

THE PEOPLE OF THE PRINCE THAT SHALL COME. .

WHO ARE THEY?

by Rodrigo Silva

The Bible indicates that the **Antichrist** will be of the people who destroyed the City of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in 70 AD. In Daniel chapter 9 we read the following:

"24Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the **people of the prince that shall come** shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Daniel 9:27)

This is the famous prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. In this prophecy the angel told Daniel that after 69 weeks of years (7 weeks + 62 weeks) the Messiah would be cut off. This was fulfilled when Jesus entered Jerusalem riding a donkey exactly 173,880 days after March 14th, 445 BC when the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was given by Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2. In the rest of verse 26 we read that the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. This prophecy was fulfilled when the Roman army under general Titus Vespasian laid siege against Jerusalem destroying the city and the Jewish Temple not leaving one stone upon another as predicted by Jesus in Matthew 24:1-4. Many people conclude that because the Romans fulfilled this prophecy, the people of the prince (Antichrist) must be Europeans. Some even say that he will be an Italian.

Dr. Dave Reagan of Lamb and Lion Ministries writes:

"The Bible teaches that in the end times, right before the return of Jesus, the greatest political leader in the history of Mankind will emerge from **Europe**. . .It is much more likely that he will rise out of the heartland of the old Roman Empire and that he will be of **Italian** descent.

This conclusion is based upon a statement in Daniel 9:26. In that passage the Antichrist is referred to as "the prince who is to come," and he is identified as being from the people who "will destroy the city and the sanctuary." We know from history that both Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple were destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. Therefore, according to Daniel, the Antichrist must be of Roman heritage." [1]

Clearly Dr. Dave Reagan identifies the Antichrist as coming from the heartland of the Roman empire (Rome) and that he will be of Italian descent. This theory is not supported by the text because Daniel says that the "people" not the government of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Although the Roman soldiers who participated in the destruction of the temple were "Roman citizens" they were not necessarily Europeans because the Roman legions that laid siege against Jerusalem were stationed in the Middle East.

" On 14 April 70, during Passover, Titus laid siege to Jerusalem. To the northeast of the old city, on Mount Scopus, the legions XII Fulminata (a new addition from **Syria**) and XV Apollinaris shared a large camp; V Macedonica was camped at a short distance. When X Fretensis arrived from **Syria**, it occupied the Mount of Olives, in front of the Temple." [2]

Two of the main legions that participated in the siege against Jerusalem were legion XII Fulminata and legion X Fretensis and both came from Syria. Walid Shoebat and Joel Richardson write:

"For some reason, possibly due to the fact that the capital of the Roman Empire was in Rome - and thus in Europe - many seem to forget that the Roman Empire also included a vast portion of the Middle East. Because most of the soldiers were recruited from the provinces where their garrisons were located, the legions that were stationed in the Middle East were also primarily Arab and, most specifically, **Syrian** and Turkic" [3]

In writing about the destruction of the Temple, the historian Tacitus states:

"Early in this year Titus Caesar, who had been selected by his father to complete the subjugation of Judea . . . He found in Judea three legions, the 5th, the 10th, and the 15th, all old troops of Vespasian's. To these he added the 12th from **Syria**, and some men belonging to the 18th and 3rd, whom had withdrawn from Alexandria (Egypt). This force was accompanied by twenty cohorts of allied troops and eight squadrons of cavalry, by the two kings Agrippa and Sohemus, by the auxiliary forces of king Antiochus, by a strong contingent of Arabs, who hated the Jews with the usual hatred of neighbors, and lastly, by many persons brought from the capital and from Italy by private hopes of securing the yet unengaged affections of the Prince. With this force Titus entered the enemy's territory, preserving strict order on his march, reconnoitering every spot, and always ready to give battle. At last encamped near Jerusalem." [4]

Josephus writes:

"Hereupon some of the deserters, having no other way, leaped down from the wall immediately, while others of them went out of the city with stones, as if they would fight them; but thereupon they fled away to the Romans. But here a worse fate accompanied these than what they had

found within the city; and they met with a quicker despatch from the too great abundance they had among the Romans, than they could have done from the famine among the Jews; for when they came first to the Romans, they were puffed up by the famine, and swelled like men in a dropsy; after which they all on the sudden overfilled those bodies that were before empty, and so burst asunder, excepting such only as were skillful enough to restrain their appetites, and by degrees took in their food into bodies unaccustomed thereto. Yet did another plague seize upon those that were thus preserved; for there was found among the **Syrian** deserters a certain person who was caught gathering pieces of gold out of the excrements of the Jews' bellies; for the deserters used to swallow such pieces of gold, as we told you before, when they came out, and for these did the seditious search them all; for there was a great quantity of gold in the city, insomuch that as much was now sold [in the Roman camp] for twelve Attic [drams], as was sold before for twenty-five. But when this contrivance was discovered in one instance, the fame of it filled their several camps, that the deserters came to them full of gold. So the multitude of the Arabians, with the **Syrians**, cut up those that came as supplicants, and searched their bellies. Nor does it seem to me that any misery befell the Jews that was more terrible than this, since in one night's time about two thousand of these deserters were thus dissected." [5]

