

JESUS' "HORAMA"

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INTRODUCTION

This paper will focus upon the unique vision that Jesus experienced as recorded in scripture at Luke 10:18. Thus in order to distinguish this research topic from a picture of Jesus that persons normally think of when someone says “the vision of Jesus”, then I will often refer to this as Jesus’ horama, a vision given to Jesus - not a vision of Jesus. Though Jesus expresses many other words of wisdom, prophetic knowledge, comfort, etc. as He is empowered by the Holy Spirit, yet there are no other points in scripture where Jesus has a vision of such impact to Him that He immediately exults and rejoices greatly in the Holy Spirit. The Greek word *ὄραμα* (pronounced horama) is defined as:

- a) Analytical Greek Lexicon by Friberg - In the New Testament a supernatural vision, given as a means of divine communication, to be distinguished from a dream
- b) Greek NT Lexicon by Gingrich - vision as opposed to figment of the imagination [*panorama, πᾶν ὄραμα*]
- c) Greek NT Lexicon by Danker - something that is seen by virtue of a transcendent or revelatory experience, vision

This paper will consider the significance that this unique vision given to Jesus is curiously underreported, under-researched, often debated, and a mystery to Biblical commentaries. An extensive list of commentaries and their conflicting opinions will be reviewed as examples to demonstrate this concern. The immediately adjacent verses Luke 10:17, 19-24 will also be examined for their facilitation of context and Jesus’ response to this vision.

The author Stephen Kirk contends that the vision given to Jesus is actually a vision of Barack Obama, as the Satanically controlled Anti-Christ, falling into the Lake of Fire

(Rev 20:10).¹ This very specific personal identification is derived from the translation of the Greek text of Luke 10:18 whereby the words “lightning from heaven” can be phonetically equated to “Barack Obama” if one considers first that Luke translated the pronunciation “bama” which means high place (i.e., bamah) as a Hebrew synonym for heaven. Secondly, the Greek “from” is attributed to a smoothing of the sentence by Luke from the original pronunciation of Barack Obama which in Hebrew directly means “lightning and high place”. The Hebrew conjunctive letter “vav” is converted to a vowel sound for ease of pronunciation as “u” or “oo” when placed before a “b” consonant, thus the “o” for Obama comes from the Hebrew “and”. Luke’s smoothing of a Hebrew “lightning and high place” to the conceptual Greek “lightning from heaven” of Luke 10:18 is thus traced.

Given the often misguided and passionate attempts by many to identify the person of the Anti-Christ throughout history, then this paper will also examine the historical luminaries of the church as they have wrestled with scripture throughout the ages on this Antichrist subject. Hopefully, we may be made wiser in this paper by observing their mistakes and their insights.

The astounding question that we will attempt to address is “Did Jesus see a vision of the final defeat of the Satanically inspired Anti-Christ?”, “Was Jesus given a gift by His Father in heaven to see the climaxing end of the war just as His disciples were starting to begin the battle against Satan’s demons?” What other panoramic, climactic vision could better inspire the Lord Jesus Christ to exult with such intense joy!

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and

¹ Stephen Kirk, *Satan as Barack Obama* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 1.

revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. (Lk. 10:21 NKJ)

ASSESSMENT OF LUKE 10:17-24 COMMENTARIES

This section will provide excerpts of appropriate commentaries as listed below in order to identify how theologians have spoken to the meanings of Luke 10:18 and its associated verses. My commentary on the commentary will be provided following the listing of each commentary's pertinent notes. In summary, the commentary of John T. Carroll in *Luke – A Commentary* reflects what appears to be a correct analysis fully consistent with the work of Stephen Kirk.

Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament²

- 1) There is no way to be certain if this was a vision (Manson 1949:258; U. Muller 1977) or simply a remark, a prophetic declaration about the implications of these events. (p 1006)
- 2) Satan's access to heaven is assumed in Job 1:6-12.....; see especially T. Sol. 20.16-17, which pictures demons falling like lightning to earth. (Note 38, p 1006)
- 3) Jesus says that he watched (Ellis 1974: 157 translates 'Εθεώρουσιν, etheoroun, as "was observing") Satan fall.
- 4) Leaney 1958: 179 notes that the specific picture of a fall from heaven (for the wicked angels, not Satan specifically) comes later in Judaism (e.g., the eighth century ...) (Note 40, p 1007)
- 5) Jesus' rejoicing is described as Spirit directed, thus underscoring its solemnity (Leaney 1958:179). (p1009)
- 6) [Verses Luke 10:21-22] parallel Matt. 11:25-26. In fact, except for the introduction, where Luke alone mentions joy and the Holy Spirit, the two prayers are verbally exact to the end of the verse. Matthew's introduction is general ("at that time"), so it is possible that both writers are referring to the same situation. (p 1010)
- 7) This passage (Luke 10:22) sounds so much like John's material that it has been called "a bolt out of the Johannine blue" (p 1011)
- 8) They (Luke 10:23) are blessed and experience God's favor, because of what they see. βλέπετε (blepete, you are seeing) notes that they are eyewitnesses to great events. (p 1013)
- 9) **Luke 10: 21** Metzger (1975:152) list the four textual options, of which the best two mention the Holy Spirit. (p 1016)

² Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 1006-1016.

The above commentary, item 1, is agnostic in regards to a conclusion of what type of communication genre Luke 10:18 is, whereas other commentaries below make a decision. In regards to item 2 there is an presumptive error because in Job 1:6 Satan came with the sons of God to present themselves before the Lord – the Lord is present everywhere – thus they could have met on Jupiter, not Heaven where Satan has already been cast from! In item 3, the fact that Jesus “was observing” (in the Greek imperfect) the fall of Satan is consistent with a future vision and as both item 4 and item 2 verify the Jewish commentaries of angels falling from heaven comes only after the New Testament thus demonstrating their “angelic falling” concept is simply from being a “copy cat” of the New Testament. Thus Jesus’ words regarding Satan falling from Heaven is not tied to an ancient Jewish idiom! In item 5, the comment that Jesus’ rejoicing in the spirit is a solemn moment is in complete disagreement with common sense and the many other commentaries below. The Johannine “bolt out of the blue” comment from item 7 would indicate that this was a bold insertion by Luke as specifically recommended by one of the eyewitness apostles; thus when Jesus begins verse 22 with “All things have been delivered to Me by My Father” He can certainly be alluding directly to the fact that the vision showed Him that Satan, His arch enemy, has been delivered in defeat before Him! The Jesus’ vision/eyewitness privilege addressed to the apostles “in private” as mentioned by item 8 is thus a confirming support to the Johannine bolt. The confirmation of the unique “exulting in the Holy Spirit” by the respected Metzger further demonstrates the importance of this Luke 10:18-24 record moment of Jesus’ life.

The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary³

- 1) Jesus' oracle is couched in the language of a vision: "I saw" (v. 18). Whether we are to read this as the report of an actual vision, or whether it should be understood as simply a metaphorical description of the significance of the apostle's work may be debated.
- 2) It should be noted that these sayings (v 21-22) use terms that are seldom or never found elsewhere in Luke and Acts (I thank/praise, Father/Son, hidden, wise, intelligent, infants, and chooses). The vocabulary is distinctly non-Lukan.
- 3) Verse 21 contains the first reference to the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Jesus (see 3:22, 4:1) and echoes the celebration of the meeting between Mary and Elizabeth (1:41, 47).
- 4) Verse 23 pronounces a blessing on the disciples for what they have seen, and v. 24 offers an explanation of the blessing. The beatitude affirms the privileged position of the disciples, who have witnessed the mighty works of Jesus and the fall of Satan, alluded to earlier (10:18-19) Even prophets and kings desire to see and hear what the disciples have seen.

The above commentary, item 1, shows that the genre of Luke 10:18 is subject to debate with vision as a legitimate opinion. Item 2 notes and further confirms the atypical language as a non-Lukan specific intentional insertion. In item 3, the commenter notes that here Jesus, Himself echoes both the joy and mystery workings of God in the words of the magnificat of His mother Mary – thus this points to a truly unique event for theological inquiry. Even the disciples are noted as privileged for this moment per item 4.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary⁴

- 1) When the disciples exorcise demons, the forces of evil are shaken, symbolizing the defeat of Satan himself.
- 2) The emphasis on joy combines with another subject of Luke's special interest – the Holy Spirit in the life of Christ. The apparent parallel to this passage (Mt 11:25-27) lacks the reference to joy and the Holy Spirit.
- 3) Here Jesus congratulates the disciples privately on participating in this revelation.
- 4) "These things" in v. 21 is without antecedent, and various solutions have been proposed, among which are as follows: knowledge of the will of God, God's mystery, Jesus' suffering, the plan of God, and the fall of Satan....the

³ R. Alan Culpepper and Gail R. O'Day, *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 224-225.

