

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!

The Antichrist initially comes as a “savior” brokering a 7-year peace plan with Israel (Daniel 9:27). But then 3 and ½ years in he will break the covenant by going into the rebuilt Jewish temple and committing the “abomination of desolation” in which he will declare himself to be God over all (2 Thess. 2:4). Jesus then in Matthew 24:16-20 instructs the Jews who will be living at that time what to do.

Matthew 24:16 (NKJV)

16 “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

This is the signal to run for your life. Note the whole context here is in relation to Israel. Judea is a Jewish context involving the area surrounding Jerusalem. Remember the 70th week applies to Daniel’s people (that is the Jews (Dan. 9:24). This is called “*the time of Jacob’s trouble*” in Jer. 30:7.

This whole context here is so Jewish that some dispensational commentators say they don’t see the Church in Matthew 24 at all. The problem is they only study half the chapter. It is true that through verse 35 it centers on Israel in particular because this is dealing with the 70th week of Daniel which is Jewish in orientation. However, verse 36 denotes a major transition and change in which Israel thereafter is not specifically mentioned at all.

What mountains are in view is not specified here. It seems that Revelation 12 is dealing with this same time frame and speaks in terms of the wilderness.

Revelation 12:6 (NKJV)

6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Revelation 12:14 (NKJV)

14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

Various Scripture references point out that this will be a region in a wilderness/mountainous area. Many scholars believe this place will be what in the Bible was called **Bozrah**, but today is called PETRA which is located about 125 miles south of Jerusalem in modern-day Jordan (cf. Dan. 11:40-45, Isa. 63:1-6, Jer. 49:13-14). Today Petra is an ancient and deserted rock hewn city that could accommodate many thousands of people. To get there you have to walk through a 1.5 mile narrow canyon.

Matthew 24:17–18 (NKJV)

17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

There is urgency here! There is no time to lose. This is the time to run for your life.

Matthew 24:19–20 (NKJV)

19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

Woe is a cry of lament for those who are pregnant and those nursing babies because they will be at a major disadvantage in fleeing with haste.

Jesus says to pray that their flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. The place of prayer is mysterious. God is sovereign and yet He responds to prayer. God already knows when it will happen and yet Christ tells them to pray about the timing of it (cf. Matt. 6:7-8).

Winter makes for hazardous travel, especially on short notice. This verse also indicates that the Jews will still be practicing the Sabbath which is the case today. This is quite amazing because most Jews are secular Jews who have no real belief in God. One report says **55%** of Jews say being Jewish is mainly a matter of ancestry and culture, while **66%** say it is not necessary to believe in God to be Jewish. However, they are still culturally Jewish and still practice keeping the Sabbath – certainty in Israel.

When Shabbat comes at Sundown on Friday everything comes to a sudden stop. If a Jew would happen to be in the hustle and bustle of moving a great distance it would be conspicuous and the authorities in

league with Antichrist would notice. A Sabbath day's journey for a Jew is about half a mile. Also, there would be no place open to get emergency supplies because everything would be closed down.

The middle of the Tribulation Period will mark the worst of times for the Jews and yet it will be greatly used of God to bring many of them to Himself.

Zechariah 13:8–9 (NKJV)

8 And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the Lord, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it:

9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' "

The Antichrist will have his moment of fame, but those who trust in the Lord will abide forever.

Psalms 125:1 (NKJV)

1 Those who trust in the Lord Are like Mount Zion, Which cannot be moved, but abides forever.