

DOCTRINE OF ANTICHRIST

- I. Introduction.
- A. While the term **antichrist** is used only five times in the New Testament, this individual has been the subject of much discussion and speculation among unbelievers and believers alike.
 - B. One must make a distinction between the one **Antichrist** and the many antichrists that have appeared in human history. IJn. 2:18
 - C. While Jewish eschatology had a place for the Antichrist, their beliefs were numerous and varied, with nothing that may be properly called a consensus.
 - D. There is no question that Jewish belief about this issue, which was based on prophetic passages of scripture, was adapted and modified by Christians due to further revelation.
 - E. In order to properly identify this singular **Antichrist**, his place in history, and his career, one must have a thorough knowledge of the prophetic writings, especially the book of Daniel, the prophecies of Jesus, Second Thessalonians, and the book of Revelation.
 - F. As we pointed out in the introduction to the book of Revelation, there are a number of schools of interpretation with respect to that book and the Antichrist.
 - 1. The preterist view of prophecy maintains that the prophecies of Revelation and other books of the Bible have already been fulfilled.
 - 2. The historical or continuous school believes that the Revelation is a progressive history of the church from the first century to the end of time.
 - G. The futurist school of interpretation allows for various anti-God movements and persons throughout human history, but sees the Antichrist as the ultimate culmination of Satan's counterfeit for Christ.
 - H. This method of interpretation also allows for a man to appear on the stage of human history at the end of time who will lead a worldwide rebellion against God, but will be destroyed by Jesus Christ at the Second Advent.
- II. Titles for Antichrist.
- A. This person is identified by many names or phrases in the Bible, each one providing insight into the character of this man.
 - B. ἀντιχριστος (antichristos) is the most common name by which this man is known.
 - 1. The name is a compound of the preposition ἀντί (anti) and χριστος (christos). IJn. 2:18, 4:3
 - 2. The term is understood by most to mean against Christ, but the Greek preposition also means **in place of or instead of**; this stresses the fact that he is not merely against Christ, but attempts to take His place and represent himself as being Christ.
 - C. ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας (hos anthropos tes anomias), the man of lawlessness as seen in II Thessalonians 2:3,8
 - 1. This term indicates that he is totally human in every sense of the word.
 - 2. The use of the term **lawlessness** stresses his complete antagonism to, and rejection of, all divine laws or restraints.
 - D. ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας (hos huios tes apoleias), the son of destruction. II Thess. 2:3
 - 1. This is an Hebraic form that is used to convey the character or destiny of someone.
 - 2. He, like Judas, is doomed to eternal destruction. Jn. 17:12; Rev. 17:8

- E. **θηρίον** (therion), beast. Rev. 13:1, 17:8
 1. This word stresses that the lower nature will predominate in this man; he will be ruled by the basest of impulses, will act like an animal, and will be hostile to the best interests of mankind.
 2. The added explanation that he arises out of the sea is a prophetic method that indicates that he is a Gentile.
- F. **The little horn.** Dan. 7:8,11
 1. In prophetic passages, the horn is used to denote political power.
 2. A horn rising up indicates the commencement or revival of a nation of political power.
- G. **The prince who is to come.** Dan. 9:26
 1. The fact that his people are mentioned indicates that he has a history with the Roman Empire, actually the Revived Roman Empire.
 2. The term **prince** is used to emphasize his position of royal power and authority.