⁴ David E. Garland and Tremper Longman, III, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 194-195.

powerful manifestation of the dawn of God's kingdom should at least be considered as among these "things" that are revealed.

- 5) ...and it is most likely that it is in the Spirit of God, not Jesus' human spirit, that Jesus exulted.

Many of these comments are repetitive to the previous commentary analysis. However, as items 3 and 4 comment regarding what the antecedent options are then certainly Satan's fall from verse 18 qualifies as the ultimate point of revelation which is why Jesus Himself exceeding exults in the Holy Spirit – it is like a "high five" between Jesus and the Holy Spirit that He also shares with His apostles. As item 1 mentions the disciples are certainly joyful that demons are subject to them (Luke 10:17) for this is the beginning of the invasion into Satan's kingdom, but Jesus is overwhelmingly joyful when He by His vision (Luke 10:18) sees the end of the Satanic kingdom!

The IVP Bible Background Commentary⁵

- 1) But the context and the imperfect tense of the Greek verb ("I was watching") might suggest that something different is in view here (although it could draw on the same image): the self-proclaimed ruler of this age (Lk 4:6) retreating from his position before Jesus' representatives.

The Greek imperfect as also mentioned in other commentaries above supports the Jesus vision analysis. The imperfect tense is used to convey imperfective (progressive) verbal aspect in narrative of past-time contexts. If Jesus was watching the disciples at work via a miraculous view, then I believe He would have stated something to the effect of "I was watching you cast out demons" just like a parent with a little leaguer says "I was watching you hit the ball!" with the you clearly emphasizing not the importance of the hit but the you of relationship.

⁵ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 206.

Evangelical Commentary on the Bible⁶

- 1) When Jesus says that he saw Satan fall from heaven (v. 18), he is not speaking of Satan's prehistoric fall, nor is he referring to a vision he had during the disciples' ministry, nor is he predicting Satan's future fall. He is merely describing in symbolic terms the impact of the disciples' ministry.
- 2) Jesus' words show that the knowledge of God is a gift bestowed from above, and thus it follows that the disciples are privileged to see the revelation of the Father in the Son. Many Old testament persons wanted to see this capstone of God's self-revelation, but it was not part of God's gracious purpose (v. 24)

If Jesus was speaking in symbolic terms as item 1 concludes, then His Luke 10:18

comment is out of order. It would be like the LSU baseball player calling to tell his dad

that they were ahead 10-0 in the 8th inning of the first playoff game and then the Father

responding immediately by saying "I was watching you win the NCAA championship!"

That Father's response would be presumptuous unless it was a vision!

The Pulpit Commentary⁷

- 1) Their Master replied in an exalted and exultant strain – strange and rare sounds on the lips of the Man of sorrows – telling them how he had been looking – not on a few spirits of evil driven out of unhappy men, but on the king and chief of all evil falling from his sad eminence and throne of power like a flash of lightning.
- 2) V. 21 – In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit. More than "rejoiced;" the Greek word rather signifies "exulted". Very rarely in the holy story of the life of lives is a hint given us of any gleam of gladness or of joy irradiating the spirit of the Man of sorrows.
- 3) These last words (vs. 24), the evangelist expressly says were spoken privately.

These comments have been addressed in the previous commentaries; however, the further

uniqueness of the Man of sorrows (items 1 and 2) exulting in these verses points to its

importance.

⁶ Walter A. Elwell, *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), 820.

⁷ H.D.M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers), 272-275.

The Eerdmans Bible Commentary⁸

- 1) Jesus is speaking metaphorically. He has a vision of the spiritual defeat of Satan which took place at the cross;.....v. 22 the slight difference in wording from Mt. 11:27 does not affect the meaning.

If Jesus was speaking of the spiritual defeat which took place at the cross, then this stands in awkward contrast to his words in Gethsemane:

"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." (Matt. 26:38 NKJ).