Walid Shoebat and Joel Richardson write:

"Indeed, the majority of the "Roman" soldiers that destroyed Jerusalem were Arabs, **Syrians** and Turks. When we look at the four Roman legions that were under Titus during the siege against Jerusalem, we see that they were from the Eastern portion of the Empire and were primarily from Syria or eastern Turkey. Below are the four legions that were under Titus during the Jewish Roman war and the location that history records for their garrisons:

Legion 10 Fretensis: Turkey, Syria

Legion 15 Apollinaris: Syria

Legion 12 Fulminata: Melitene: Eastern Turkey, Syria

Legion 5 Macedonica: Moesia: Serbia, Bulgaria

These four legions were all involved in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. The legion, in particular, that went through the wall breach and set fire to the Temple was known as X Fretensis or the tenth legion. It was this particular legion that actually pulled down the entire Temple and made the Temple Mount its new base. It should be pointed out that each legion was composed of several smaller "cohorts." Below is a list of the actual cohorts that comprised the tenth legion and where they originally came from:

A. Thracum: Syria (Syrians)

B. IV Cohort Thracia: Bulgaria and Turkey (Turks)

C. Syria Ulpia Patraeorum: Petra in Edom (Nabatean Arabs)

D. IV Cohort Arabia (Arabs)

Again, these were a mixture of **Syrians**, Turks and Arabs. While the people who destroyed the temple were indeed Roman citizens, they were not primarily Europeans or Italians, but rather the peoples that lived in **Syria** and Eastern Turkey during the first century. This verse is concerned with the heritage and lineage of the people as restricted by the text "people of the Prince" and not their allegiance to Rome. This is why the text is written in this way. It insists in this connection. Once again, the Bible has led us to the same region. In context, the "people of the prince" are simply the people of the Antichrist; the Hebrew "Am" for people is persons, members of one's people, compatriots, countrymen, kinsman and kindred. (Strong's 5971)

Even if we take the meaning of "Am" as "nation", how will the construct of this verse with such meaning be logical? "The nation of the Antichrist" that is entirely futuristic. How can someone conclude that the Antichrist is Roman with this interpretation? It proves nothing, since the nation of the Antichrist would not be known for such a construct. The only logical construction for the context "Am" is the "kindred" of Antichrist - his ancestors, his kinsman.

The Antichrist will be from among the people who still live in the Middle East - those who destroyed the city and the sanctuary in Titus' time. This is the natural way to read the text, especially since connecting to the people with the prince is widely accepted." [6]

As we have seen, the people of the Antichrist are not Europeans, but Middle Eastern. All historical accounts point mainly to the Syrians as the people of the Antichrist. Josephus writes:

"The greatest part of the Roman garrison was raised out of **Syria**; and being thus related to the Syrian part, they were ready to assist it. [7] It should be pointed out that the Syrians of the first century are not the Syrians of modern times who are Arabs of the modern Syrian Arab Republic [8]

Etymology

The name **Syria** derives from the ancient Greek name for Syrians, Σύριοι *Syrioi*, which the Greeks applied without distinction to various **Assyrian** people. Modern scholarship confirms the Greek word traces back to the cognate Ἀσσυρία, **Assyria**, ultimately derived from the Akkadian Aššur.

The area designated by the word has changed over time. Classically, Syria lies at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Arabia to the south and Cilicia to the north, stretching inland to include Mesopotamia, and having an uncertain border to the northeast that Pliny the Elder describes as including, from west to east, Commagene, Sophene, and Adiabene, "formerly known as **Assyria**". By Pliny's time, however, this larger **Syria** had been divided into a number of provinces under the Roman Empire (but politically independent from each other): Judaea, later renamed Palaestina in AD 135 (the region corresponding to modern day Palestine and Israel, and Jordan) in the extreme southwest, Phoenicia corresponding to Lebanon, with

Damascena to the inland side of Phoenicia, Coele-Syria (or "Hollow Syria") south of the Eleutheris river, and Mesopotamia. [9]

