolation, so at the end, apostate Christianity breaks God's law and follows a false christ, which will lead to desolation.

The beast is a political power. The woman/harlot represents a blasphemous religious system. Slandering the name of God permeates Revelation 17. You see, as has been said so many times before, we Christians are in a battle. Our leader is the Lamb *(Jesus Christ).* We are fighting a very real enemy. The devil and his demons are our enemies. This war we are in is a war of the spirit. We must come against the devil in hand to hand combat every day. Our weapon is the two edged sword ***(Bible).*** We are reminded that the harlot is the mother of the ***abominations*** on the earth resisting this truth. It is the *pesha* found in Daniel 8.

The collective evidence suggests that the harlot, epitomizing the antichrist, is a church that leads all other churches ***(her daughters)*** into rebellion against God. This is end-time imagery. It becomes a mark of her power and authority since the world submits to her seductive influence. The world eventually seeks to kill the saints who resist this mark. This, then, fulfills a subsequent description of what is also in the cup... ***the blood of God's people.***

The King of the North Connection... We were introduced to the antichrist... the papal little horn power *(its second rise),* back in Daniel 8. There is a sequel to that story. God uses varied symbols to describe prophetic powers and events. In chapter 11 the little horn is first referred to as a ***"vile person."*** Then in another section, it is ***"king of the north."*** The latter represents the ***rest of the story*** in Jesus' command to look at Daniel.

This king hates God's covenant (11:30). His practices pollute God's sanctuary because he ***(stands where it ought not be). Then it says that he places*** or decrees the abomination that leads to desolation (11:31). This is amazing! The King of the North not only seductively pollutes the church, but is associated with a decree or law that enforces it!

The ***"mother church"*** is the Roman Catholic Church. She admits it, and the Bible supports it. But... in the latter, only in a setting of apostasy! If it is, the issues of that church related to the abomination would raise an alarm of fearful magnitude.

It would be a fulfillment of end-time prophecy that threads its way from the very words of Jesus back to Daniel and forward to Revelation!