Therefore, the commenter is incorrect, since the "falling" vision is actually derived from:

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (Rev. 20:10 NKJ)

College Press NIV Commentary⁹

- 1) In fact, he too rejoices, exclaiming, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Jesus is speaking figuratively here, and his point is simply that Satan is being defeated, as his demonic forces are being cast out. The imagery of Satan's falling from heaven is based on Isaiah 14:12 (see Rev 12:7-10).
- 2) He rejoices through the Holy Spirit, signifying that the following prayer was inspired by the Spirit.
- 3) Luke's comment that he is now speaking to his disciples... privately probably implies simply that he has finished his prayer to God and is now addressing his followers. The blessing, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see," indicates just how privileged Jesus' followers are, but it also suggests how fortunate are Luke's readers...

In regards to item 1, if Jesus had previously cast out demons in His ministry, but never exulted in the Holy Spirit then, the question becomes why does He rejoice so exceedingly here as He is supposedly speaking figuratively unless it is a magnificent vision?

⁸ D. Guthrie and J.A. Moyer, ed., *The Eerdmans Bible Commentary*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.M. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), 905.

⁹ Mark C. Black, *College Press NIV Commentary* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing, 1996), 212-213.

The IVP New Testament Commentary Series¹⁰

- 1) There is some discussion as to what event is in view here. Does Jesus really refer to his current ministry or that of his disciples? Two other candidates are sometimes suggested: (1) the fall of Satan as described in Isaiah 14 and (2) the future defeat of Satan as described in Revelation 20. The second option is highly unlikely, since that would ask Jesus' audience in Luke to understand an allusion to a book not yet written. The allusion to Isaiah requires that Isaiah be read as describing Lucifer only. But that text may well be a typological passage about an early king who portrays himself as God and whose arrogance parallels that of Satan, the fallen star. It is much more natural contextually to relate Jesus' comment to the disciples' words, especially given how the imagery of defeat reappears in 11:21-23 in the context of miraculous activity. (from text Note on Luke 10:18)

The commenter precludes the Revelation 20 candidate above out of hand; yet it is obvious that prophetic visions of future Biblical events are often hard for the immediate audience to understand when one considers Daniel, Revelation, Ezekiel, and the list is extensive!

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scriptures¹¹

- 1) Satan falls from heaven because Jesus has come from heaven to defeat him (Cyril of Alexandria). Like lightning that flashes for a moment and is gone, so also is Satan's power vanquished as he falls beneath the victory of the cross that crushes him as was foretold in Genesis (Ephrem the Syrian)
- 2) The Victory of the Cross Crushes Satan – Ephrem the Syrian: "I was looking at Satan, who fell like lightning from the heavens." It was not that he was actually in the heavens. He was not in them when he said, "I will place my throne above the stars." but he fell from his greatness and dominion. "I was looking at Satan, who fell like lightning from the heavens." He did not fall from heaven, because lightning does not fall from heaven, since the clouds create it. Why then did he say "from the heavens"? This was because it was as though it was from the heavens, as if lightning which comes suddenly. In one second, Satan fell beneath the victory of the cross.
- 3) As I have already said, he was full of joy, or rather of exultation because he knew that those he sent had benefited many..... Cyril of Alexandria

It is noteworthy that Ephrem the Syrian asks a critical question of 'Why then did he say "from the heavens"?' It is an oversight that no other modern day commenters have

¹⁰ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke – The IVP New Testament Commentary Series* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1994), 192-193.

¹¹ Authur A. Just, ed. and Thomas C. Oden, gen. ed., *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scriptures* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2003), 174-177.

noticed this unusual wording of Luke 10:18. It is obvious when one considers that whenever a person sees an astounding lightning strike they may mention the earthly object that the lightning strikes, or rarely mention the cloud that the lightning strike originates from, but they never mention heaven or the skies as the source of lightning. Why – because it is physically obvious – and need not be stated! So why would Luke go to unusual lengths to record the phrase “from the heaven” (ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ). Only the work of Stephen Kirk answers this question!