I writing about the Assyrian Identity in Hellenistic and Roman Times, Simo Parpola, Helsinki says:

"In the second century AD, two prominent writers from **Roman Syria**, Lucian and Tatian, ostentatiously identify themselves as **Assyrians** (Assúrios). This self-identification is commonly misinterpreted to imply nothing more than that these writers were ethnic **Syrians** (in the modern sense) speaking Aramaic as their mother tongue (Millar 1993, 460). It is perfectly clear from the contexts, however, that they were specifically referring to their **native identity and cultural heritage**, which they proudly and defiantly contrasted with the Greek culture. That heritage was **Assyrian**. It is worth emphasizing that while **Assúrios in Roman times** could refer to an inhabitant of the **Roman province of Syria**, it basically meant "**Assyrian**", nothing else. No "**Syria**" in the modern sense existed in antiquity. In Armenian, Parthian and Egyptian sources of the Roman period, **Roman Syria** is consistently and unmistakably referred to as "**Assyria**" (Asorik', 'swry'; 'Išr; see Frye 1992; Steiner 1993)." [10]

The above information shows that the Syrians of Roman times were "Assyrians" in native identity and cultural heritage. That is in total agreement with the Bible which should be our final authority in identifying the people of the Antichrist. The Antichrist is called the "Assyrian" in Isaiah 10:5, 14:25, 30:30-33, and Micah 5:5-6. The Syrians who destroyed the Temple in 70 AD were Assyrians who lived in the Syrian province of the Roman Empire during the first century according to information presented above. The Syrians of today are ethnically Arabs whereas the preserved Assyrian people who for the most part live in Iraq, Syria and Turkey are not Arabs ethnically.

Some say that the Antichrist must be a Syrian because Antiochus Epiphanes who was a type of the Antichrist was the ruler of Syria and caused the abomination of desolation by erecting an image to Zeus in the Jewish Temple around 167 BC. Although Antiochus reigned the Syrian province of the Seleucid dynasty, he was a Greek ruler, not Syrian. As a ruler he was best known for his encouragement of Greek culture and institutions. [11]

The prophets Isaiah and Micah used the Hebrew word "Asshur" to refer to the Antichrist and it is defined as:

- 1) the second son of Shem, eponymous ancestor of the Assyrians
- 2) the people of Assyria
- 3) the nation, Assyria
- 4) the land, Assyria or Asshur [12]

This points to the Antichrist as being ethnically an Assyrian who will come from the land of Assyria also known as the land of Nimrod.

'And they shall waste the **land of Assyria** with the sword, and the **land of Nimrod** in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver [us] from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders." (Micah 5:6)

Nimrod was the son of Cush, grandson of Ham, and great grandson of Noah; a mighty hunter, he established an empire in the area of Babylon and Assyria [13]

According to Genesis 10, the empire established by Nimrod was in the land of Shinar:

"And the beginning of his [Nimrod's] kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur (Assyria), and builded Nineveh . . ." (Genesis 10:10-11). The land of Shinar is defined as:

Shinar = "country of two rivers"

1) the ancient name for the territory later known as Babylonia or Chaldea [14]

Babylonia or Chaldea is the general area of modern day Iraq. This suggests that the people of the Antichrist who destroyed the city and the sanctuary who were labeled as "Syrians" during that time were originally from the region of Iraq, more specifically, the Assyrian region located in northern Iraq. Today they are referred to as an "indigenous people" [15] who are working hard toward an independent Assyrian state in northern Iraq. "The Assyrian independence (also known as the Assyrian Question) is a political movement and ideology that supports the creation of an Assyrian homeland for the Aramaic-speaking Christian Assyrian people in the Nineveh plains of Northern Iraq. The issue of Assyrian independence has been brought up many times throughout the course of history from the end of World War I to the present-day Iraq War. The Assyrian-inhabited area of Iraq is located in the Ninawa-Mosul region in Northern Iraq where the biblical Assyrian capital of Nineveh was located. This area is known as the "Assyrian Triangle." [16]

Click the links below to read recent news articles related to Assyrian independence

[Netherlands Requests Assyrian Autonomous State in Iraq](#)

[Good News For Iraq's Assyrian!](#)

[Assyrians Need Own Area in Iraq, Swedish Mayor Tells US Congress](#)

[European Union Foresees Bigger Future Role in Iraq with specific concern for the "Assyrian Minority"](#)

We have mentioned in our articles that the Antichrist will be a Muslim Assyrian. How can that be since the Assyrians today are orthodox Christians? Below is some information I found on the Internet. Whether it is true or false, I do not know, but I will include it for the sake of our subject. "The Assyrian people have been subject to Islamisation since the 7th century Muslim conquests. Some of them have been fully Arabized, while a small number retains elements of Assyrian ethnic identity:"A small minority of the Assyrians, around 1%, has converted to Islam, but remains Assyrian in culture and language...The flag of the Muslim Assyrian minority is a vertical tricolor of violet, yellow and green, bearing a white crescent moon and five-pointed star on the upper hoist.

