Watchman Report - The Antichrist his Mark and Babylon - Issue #5
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By Dr. Christian Widener · Issue #5 · View online

October 29th, 2021

Welcome to the fifth issue of the **End Times Berean Watchman Report**!

Let me help you track the specific trends and events that the Bible tells us to be watching out for.

In this fifth issue, we will be looking at the signs regarding the Antichrist, The Beast, and Babylon the Great.

The Antichrist

Now this is a tough one. There are a lot of possibilities here, but I'm pretty sure that it's going to be a guessing game for quite a while. If I'm correct in recognizing the Abraham Accords as the Daniel's confirmation of the covenant with the many, then presumably the future Antichrist was somehow involved. However, the Antichrist has to rise to power first. He is only given 42 months to reign, not seven years, so we should be watching out for him, while recognizing that it could take quite a while to really know who it is. He will be a master of deception and intrigue, and so fully expect that if he is really out there, he doesn't want to be in spot light yet. At least not in a way that would be conspicuous for identifying him as the Beast.

But anyway, what allows the Antichrist to rise to power? Well, based on my third newsletter, you may guess that I suspect that the system that he is going to control is already trying to "conquer" the world through this global pandemic debacle. But, there is another reason given to us by Paul regarding the "man of lawlessness" and what restrains him. Who is it, and when is he taken out of the way? We know that the Beast will have authority to rule for 42 months, not seven years, but when is the restrainer removed? And will it be all at once or gradually over the previous three and half years?

> 6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming: that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish...
>
> 2 Thessalonians 2:6-10a (NIV)

Paul's letter to the Thessalonians makes it perfectly clear that we are talking about the Antichrist who will be one of the beasts of Revelation. The phrase "so that in his time he will be revealed" implies that the restrainer is removed or begins to be removed well before the Antichrist is revealed "in his time." It would make sense that the restrainer begins to pull back his hand as soon as the first seal is opened. It is also reasonable to assume the restraining hand will be removed in a measured way, even if it is relatively quickly. Lastly, I think that we can assume that this does not mean that all restraint is removed. If that were the case, then the demonic hordes of the Abyss would have no limits on them whatsoever, and surely "no flesh would be saved."

Some have suggested that the Holy Spirit is the restrainer. And in some ways, I agree. The Holy Spirit is God and God is ultimately the one who restrains and sets boundaries on everyone and everything. And yet, God who is omipresent can never really be removed from anywhere. So I think we are talking about the restraining arm of the Lord, which is a practical sense is often accomplished through his angelic host who have been restraining evil in the world since the Fall of Man (or even before depending on when Satan rebelled). We also have the testimony of Daniel that in the last days, that Michael the archangel will arise (i.e. be removed, ordered to stand down, etc.). And if this is the sense, might we already be seeing the removing of restraint on the world? I think so.

> "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued." - Daniel 12:1 (NIV)

The Mark of the Beast

However, there is plenty to say about the trends that I think are leading us towards the Mark of the Beast. First of all, at this point in our technological history, I think we can safely say that the mark will also contain some kind of identifying chip technology, which among other things, will enable buying and selling.

If you've read my blog post, **Thoughts About the Mark of the Beast**, then you also already know that I think it has to be more than just an identification and commerce enabling mark. It must also include a voluntary oath of allegiance and a repudiation of all other affiliations, which we can easily presume will also mean a rejection of faith in Jesus Christ.

Thoughts About the Mark of the Beast – End Times Berean
Thoughts about the inclusion of an oath of allegiance along with the administration of the mark of the beast.
endtimesberean.com · Share

As for current events to develop the technology for such a mark, check out the goals of ID2020, which want to have durable, implantable IDs for everyone on the plant, from birth through death. Their goals sound reasonable and praise-worthy, but between the lines you can see it leading towards 100% governmental accountability and control, which won't end well.

Alliance partners share the belief that identity is a human right and that individuals must have "ownership" over their own identity
Alliance partners share the belief that identity is a human right and that individuals must have "ownership" over their own identity.
id2020.org · Share

But as for going cashless globally, and moving towards a fully digital economy, that is already underway. When you add to that restrictions on buying selling in some countries for people who aren't properly vaccinated, you can see that the world is already being set up to accept limitations on commerce whenever they are out of compliance with government mandates. That means that by the time the Mark of Beast arrives, people will already be thoroughly conditioned to comply with anything they are told to do. "Simon says..."

Why we need to shift toward a cashless world | World Economic Forum
Reducing transaction costs, closing the financial inclusion gap, and fighting corruption are just a few of the benefits.
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The Fed Just Revealed Plans for Digital Dollar Replacement | Newsmax.com
The Fed Just Revealed Plans for Digital Dollar Replacement; Federals has the potential to provide greater value at a lower cost for monetary transactions. Sounds reasonable, if taken at face value.
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The COVID-19 'vaccine passport' is coming. Here's how it could work and how it's legal - ABC News
A COVID-19 "vaccine passport" is coming, and rules about access to businesses, masks wearing and even public transport could all be very different for people depending on whether they are vaccinated or not. Here's what you need to know.
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Babylon the Great

Another tough topic to interpret at this early stage, but I think a pretty good case can be made that any large, corrupt city is a kind of mini-Babylon. And if things are going to get even crazier in the future, then being in the middle of a big urban area when food supplies get interrupted or people start rioting sounds like a bad idea to me. One could argue that I'm not the only one who feels that way, because this past year saw a dramatic exodus of people moving out of big cities. Now some sources are trying to explain it away as an simple response to changing conditions under the pandemic, but I think that's probably a rose colored glasses view.

More Americans Are Leaving Cities, But Don't Call It an Urban Exodus
A year of migration data shows movement outward in some of the densest and most expensive metro areas during the pandemic. But most people stayed close by.
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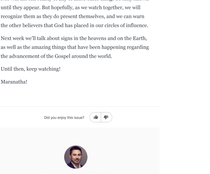
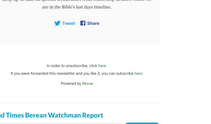


Areas in GREEN indicate positive growth from migration.

However, according to a more recent source, the trend may be beginning to settle out, but the way I read Figure 1, it is still relatively high. Anecdotally, I have met a lot of people that have moved here to South Dakota who felt God was calling them to move away from large urban centers and liberal-led states over the past year and half, so the trends on these charts don't surprise me.

4 Charts Reveal the Urban Exodus Out of Big Cities Is Over: UBS
Migration away from urban areas "has largely ceased" and the next few months will show just how fast cities can recover, UBS economists said Monday.
www.businessinsider.com · Share

Figure 1: Country-level *permanent* migration stable, though a little above yearly trend



Source : UBS Evidence Lab. (x Access Dataset)

Final Thoughts

We look to be only a few years from the full revelation of the Antichrist, at least to Christian observers. Some Christians may already think that they know who that is going to be, but there isn't any way to be truly sure about who he is at the moment. We must keep watching and be on our guard, but we should expect that such a masterful deceiver will not be found out so easily.

Nor will the full reality of any of these other things be fully known until they appear. But hopefully, as we watch together, we will recognize them as they do present themselves, and we can warn the other believers that God has placed in our circles of influence.

Next week we'll talk about signs in the heavens and on the Earth, as well as the amazing things that have been happening regarding the advancement of the Gospel around the world.

Until then, keep watching!

Maranatha!

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By Dr. Christian Widener
Keep up-to-date on specific trends and events which help us know where we are in the Bible's last days timeline.
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