Luke - A Commentary¹²

- 1) Jesus’ vision of Satan’s fall, then, must be a prophetic vision of the future, final defeat of Satan.
- 2) The note of joy....to Jesus’ preceding comment: “That very hour he joyfully exclaimed in the Spirit, “I praise your Father....”
- 3) In a fashion reminiscent of earlier prophetic oracles by Zechariah and Simeon (1:67; 2:25-27), the Spirit now inspires both rejoicing and a message.
- 4) Jesus first addresses God in prayer (10:21), then speaks to a general audience (v. 22) before directing to the disciples a private comment that concludes the unit (vv.23-24)
- 5) What he asserted then he reaffirms now: not Satan, whose demise he has just witnessed in a prophetic vision (10:18), but God is Lord and worthy of worship.
- 6) Jesus’ prayer “in the Spirit” and the following lines about knowing, seeing, and hearing (10:21-24), however, go further. They picture a God who graciously reveals to some but withholds from others. They contrast the present blessedness of the disciples, who see (God’s work of salvation), to the frustrated desire of their predecessors in Israel—even kings and prophets—who wanted to see and hear (vv. 23-24, perhaps including even the prophet John? [cf. 7:22-23])

The commentary of John T. Carroll appears to correctly address in all facets of Luke 10:17-24. Jesus has a vision of the final defeat of Satan, He rejoices in the Spirit exceedingly for the prophetic revelation from the Father God, and He informs His disciples of what a privilege they have had to have heard this prophetic event and seen

¹² John T. Carroll, *Luke – A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), 238-242.

Jesus, Himself rejoicing! Only the additional developments of Stephen Kirk are needed to complete the specific revelation of the person of the Antichrist.

HISTORICAL IDENTIFICATION OF THE ANTICHRIST

This section will provide excerpts of appropriate resources that are dedicated to describing who or what the Antichrist has been theorized to be throughout history. For initial orientation we can acquire a clear definition of the Antichrist from the following source material:¹³

“John defines the antichrist as the one who denies that God has come in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ (I John 2:22, 4:3; 2 John 7)”

“The evil-ruler tradition and the false-prophet tradition seem to converge in Rev. 13 as the beast from the sea (the antichrist) and the beast from the earth (the false prophet).”

“..., Revelations indicates that the “beast coming out of the sea” is empowered by Satan (vv.1-2, 4), masquerades as Christ (vv. 1, 3, 12, 14), accepts worship as a god (vv. 4, 8), wields extensive power (vv. 4, 7), blasphemes and slanders God (vv. 1, 5-6), and ruthlessly persecutes the saints (v. 7). The “beast coming out of the earth” (emperor cult) is also empowered by Satan (vv.11, 14), promotes the worship of the first beast (vv. 12, 14-15), performs signs and wonders designed to deceive (vv.13-15), and causes those who refused to worship the first beast to be put to death physically (v. 15) or economically (vv.16-17).

No comment will be made on the individual opinions of these luminary theologians, since history speaks for itself regarding the earlier Antichrist identifications and the future remains to be seen. The politics are certainly against the thesis of this paper, since “Richard Landes (in his book *Lest the Millenium Be Fulfilled*) has argued that the tradition of western chronography, if read against the grain, is in fact a “conspiracy” among ecclesial officials to quell millennial expectations by postponing the eschaton to a

¹³ Tremper Longman III, gen. ed., *The Baker Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 76-77.

safe distance from the present.”¹⁴ Only a summary conclusion of these various Antichrist excerpts will be made as pertinent relative to the specific Stephen Kirk assessments.

Summary of Patristic Opinions¹⁵

Initial patristic opinions generally assume that the apostasy will be “(1) ...a departure from Roman authority, either as an imperial political power or as an ecclesial spiritual authority, (2) the “Son of Perdition, Man of Sin” presents an Antichrist who will be a single human being come either to persecute the faithful (dread) or to lead astray (deception) or both, and (3) that his work is foreshadowed in persecutions by Nero and his successors to the throne.

Hippolytus¹⁶

“culled from earlier sources (by Hippolytus): Antichrist will be of Jewish origin; he will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, gather disciples, and send them out to spread the message, restore the Roman Empire, and persecute Christianity.”

Ambrosiaster¹⁷

“Ambrosiaster’s Antichrist is, above all, the false idol, the personification of the devil’s deceptions, and this personification finds its clearest exemplar in Rome (as paganism)”.

Theodore¹⁸

“He will be a man, with a demon working everything in him, just as God in the Word seems to have accomplished everything in that man who was assumed for our salvation.”

“His means of persuasion will be the many ‘lying signs and prodigies’, which, according to Theodore, means that they will be ‘more phantasm than actual work’.”

“...neither the devil’s present work nor the future coming of Antichrist has any relation to the Roman Empire or the Jews. Theodore refrains from any and all extra-ecclesial apocalyptic referents.”