III. The origin of Antichrist.

- A. This awesome person has so much ascribed to him in such a short period of time that some may tend to believe that he is superhuman.
- B. In fact, many scriptures support the fact that the Antichrist is completely human in every sense of the word.
 1. Daniel 7:8 ascribes eyes and a mouth to him, which denotes his intelligence verbal propaganda.
 2. Daniel 7:24 mentions that he has a kingdom and that he is somewhat different than the ten kings with whom he is associated.
 3. Daniel 9:26 notes that he is a prince and is associated with a particular people.
 4. II Thessalonians 2:3 uses both the terms **man** and **son** to refer to the character of the Antichrist.
- C. The normal masculine pronouns such as **he** and **his** are used of this man. Dan. 7:24; II Thess. 2:4ff
- D. The thing that sets this man apart from his contemporaries in human history is the fact that he has lived on the earth once before and has been resuscitated from the dead out of Hades. Rev. 11:7, 13:3, 17:8-10
 1. He must have lived before the time of the writing of the book of Revelation, a man with a history prior to 96 AD.
- E. He must be a king from the pre-Roman past, and must be from a kingdom that is intimately associated with the mother/son cult. Rev. 17:9-11
 1. The seven heads on the beast represent seven mountains (prophetic language for kingdoms) that have been dominated religiously by the mother/son cult. Rev. 17:9 **...on which the woman sits...**
 2. Chronologically and historically, these kingdoms includes:
 - a. Egypt, with the cult of Isis and Osiris.
 - b. Assyria, with the cult of Ashtaroth and Baal.
 - c. Babylon, with the cult of Ishtar and Belshazzar.
 - d. Medo-Persia, who worshipped the names of Anahita and Mithra.
 - e. Greece, with the cult of Diana and Bacchus/Zeus.
 - f. Rome, with the cult of Venus and Cupid/Mars.
 - g. The Revived Roman Empire, who worship the mother/son cult under the names of Mary and Jesus.

3. Since the beast is declared to be one of the seven, but **was and is not**, he must have existed before the Roman Empire and we can safely eliminate any of the kingdoms after Greece. Rev. 17:11

IV. The time of his reappearance in human history.

- A. The Scripture clearly indicates that his appearance, as the ultimate manifestation of the mystery of lawlessness, is being hindered at present by God the Holy Spirit. II Thess. 2:6-7
- B. The time of his reappearance in human history is keyed to the end of the current dispensation (the Church Age) and the resumption of the Age of Israel, which will complete the missing seven years of Daniel's 70th week. Dan. 9:24; II Thess. 2:7
- C. God clearly controls the timing of his appearance as seen by the fact that the Lamb must open the 1st seal before he can come forth. Rev. 6:1-2
- D. At the opening of the first seal, the soul of Antichrist ascends out of Hades, is reunited with his physical body, and returns to planet earth as part of God's judgment on negative volition. II Thess. 2:9-12; Rev. 11:7, 13:3, 17:8
- E. He appears immediately after the removal of the church at the rapture and remains present on the planet for the entire seven years before the return of Christ at the Second Advent. II Thess. 2:6; Rev. 17:12
 1. His appearance is part of the **hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world**. Rev. 3:10, 17:12
 2. As we have noted previously, the term **half an hour** is used to denote 3½ years, or half of the final seven years. Rev. 8:1
- F. The Antichrist appears at the time in human history when the world is most ready, willing, able, and eager to receive that which is opposed to God and His plan.
 1. Paul clearly taught that the last days were to be characterized as a period of maximum personal degeneracy. II Tim. 3:1-4
 2. The false scientific theory of uniformitarian evolution will be the predominant thinking concerning origins. II Pet. 3:3
 3. Religious defection and apostasy will be rampant, as the church has descended into a nauseating state that is described as lukewarm. II Tim. 3:5-7, 4:3-4; Rev. 3:14ff
 4. There is an international conspiracy that will actively promote the concept of a one-world global government. II Thess. 2:3; Ps. 2:1ff
 5. In fact, the world will be in such a state of rebellion against God and evil as to demand the events of **the great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall**. Matt. 24:21
 6. It is clear that God sends this man into human history in order to render His righteous judgment on all those that reject the truth. II Thess. 2:11-12

V. His career.

- A. His relationship to Satan.
 1. While it is clear that the Antichrist is at first a man that has been resuscitated from Hades, his very presence is declared to be in accord with the activity of Satan. II Thess. 2:9
 2. He will exercise great power both before and after the middle of Daniel's 70th week, which will ultimately find its source in Satan. II Thess. 2:9-10a; Rev. 13:2b
 3. The ultimate satanic goal for the career of this man will be the mass deception of all mankind, something at which he will succeed. II Thess. 2:10; Rev. 13:3-4b
 4. At the midpoint of Daniel's 70th week, Satan and his angels will be expelled forcibly from Heaven, denied further access to Heaven, and confined to planet earth. Rev. 12:7-12

