

Abomination of Desolation

What do you believe the Abomination of Desolation will be? Do you believe the Temple will be rebuilt?

Yeshua indicates in His Olivet Discourse, in Matthew 24:15, that the Abomination of Desolation is the key sign that will occur indicating that His return is near. We believe that the Abomination of Desolation is when the antimessiah/antichrist “will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering” (Daniel 9:27, NASU) on the Temple Mount, will proclaim himself to be a god (2 Thessalonians 2:4), and the false prophet will erect an image of him (Revelation 13:14). The antimessiah will demand worship, and those in the city of Jerusalem at this time are commanded by Him to flee (Matthew 24:16-20).

Some in the Messianic community believe that the Temple does not have to be rebuilt in order for these prophecies to take place, and only an “altar” will be erected. They view the Temple as only being the “holy place” of the Temple Mount. Is this what the Apostle Paul says, per the specific vocabulary employed in his letter to the Thessalonians? In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Temple of God is usually called the *beit-ADONAI* (בֵּית־יְהוָה), literally “House of the LORD,” and the Tabernacle is called the *mishkan ADONAI* (מִשְׁכַּן יְהוָה). The Greek Septuagint renders *mishkan* as *skēnē* (σκηνή), “tabernacle” or “dwelling,” and *beit* as either *oikos* (οἶκος), meaning “house,” or as *naos* (ναός), “temple.” Paul says that the antimessiah “will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4, NASU). Paul says that this takes place in *ton naon tou Theou* (τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ), or the Temple of God.

Given the differences between *skēnē*, *oikos*, and *naos*, Paul chose *naos* meaning “Temple.” It should be prerequisite that in order for the Abomination of Desolation to occur, that the Temple should be rebuilt in Jerusalem. A minimalist interpretation would allow for the Tabernacle to be erected on the Temple Mount, in a similar manner to how it was employed during the reign of King David. In many cases, those claiming that the Temple does not have to be rebuilt (or even a Tabernacle installed) are making hastily drawn conclusions about prophecy, and are trying to force current events to fit the Biblical text, rather than let events play out naturally.