Jerome¹⁹

“Jerome explains the obscurity of Paul’s reference to the Empire’s fall with fear of persecution:If he had said boldly and openly, ‘Antichrist will not come

¹⁴ Kevin L. Hughes, *Constructing Antichrist: Paul, Biblical Commentary, and the Development of Doctrine in the Early Middle Ages*, (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 57-63.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

until the Roman Empire falters,' a just cause for persecution of the church ... would then seem to arise."

Tyconius²⁰

"The 'enemy body', which Paul calls the 'man of sin', is in the temple , claiming to be the Church."

"it (Tyconius's collection of essays) also develops a sustained inquiry into the 'mystery of iniquity', the enigmatic presence of evil within the Church."

Augustine²¹

"Augustine clearly reads this text through the eyes of Tyconius. Antichrist for him is present within the Church now, as the body of potential schismatics, as much as he will come in the future as a historical figure seated in the Church or restoring the Jewish Temple cult."

Gregory the Great²²

"His belief in the incarnation of the devil probably stems from his theological penchant for symmetry: Antichrist truly is the opposite of Christ, and as Christ is the "man assumed by God", so, too, Antichrist is the "man assumed by the devil".

Rabanus Maurus²³

"For Rabanus, then, the historical Antichrist – the eschatological Adversary – is a rival king, a warrior, and a tyrant, while the immanent body of Antichrist is moral and theological -- members are marked by heresy and apostasy. It is as if for Rabanus, the threat of human evil in the immediate future is not political or military, but within."

Haimo²⁴

"Haimo's portrait of Antichrist is a summary of classic Christian apocalyptic. Antichrist is called 'Man of Sin' because, 'although he may be only a man, he will be the font of all sinners'. He is called the 'Son of Perdition' because he is the son of the devil by imitation, not by nature,...."

"Haimo is the first in this (patristic) exegetical tradition to affirm his (Antichrist) humanity clearly and unequivocally.

²⁰ Ibid., 91.

²¹ Ibid., 103.

²² Ibid., 109.

²³ Ibid., 137-138.

²⁴ Ibid., 154 and 161.

Adso²⁵

“In Adso’s treatise, Antichrist will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and be enthroned in the church.”

Bruno the Carthusian²⁶

“The body of Antichrist, already present in the Church, will become prominent when the *imperium* (Christian and temporal rulers) fails.”

Peter Lombard²⁷

“Peter’s exclusion of Antichrist from the *Sentences* reflects his opinion that “it is not a subject upon which responsible theologians research can be done. It is not a field in which certitude is available. Thus it should not be allowed to obstruct the logical and theological passage of the structure from the ethical and sacramental lives of Christians to their posthumous outcomes.”

Pope Urban II²⁸

“..when Pope Urban II conceived of the first crusade...he appealed to the necessity of Christians retaking Jerusalem so that Antichrist will arise and, in turn, begin the process of bringing about the events that are a prelude to the end.”

Martin Luther²⁹

“Luther declared that the ‘pope is the masked and incarnate devil because he is the Antichrist,’ and that Christians have been ‘warned about this deadly pestilence by Daniel, Christ, Paul, Peter, and others.’”

Westminster Confession of Faith³⁰

“There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, that Man of Sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God.”

The Antichrist as described in the listing of historical assessments above was shown to have quite a bit of variety throughout history. He was identified as everything from false church members, Popes, revived Roman paganism, tyrants, those who reject the

²⁵ Ibid., 170.

²⁶ Ibid., 205.

²⁷ Ibid., 236, footnote 142.

²⁸ Kim Riddlebarger, *The Man of Sin: Uncovering the Truth about The AntiChrist*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2006), 145.

²⁹ Ibid., 149.

³⁰ Ibid., 153.