Arabic-speaking Muslims known as Mhalmoye or Mhallami from the Tur Abdin region may originally have been converted from Syriac Orthodoxy to Islam during the sixteenth century. (cf. Hamshenis, Greek Muslims, Pomaks, Torbesh, Gorani). Culture from their pre-Islamic period survived, such as the appearance of the cross otherwise considered to be a decoration based on a flower. A Swedish Assyrian web site names four other ethnic groups whom it considers as "Assyrian Muslims": the Barzani Kurds and the Tagrit, Tayy and Shammar tribal confederations." [17]

Flag of the Assyrian Muslim Minority. Notice the Islamic crescent and star

Could it be that this Muslim Assyrian Minority will be the people where the Antichrist will rise from? That will only be answered when the time of the appearance of the man of sin arrives. It has been recently reported that the Christian Assyrians of Iraq are about to face extinction:

" Thousands of Christians fleeing persecution in other parts of Iraq have returned since 2004 to ancestral lands in the Nineveh Plain, just north and east of Mosul. While they have escaped the Islamic militias who slaughtered family members and burned down their houses and churches in Baghdad and Mosul, now they face a new battle. Today's enemies are poverty, joblessness, and despair. Jamal Dinha, mayor of Bartella, a large Christian village east of Mosul, painted a dire picture of the life these persecuted Christians now face in this Kurdish-controlled safe haven. . .The plight of these **Assyrian / Chaldean Christians** has been aggravated by the collapse of any central government authority in the Nineveh province, to which they officially belong, and by the actions of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG), which is seeking to annex this fertile land where Christians have lived for two thousand years because it is believed to contain rich oil resources. . ."As Christians are driven out of the Nineveh plain, this place will become a great museum of churches and cemeteries. And ultimately, the churches will end up as mosques. The Christian community in Iraq is on the **verge of extinction.**" [18]

Could it be that the heavy persecution of Christian Assyrians in Iraq caused by Islamic militias will cause many Assyrians to give up orthodox Christianity and embrace Islam as their new religion in order to be preserved as an ethnic group? Only time will tell.

Conclusion -- The people of the prince that shall come (Antichrist) who destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in 70 AD were not Europeans as many conclude based on Daniel 9:26, but Middle Eastern Syrians of the Roman legions 10 Fretensis and 15 Apollinaris that were garrisoned in the Roman province of Syria. These Roman Syrians were ethnically

known as "Assyrians" in native identity and cultural heritage. They have been preserved throughout history and live today in the Nineveh plains of Northern Iraq near the modern city of Mosul. They are the people of the coming Antichrist who is referred to in the Bible as the "Assyrian" and " the king of Assyria " (Isaiah 10:5,12,24 ; 14:25; 30:30-33; 31:8 and Micah 5:5-6)

God Bless You!

Rodrigo Silva

End Notes

[1] http://www.bibleprophecyinthenews.com/PZ_Insider_Report_02-18-08_1_.pdf

[2] http://www.livius.org/ja-jn/jewish_wars/jwar04.html

[3] Walid Shoebat and Joel Richardson, God' s War on Terror, 2008 Top Executine Media, page 350

[4] Tacitus, The History New Ed book 5.1 Editor:Moses Hadas, Translators: Alfred Church, William Brodribb (Modern Library; New York,2003)

[5] Josephus, book 5.13.4
<http://www.searchgodsword.org/his/bc/wfj/war/view.cgi?book=5&chapter=13>

[6] ibid 3, page 351-353

[7] Flavius Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, 2.13.7

[8] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syria>

[9] ibid 8

[10] <http://www.aina.org/articles/assyrianidentity.pdf>

[11] <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/28380/Antiochus-IV-Epiphanes>

[12] <http://cf.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H0804&t=kjv>

[13] <http://cf.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H05248&t=kjv>

[14] <http://cf.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H08152&t=kjv>

[15] <http://www.nineveh.com/Who%20Are%20We/Index.htm>

[16] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assyrian_independence

[17] <http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Muslim+Assyrians>

[18] <http://www.aina.org/news/20080425041302.htm>