

A Judas in Jerusalem

The Bible describes the Antichrist as the “son of perdition.” It is the same title Jesus used for Judas Iscariot.¹ Perdition means destruction, but not just the ruin of the physical or the flesh – rather, the utter destruction of something. That is, the physical and spiritual destruction of hell. Jesus also said, “... *fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*” (Mat 10:28)

Since this unique title is given to each, it's likely that there are some similar characteristics observable in both men. Judas was the ‘treasurer’ if you would of the disciples. He carried ‘the bag’. Obsessed with money, he was a thief (John 12:6) and critical of those who sought to give generously in worship of the Lord. However, he masked this criticism, with a thin veneer of practical compassion for the poor (John 12:3-6). He hung out with the Lord for a significant amount of time but was never changed inwardly. He was a master deceiver – even when he left the upper room to sell out the Lord, the disciples were clueless as to his true intentions (John 13:29). He consorted with the

religious power-brokers of the time to deliver Jesus and the other disciples to them (Mat 26:14). He betrayed Christ with a kiss. (Luke 22:47,48)

Likewise, the Antichrist will be economically oriented. Revelation 13 says that he will create an economic order in which no one may buy or sell without his mark, his name or the number of his name. It also states that he will persecute those who desire to worship the Lord (Rev 13:6). He will speak powerfully and persuasively (Rev 13:5, Dan 11:36) yet with tremendous deception (2Thes 2:9,10; Dan 8:25) for his real intent will be to redirect the worship of God to himself (2Thes 2:4).

It's also quite possible that he and/or his ‘false prophet’ (Rev 13:11; 16:13) will have spent significant time in some association with the church but by Satan's inspiration will ultimately turn on it and all sincere believers with a hellish fury (Rev 12:13-17). He will probably be Jewish or of Jewish ancestry. (Dan 11:37) Revelation 13 makes it clear that he and his associate, the false prophet, will be masters of deceit (Rev 13:13,14).

And like Judas, he will do his dirty work in the temple. 2 Thes 2:4 says so. He will undoubtedly be treacherous – just as Judas sold out Christ, it may be that the AC who initially seems like an awesome leader, indeed a savior, to the Jews, will ultimately sell them out.

He will conspire with the powerful and gain great power. In fact, we are assured that his power base

will be a government arising out of the old Roman empire – that is, the EU/EC. Consequently, we would expect to eventually see some movement of Israel and the EU toward each other governmentally. Will the EU/EC one day include Israel and more importantly, Jerusalem? I think it's quite possible. Let me refer to Daniel chapter two to explain.

In an earlier issue of HM, we examined in some detail the image of Daniel two so I won't reiterate that lesson. However, it is important to recall that the key to understanding this prophecy is to perceive the governments portrayed by the materials in the vision as not just “world governments” as some are inclined to say, but rather that they were powerful governments which ruled over a Jewish Jerusalem with a Jewish Temple.

You see, if it were just a matter of being a world government, none of the identified ruling systems (Babylon, Medio-Persia, Greece, and Rome) would qualify for none of them governed the world, only a portion of it. Neither is it solely a matter of governing the land of Israel apart from the Jews being there and more specifically, while they are inhabiting Jerusalem as well as engaged in temple worship. Else, you would have the Arabs, the Ottoman Turks and the British portrayed in the vision for they each ruled over the area of Israel.

Let's quickly review the gold, silver, brass and iron governments portrayed in the image. Recall, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar conquered and ruled over Jerusalem for some twenty years

until the continual rebellion of the people led to the destruction of the city and the temple. In 536 BC, seventy years after the initial fall of the city, a faithful Jewish remnant returned and began rebuilding the temple and the city. This occurred during the Medio-Persian rule. Next, the Greeks ruled over a Jewish Jerusalem and its temple. In fact, the notorious Antiochus Epiphanes who foreshadowed the Antichrist desecrated the second temple. Finally, the Romans ruled Jewish Jerusalem and like the Babylonians, destroyed it and the temple leaving in its place a barren waste. Not until 1967 could Jerusalem again be considered Jewish though as yet, it has no temple.

Yes, each of these governments ruled over a Jewish Jerusalem and its temple. This key is also hinted at in Daniel 2:45 where the prophet, looking backward through history so to speak lists the materials of the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the order of iron, brass, clay, silver and gold. This order is different from verse 35 which lists them in the order found in the image from top to bottom. Thus, verse 45 is suggestive that the clay is indeed a government-representing material just like the others. It is also significant that it is placed after the silver (Medio-Persia) historically and before the brass (Greece) – what happened at this time? What happened is that the Jews returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt both it and the temple! That's the key.

So, as we consider the final part, historically, of the Daniel two image, (i.e. the feet and toes) we see that

¹ (Some of the Antichrist's other titles: *little horn* (Daniel 7:8); *king of fierce countenance* (Daniel 8:23); the *willful king* (Daniel 11:36-45); the one who comes *in his own name* (John 5:43); *the man of sin, the lawless one* (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 8).)

they are made of iron and clay. Clearly, the clay is the Jewish people – several scriptures say as much (e.g. Isa 64:8, Jer 18:6). But the feet are a composite of iron (the material of the Roman Empire) and clay. Right now, we only have the Jewish people controlling Jerusalem, therefore, we are not in those days yet.

Soon, however, the iron and clay will rule over Jerusalem and over a Jewish Temple. Will that mean EU/Israeli rule? How about Vatican/Israeli rule? We'll soon see; or maybe we won't since this might happen only during the Tribulation period.

In any event, I think it is highly significant that Romano Prodi the EC Commission President has just mentioned his intent of including Israel in the EC "ring of friends" (see this month's news). So I wouldn't be surprised to see more involvement of Israel with the

EU/EC or the Vatican. It could be the AC who actually cements this relationship, and it is very possible that he himself will make a way for the third temple to be built.

Orthodox Jews in Israel today say they will recognize the Messiah because he will be the one to do just that. Christ said to the Jews, "*I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*" (John 5:43)

"But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom" (Irenaeus, late second century)

The Second Coming

From Streams in the Desert by Mrs. Charles E. Cowman

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

George Mueller bears this testimony, "When it pleased God in July, 1829, to reveal to my heart the truth of the personal return of the Lord Jesus, and to show me that I had made a great mistake in looking for the conversion of the world, the effect that it produced upon me was this: From my inmost soul I was stirred up to feel compassion for perishing sinners, and for the slumbering world around me lying in the wicked one, and considered, 'Ought I not to do what I can for the Lord Jesus while He tarries, and to rouse a slumbering church?'"

There may be many hard years of hard work before the consummation, but the signs are to me so encouraging that I would not be unbelieving if I saw the wing of the apocalyptic angel spread for its last triumphal flight in this day's sunset; ... O you dead churches wake up! O Christ, descend! Scarred temple, take the crown! Bruised hand, take the sceptre! Wounded foot, step the throne! Thine is the kingdom. --Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D. D.