Roman Catholic church, and even spiritualized as the presence of the “mystery of iniquity” within the Church. However, it is noteworthy that the end times Antichrist must have military power and use worship of himself as “a Christian identification tool” to determine who is on his side:

MILITARY POWER - So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. 13:4 NKJ)

WORSHIP POWER - He [false prophet] was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. (Rev. 13:15 NKJ)

Therefore, we can use these two criteria which are present in many of the writings of the church fathers to evaluate the above listing in terms of feasibility. In fact, it is interesting that many of the church fathers assumed that the failure of the Western government (whether Rome or its medieval descendants) would lead to the great apostasy and entre’ of the Antichrist. Likewise, the sudden and catastrophic ruin of the Western powers is described in the Isaiah 18 prophecy as translated by Stephen Kirk.³¹ Additionally, there is no waiting period for a Jerusalem temple to be rebuilt, since the word for Temple is the same word used for the church, the body of Christ.³² This view is consistent with many of the church father’s comments above. There is no “Get Out of Tribulation” rapture card to save the Church from the tribulation.³³ Again this view is consistent with many of the church fathers such as Augustine who says, “[this] is exactly what Daniel predicted, for the kingdom of Antichrist will assail the church before Christ returns to rescue his people.”³⁴ In fact, the tribulation could effectively begin this very minute with the unleashing of a nuclear holocaust upon the USA. These existing conditions of immediate

³¹ Kirk, 43.

³² Ibid., 68.

³³ Ibid., 49.

³⁴ Riddlebarger, 140.

potential chaos certainly make the imminent possibility for a Barack Obama seizure of total military power possible.

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

There is room within the existing and independent systematic theological commentary assessments of Luke 10:17-24 for compatibility with the theory of Stephen Kirk that Barack Obama is the Antichrist. There is no doubt that circumstances could quickly fall into place for a Barack Obama seizure of vast military power. Dictator worship, as irksome as it is, has been used throughout history to separate friend from foe by tyrants. Such events are certainly consistent with the predicted Antichrist's behavior.

Others have tried to determine the Antichrist name via gematria algorithms around the numbers 666. However, this is a fundamentally flawed concept since when given a starting point of a person's name and the ending point of 666, then anyone can develop a code system to accomplish this transition. It is simply an application of encryption techniques. However, Stephen Kirk has found a unique verse (i.e., Luke 10:18) where Jesus has a prophetic vision of future events by all indications. This singular approach by Stephen Kirk to identify the Antichrist based on the vision of Luke 10:18 is unprecedented, yet it breaks no hermeneutical guidelines. The resulting simile from the Aramaic/Hebrew lips of Jesus as translated into Greek and communicated in Luke's gospel does not fit with the physical, logical, historical, or theological genre' of the event. Therefore, further investigations are called for. The "forensic evidence" of Luke 10:18 containing the names of both Satan and Barack Obama are too coincidental to ignore.

The key and only challenge to the theory of Stephen Kirk would be if there is some other explanation for the unusual phrase "from the heaven" in Luke 10:18. However, this

prepositional phrase “as is” does not fit with a normal person’s description of a typical lightning strike. This phrase does not fit with any Jewish idioms.³⁵ This phrase does not fit with any Jewish theological teachings before the New Testament.³⁶ This phrase is not even a good simile, since the remarkable feature of “lightning from heaven” is how extremely fast and sudden it occurs! Yet, Satan though bound wherever the gospel is preached and believed on, is still active, lingering, and in the case of ISIS is winning throughout many places. The kingdom of heaven, which must displace Satan’s realm, is in fact a slow growing device in Jesus’ similes of sowing seed, the mustard seed, the leaven in bread, a king settling accounts with stewards, a vineyard owner hiring laborers! Similarly, if anyone said “World War II or the Cold War was a flash in time”, then they would most certainly be questioned as to “What are you saying?” Likewise, the bad simile of Luke 10:18 is a strong indicator that something is amiss (or better yet hidden) in the translation from Jesus words to the scripture itself and thus needs to be investigated.

Of course Luke, being the faithful historian he was, recorded Jesus’ unique exulting in the Holy Spirit event as best he and the other disciples understood it. But they were all hampered by the exclusion from the hidden “key” of the personal name, Barack Obama. At that time there was no Barack Obama to fulfill the verses prophecy. The same verb ἀπεκάλυψας / ἀποκαλυφθῆ is used in both the classic description of the Antichrist being revealed and the Luke 10:21 revealing discourse below.

Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, (2 Thess. 2:3 NKJ)

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent

³⁵ Kirk, 9.

³⁶ Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 1007.

and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.
(Lk. 10:21 NKJ)

As Jesus states “you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes”; therefore, there should be no surprise that the disciples and the church have misunderstood Jesus’ *δραμα* to these many centuries. Yet, the question before us is “Will we today viewing the ‘preliminary antichrist behaviors’ of Barack Obama attempt to remain “wise and prudent” and thus have this warning of revelation hidden from us, too?”

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