5. At this point, Satan will possess the Antichrist, resulting in him becoming the Satan/man.
 6. At this point, he will proclaim himself to be God in the flesh and demand the worship of all humanity. II Thess. 2:4
 7. While the Antichrist will appear in human history immediately following the rapture and will remain on the planet for the entire seven years of Daniel's 70th week; however, his satanic possession and real career of religious persecution and murder will occur primarily during the last 3½ years.
 - a. This length of time is referred to in the Bible by the phrases **time, times and half a time** (Dan. 7:25, 12:7; Rev. 12:14), **42 months** (Rev. 11:2, 13:5), and **1,260 days**. Rev. 12:6
- B. His relationship with the nations.
1. The nations that will be most closely associated with the Antichrist are the ten nations that will comprise the Revived Roman Empire (RRE), the modern form of which is the European Union (EU). Rev. 17:12
 - a. The ten horns of the beast are identical prophetically with the ten toes of the great image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream and the ten horns Daniel saw in his dream. Dan. 7:7, 2:42; Rev. 17:3,12
 - b. The ten toes of the image represent the ten nations/kingdoms/kings that will rule at the end of human history, whom Antichrist will use as his initial base of power to implement his vision of world conquest.
 - c. Although he uses the ten nations politically, economically, militarily, and religiously to fulfill his plans, three of them will be defeated when they rebel against the Antichrist. Dan. 7:20,24
 - d. Antichrist will be the man that leads the forces of the RRE/EU in the Armageddon campaign; he is also known as the king of the West. Dan. 11:40ff; Rev. 16:13-16
 2. He will be successful in certain aspects of his military campaigns, overthrowing and plundering certain countries. Dan. 11:42-43
 3. He will have enemy nations that withstand him, including the king of the North (the former Soviet Union), the king of the South (Egypt), and the kings of the East (a confederation of oriental nations). Dan. 11:40,44-45; Rev. 9:14-16
 4. He will move south across northern Africa and lead his forces toward Israel, where he will encounter the forces of the other armies; however, they will all unite in an effort to fight Jesus Christ at His return. Rev. 19:19
- C. His relationship to Israel.
1. Initially, during his rise to power, the Antichrist appears to be a pro-Semitic, peaceful man in order to gain mastery over other existing powers.
 2. With the nuclear destruction of the United States, which occurs during the first half of the third year of Daniel's 70th week, Israel will sign a seven-year treaty with the Antichrist and recognize him as their messiah in return for his guarantee of military protection. Dan. 9:27
 3. He will murder the two witnesses after the first 3½ years of Daniel's 70th week, gaining the admiration and accolades of the entire world. Rev. 11:7ff
 4. He will engage in active persecution of all believers, many of whom will be Jewish. Rev. 12:13-17
 5. When he signs the treaty with Israel, he will eventually terminate the ritual worship that has been resumed in the third Temple. Dan. 9:27; II Thess. 2:4

IV. The cult of Antichrist.

A. His worldwide popularity.

1. There is no doubt that when Antichrist returns to planet earth he will be able to document his claim that he has returned from the dead, making him an instant celebrity. Rev. 13:3
2. During the first half of Daniel's 70th week, Antichrist will rise to power and consolidate his position as the leader of the RRE/EU.
3. He will establish himself as a formidable force in the world and will demonstrate a military reputation that is unequalled. Rev. 13:4
4. He will actively oppose the ministry of the two witnesses, who are a source of torment to the world of negative unbelievers. Rev. 11:10
5. He will demonstrate miraculous satanic powers, including misleading signs and wonders, which are employed to deceive those that witness them. II Thess. 2:9-10a

B. His relationship to the false prophet.

1. The false prophet does not arise from the sea as Antichrist did, indicating that he is not a Gentile. Rev. 13:11
2. He is the final part of the satanic trinity, corresponding to the Holy Spirit, who is the agent that is designed to glorify Antichrist by promoting the worship of him. Rev. 13:12
3. Therefore, the false prophet is an unregenerate Jew, possessed with many of the same satanic abilities as the Antichrist. Rev. 13:11-14
4. He will command that an image of Antichrist be constructed and that all mankind worship that image. Rev. 13:14b-15
5. At some point in Daniel's 70th week (probably around the middle), the false prophet will cause the statue to be animated. Rev. 13:15
6. Failure to participate in the cult of Antichrist will be punished by death, much as it was in the ancient Roman Empire. Rev. 13:15
7. In order to encourage those that are wavering, he institutes an economic system that requires a mark (probably a laser tattoo or computer chip) on the hand or forehead if one intends to engage in any economic activity. Rev. 13:16-17

