

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Trinity Sunday  
St. Matthew 24:15-28  
November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Ormond Beach, FL  
St. Bartholomew Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Fort Myers, FL  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## The Abomination of Desolation

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Sermon Text:**

“When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains.”

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we most heartily thank Thee that by Thy Word Thou hast brought us out of the darkness of the Papacy into the light of Thy grace: We beseech Thee, mercifully help us to walk in that light, guard us from all error and false doctrine, and grant that we may not, as the Jews, become ungrateful and despise and persecute Thy Word, but receive it with all our heart, govern our lives according to it, and put all our trust in Thy grace; through the merit of Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

My dear friends, just as at the time of the Babylonian captivity the Lord God caused the Ark of the Covenant to be lost, so also, He caused the second temple in Jerusalem to be razed and destroyed. For with the coming of the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, He took upon Himself our flesh. As St. Paul writes to the Church at Colossae, “The fullness of the Godhead dwelled in Him bodily.” His Body was the now the true and everlasting Temple. Therefore, the new temple was no longer needed, for it is no longer necessary to sacrifice lambs, and rams, and bulls, for the Blood of the Savior is the atonement of all the sins of mankind.

It is reported in Second Maccabees, chapter two, that the prophet Jeremiah hid the Ark in a cave where no one would find it. Whether this is true, or not, is irrelevant, for we are told that when Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple that the Ark was not present. The Mercy Seat, the true Mediator of the covenant, the Lord + Jesus, has replaced the need for the Ark of the Covenant. Its whereabouts do not matter. The advent of the Christ, the true Temple, brings the true magnificence of the Lord God’s presence among His people. He was now no longer only present with His people through the work of man’s hands—the Ark of the Covenant and the temples built by human hands—but He was now present with us as one of us. He was fully man, and He was fully the Lord God. The Lord God, through the coming of the Christ, was now present with His people.

This had been foretold by the Prophet Daniel in chapter nine, verse twenty-six. There it is prophesied, “And after the threescore and two weeks shall the Anointed One be cut off, and shall have nothing; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and his end shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined. And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and for the half of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the consummation, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolator.”

In other words, the “Anointed One,” the Lord + Jesus, would be cut off, that is, He would complete His work of redemption by His suffering and death on the tree of the holy cross. Then sixty year, and two weeks later, “the prince,” that is, the Roman Emperor, would come and destroy the city and the holy place—the temple. The earthly sacrifices would cease. The city of Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed. This was on account of the sins of the Jewish people. They placed their faith in the temple of Jerusalem, but their hearts were desolate and desecrated. For they did not cling in faith to the Lord God, but to their own works. They clung in faith to their false gods and false worship.

This is why the Lord + Jesus in the Gospel reading for today from the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew talks about the abomination of desolations. What does the Lord consider an abomination? He considers several things abominations. But here is He is referring to idolatry, to false worship. It is an abomination to the Lord God for His people to turn away from Him and place their trust in any other thing than Him. Mankind places their trust in their good works. Ask anyone, who is not a Christian, what they must do to go to Heaven, and they will undoubtedly say that everyone that is “good” goes to Heaven. Entrance into Heaven is a meritocracy. We merit it by doing good works, according to the false teachings of the world.

For the unbelieving world, then, it does not matter who, or what, one worships as long as that person is a good person. Of course, what is considered good is according to the world’s standards, and not according to the Lord God’s. The world would rather do away with the Ten Commandments. They want nothing to do with those rules. Therefore, it is an abomination to the Lord to reject His Word—His Commandments—and make up one’s own way into Heaven, according to what they believe is right. False idolatry is an abomination; false worship, that is, worshipping anything other than the One, True, Triune Lord God is an abomination. What then is the abomination of desolation?

This is when the false idolatry and false worship is found among the people of the Lord God. In other words, when Christian churches reject the Word of the Lord God, and follow the ways of the world both in their worship and in their teachings. The Jewish people, who had rejected the Lord God as their god, allowed the images of the false gods of the nations around them to not only be in their hearts, but be in the temple itself. The temple, in the Lord God’s eyes, was already desecrated and destroyed. The hearts of the unbelieving Jews were already desecrated and destroyed, because they no longer worshiped the One, True Lord God. Therefore, the temple of Solomon had to be destroyed.

Therefore, this Gospel reading serves as a warning to us. It is our yearly warning to turn away from false gods and false teachings. For just as the temple was destroyed on account of idolatry and rejection of the Lord God, if the Church follows suit, it too will be destroyed. Perhaps it will not endure physical destruction, but the abomination of desolation when it is seen in the Church of the Lord God, desecrates and destroys men’s souls. The churches that have forsaken the Word of the Lord and adopted the false teachings of the world, lead all those who they teach into eternal destruction.

This is why our Lord + Jesus weeps for the city of Jerusalem on the Day of the Palms when He entered into Jerusalem to the jubilant shouts of the crowds who had come for the Feast of the Passover. That event was only a few days prior to these words of our Lord + Jesus. He speaks these words while He is in view of the temple from the Mount of Olives. A few days earlier He also foretells its destruction

while standing near the temple when His Apostles remarked how beautiful the temple was. His Apostles now come to Him and ask Him to tell them when these things would take place. It would take place when they saw the abomination of desolations in the temple. For the people of Israel, the people the Lord God chose out of all nations, had rejected the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ of the Lord God. They would nail Him to a tree. He would be the one, enduring sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. His sacrifice would mean that there was no longer any need for any more sacrifices.

Therefore, the second temple built by Zerubbabel, and restored by King Herod, also had to be destroyed. For there was now a new Temple, found in the flesh of the Lord + Jesus which atoned for the sins of all mankind. All those who now, burdened by sin and shame, can find life and hope in the Lord + Jesus. Through faith in Him, we receive the forgiveness of all our sins. Through the means of grace, we are gifted with faith by the Holy Ghost. He leads us into all truth. The truth that our sins have been paid for by the sacrifice of the Lord + Jesus. The Temple of the Lord + Jesus has been destroyed on the holy cross, and on the third day, He raised that Temple up again from the dead.

For this reason, we can rejoice with St. Paul in his Epistle to the Church at Thessalonica. For there he tells us that we have an eternal hope. We need not sorrow as the world sorrows over death, for all those who die in the faith, are not dead, but asleep. Their bodies sleep in the Lord + Jesus, the Christ. The souls live in the glories of Heaven. Let us give thanks, therefore, my dear friends, that by the work of the Holy Ghost, and the grace of the Lord God, we have been gifted with faith in our Savior, the Lord + Jesus. He has washed away from us all false idolatry and worship—all trust in our own works—and has brought us into the holy, Christian and Apostolic Church, so that we might find a safe place to flee from this false world which seeks our destruction and desecration.

As the Day of our Lord's return draws closer, let us not neglect this safe haven, this place of the true worship of the Lord God. For the world will grow increasingly more evil and intolerant of all things that come from our Lord God. We may find a safe haven from their destruction here in this place. Here where our Lord hands out His gifts to us, we find comfort and peace. We are given a hope to look past the corruptions of this world, to our joyful home in Heaven. May the Lord God Almighty bring us to that everlasting shore, and grant us everlasting peace. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*