C. The Antichrist and other religions.

1. This man will not employ the current cosmic approach to religious tolerance that pervades society at this time.
2. After his recognition as Israel's messiah, he will begin a campaign that is designed to eliminate any religious activity that is not directed toward him. II Thess. 2:4
3. He will be completely antagonistic to any form of religion, religious ritual, or overt symbols of religion. II Thess. 2:4
4. He will ultimately be so successful in his campaign that he will destroy and plunder the most successful religion in the world at that time, the mother/son cult of the Roman Catholic Church. Rev. 17:16-18
5. With the destruction of European Catholicism, the Antichrist will serve notice on all religions that he will not tolerate any rivals.
6. Satan will eventually destroy all the false religions he has employed over the course of human history to delude and enslave mankind; then he will replace them with the worship of himself in the person of Antichrist. Rev. 13:2,8,15
7. God will provide an angelic announcement warning all those on the earth not to participate in his economic system, or to engage in the worship of the beast or his image. Rev. 14:9-11
8. After his possession by Satan in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, his cult will seem to be invincible and he will enjoy success against all that oppose him. Dan. 11:36, 12:7; Rev. 13:6-7

- VI. His defeat and destruction.
- A. Just as his appearance and career are the subject of prophecy, even so his defeat and ultimate end are foretold in the prophetic scriptures.
 - B. He will appear to be invincible in many ways and the world will be completely enamoured with him; nevertheless, the Lord Jesus Christ will quickly and easily defeat him. II Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:11-20
 - C. His defeat is detailed in the following prophetic passages. Dan. 7:11,26, 9:27, 11:45; II Thess. 2:8; Rev. 17:14
 - D. His eternal destruction is predicted in Daniel 7:11,26; Revelation 17:8,11, and 19:20.
- VII. The identification of Antichrist.
- A. The identification of Antichrist has been the subject of much discussion and, very often, of ill-founded speculation over the centuries.
 - B. However, it should be clear that the final generation will have the clearest view of history, and many of the prophetic writings will be illumined and understood as they have not been in the past. Dan. 12:4, 9-10
 - C. If one simply studies what is recorded in the scripture and what is clearly revealed, this would prevent much of the speculative theology that has plagued prophetic interpretation throughout the church age.
 - D. It is readily obvious that Antichrist is a man that has lived on the earth previously and is returned to the stage of human history by God. Rev. 6:1-2, 11:7, 17:8
 - E. Revelation 17:10 makes it quite clear that this man is a king that ruled prior to the existence of the Roman Empire.
 - F. Another essential factor that must be taken into consideration is the fact that Antichrist comes from a nation with a history of the mother/son cult. Rev. 17:9
 - G. One must understand that each of these seven kingdoms has a history with, and have played an important part with Israel.
 - H. The five specific kingdoms that preceded Rome include Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece.
 - I. The most famous ruler of Babylon must be disqualified since he became a believer and could not ascend from Hades. Dan. 4:34-37
 - J. The most notable leader of Persia might be considered as a potential candidate; however, the Persian Empire never extended further west than Asia Minor.
 - K. The kings of the Assyrian Empire are largely unknown and would not be recognized by most contemporary cultures; again, their kingdom did not extend as far west as Asia Minor.
 - L. Egypt does offer the very attractive option of having many famous pharaohs; however, they must be eliminated since their kingdom never extended far northward from the African continent, and never into Europe.
 - M. The reason that the geographic and racial issue must be given serious consideration is related to the fact that one could not expect Europeans to embrace a leader that was not European himself.
 1. This is documented by the current mentality that has been expressed by the former French Prime Minister, who said, *"I feel European. I want a Europe which affirms its own identity and stands out in the world."*
 2. Further, there is a growing concern about the manner in which the EU is led, and some have suggested that a strong central leader be appointed for an extended term rather than the six-month term that is currently employed.

3. The following site contains a call for reform of the European leadership with the conclusion that the best case scenario would be for the EU to have two strong leaders, an EU chairman and a Commission president (a beast and false prophet?)
http://www.cer.org.uk/articles/times_grant0702.html
- N. This leaves the most obvious and attractive solution to be the most notable ruler of Greece; the most celebrated military genius of history—Alexander the Great.
1. He is the most familiar and romanticized leader of antiquity, and the human race is still quite infatuated with him; there are several thousand web sites devoted to this man.
 2. He was the greatest military leader of all time, successful in organizing and leading his troops to conquer the known world of his day.
 3. He was a negative unbeliever with dreams of world domination that were cut short by his untimely death.
 4. He had a strong messianic complex, and clearly believed the declaration from the Oracle at Siwa that he was the Son of God.
 5. He was a strong internationalist, who encouraged racial mixing and who adopted many foreign customs himself.
 6. He was never defeated militarily, but died an unexpected death from a mysterious illness that has never been fully explained.
 7. Although we have the tomb of His father Philip of Macedon, Alexander's body has never been recovered; the place of his burial is still a mystery.
 8. Out of the fragments of his earthly kingdom arises a type of antichrist, namely Antiochus Epiphanes.
 9. Further the details contained in the book of Daniel indicate that the fourth beast, which is clearly the RRE, has a connection with the third kingdom since it had **claws of bronze**. Dan. 7:19
 10. This would further tend to confirm the identification of the most famous leader of Greece with the one that will come to rule the Revived Roman Empire.
- O. Alexander the Great fulfills with remarkable and precise detail those things spoken in the Word of God about the coming Antichrist; it certainly appears that God cut short his career in order to restrain the mystery of lawlessness.

VIII. Types of Antichrist.

- A. The statue of Nebuchadnezzar. Dan. 3:1-7
1. Nebuchadnezzar is a type of Antichrist, a human being that demanded complete allegiance to his new state religion.
 2. The statue of Nebuchadnezzar is analogous to the image of the Beast. Rev. 13:14-15
 3. The herald in Daniel typifies the false prophet. Rev. 13:12
 4. Failure to worship under either cult results in the death penalty.
 5. The three Jews that would not comply with the mandated state religion are representative of believers that will live in Daniel's 70th week, who refuse to worship the image of the beast.
 6. The supernatural deliverance from the furnace portends the supernatural protection that adjusted believers will enjoy under the most intense of persecutions until they complete their course. Rev. 7:3, 11:5
- B. Antiochus Epiphanes. Dan. 8:9-14,23-26, aa:21-35
1. As mentioned previously, this man arises out of one of the divisions of Alexander the Great's Empire.
 2. He ruled under the Seleucid dynasty, which often competed with the Ptolemies in Egypt for control of Palestine.

3. His program of forced Hellenization and subsequent desecration of the Temple form the frame of reference for the **abomination of desolation**, which was prophesied by Jesus to still be future. Dan. 9:27, 11:31; Matt. 24:15; II Thess. 2:4
 - a. He proclaimed himself to be Zeus Epiphanes, the human manifestation of Zeus, who was the ruler of all gods.
 - b. He came to Israel under a pretense of peace, secretly planning on a radical Hellenization of the populace.
 - c. He attempted to exterminate the Jewish religion, which focused on the worship of YHWH, forbidding the observance of the Sabbath, Jewish festivals, etc.
 - d. Jews were ordered to comply with this state-mandated Hellenization process by presenting themselves four times a year to pay formal homage to Antiochus, or face the penalty of death.
 - e. The height of his blasphemies occurred when he dedicated the Jewish Temple to Jupiter Olympus, offering unclean animals on the altar of burnt offering, defiling the entire building by sprinkling it with boiled pig's broth, and erecting the statue of Jupiter in the Temple.
 - f. This typologically represents the exact pattern that Antichrist will follow, presenting himself as Israel's savior, offering peace and security, erecting his own image in the third Temple, and finally proclaiming himself to be God.