

## Eschatology

### The Antichrist

1. The idea that the Antichrist will rule the world has been a popular belief for centuries. But what is the biblical view of Antichrist? That is the great question.
2. For some Dispensationalist the Antichrist is personified in a number of different images all rolled into one.
  - The Antichrist is the king of Babylon. *Isaiah 14:4 That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!”*
  - The Antichrist is Lucifer. *Isaiah 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*
  - The Antichrist is the son of perdition or destruction. *2 Thessalonians 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*
  - The Antichrist is the prince who is to come. *Daniel 9:26 And 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.*
  - The Antichrist is the Beast of Revelation 13. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.*
3. According to The System the Antichrist is a charismatic world political ruler who is able to present himself as a man of peace and able to ensure the safety of the Jews in their own land.

4. However, in the middle of a seven year peace treaty he breaks his agreement and turns on the Jews. He then makes war with the Jewish saints. An appeal is made to Revelation 13:17 and Daniel 7:21.
  - *Revelation 13:17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*
  - *Daniel 7:21 I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;*
5. During a three and one half year blood bath two thirds to one half of the Jews living in Palestine will be killed
  - *Zechariah 13:8-9 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. 9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*
6. As a counterfeit Christ, the Antichrist will be given great power by the devil in an attempt to produce the miracles Christ performed. He will even seek to reproduce the resurrection by receiving a mortal head wound and then living again.
  - *Revelation 13:3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.*
  - *Revelation 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*
7. Under the reign of the Antichrist every person will be stamped with the dreaded number 666.
  - *Revelation 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*
8. Eventually the Antichrist will bring the nations to the final great Battle of Armageddon to make war against Israel.
  - *Revelation 13:18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

9. In responding to the invention of a futuristic Antichrist by Dispensationalism based on the book of the *Revelation* the first point to be noted is the issue of timing. When John gave the *Revelation* he spoke to a contemporary audience to tell them of things that must “*shortly*” come to pass.

- *Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:*
- *Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*
- *Revelation 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*
- *Revelation 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*

10. Biblically, the word *antichrist* appears only four times in two of John’s epistles.

- *1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*

In this passage John corrects an inaccurate *hearing* or teaching that a singular antichrist shall come. John did not have a particular individual in mind; he referred to many individuals who taught that Jesus Christ is not what the Bible says He is—God manifested in the flesh.

- *1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.*

For John antichrist is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ.

For John antichrist is anyone who denies the Father and the Son.

- *1 John 4:3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

For John antichrist is every spirit that does not confess Jesus.

- *2 John 7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

For John antichrist is someone who denies that Christ as coming in the flesh.

11. A denial of the doctrine of the Incarnation is the biblical interpretation of antichrist.
12. According to the Bible, Antichrist is not a single individual. Just because Christian today have heard there is coming a single antichrist does not make it so.
13. Believers in the first century had heard the same thing and John wrote to challenge what had been heard just as Jesus had corrected people who had heard certain teachings based on a misreading of the Bible.
  - *Matthew 5:21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*
  - *Matthew 5:27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*
  - *Matthew 5:33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:*
  - *Matthew 5:38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:*
  - *Matthew 5:43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*
14. In summary, an antichrist is anyone who denies that Jesus is the Christ thereby denying the Father and the Son and so the Incarnation (1 John 2:22).
15. This simple and biblical view of antichrist takes the fear out of the future and also saves a lot of name-calling such as thinking that Ronald (6) Wilson (6) Reagan (6) was the antichrist!
16. If the biblical anti-Christ is a historical figure and if there is no future anti-Christ to fear as Dispensationalism teaches then why do so many believe in the Anti-Christ?
  - Some people believe in the Anti-Christ because they wanted to divert attention from doctrinal impurity. This charge is made specifically against the Roman Catholic Church who during the days of the Reformation wanted to redirect popular attention from inward corruption to an outward common enemy much like Republicans and Democrats found a common enemy after 9/11.
  - Some people believe in the Anti-Christ because they want to discredit the papacy and prove the papacy is an institution is evil. Since the Middle Ages there has been many powerful voices declaring the papacy is the anti-Christ organized. The voices include those of Dante Alighieri, John Wycliff, John Huss, and Savonarola. During the Reformation men such as Martin Luther, William Tyndale, John Calvin, Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley, John Bradford, and John Foxe denounced the papacy. In the 17th and 18th centuries, by John Bunyan, the translators of the King James

Bible, and by the men who published the Westminster and Baptist Confessions of Faith; Sir Isaac Newton, Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Wesley added their voices. In more recent times, Charles Spurgeon, Bishop J. C. Ryle and Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones have all said the papacy was the antichrist.

- Some people believe in the Anti-Christ because they do not know church history and have no idea about the rise and power of John Levi of Geschala during the seize go Jerusalem in AD 70. (*Josephus, ii: xxi:1*) Now, as Josephus was thus engaged in the administration of the affairs of Galilee, there arose a treacherous person, a man of Gischala, the son of Levi, "whose name was John. His character was that of a very cunning and very knavish person, beyond the ordinary rate of the other men of eminence there, and for wicked practices he had not his fellow any where. Poor he was at first, and for a long time his wants were a hinderance to him in his wicked designs. He was a ready liar, and yet very sharp in gaining credit to his fictions: he thought it a point of virtue to delude people, and would delude even such as were the dearest to him. He was a hypocritical pretender to humanity, but where he had hopes of gain, he spared not the shedding of blood: his desires were ever carried to great things, and he encouraged his hopes from those mean wicked tricks which he was the author of. He had a peculiar knack at thieving; but in some time he got certain companions in his impudent practices; at first they were but few, but as he proceeded on in his evil course, they became still more and more numerous. He took care that none of his partners should be easily caught in their rogueries, but chose such out of the rest as had the strongest constitutions of body, and the greatest courage of soul, together with great skill in martial affairs; as he got together a band of four hundred men, who came principally out of the country of Tyre, and were vagabonds that had run away from its villages; and by the means of these he laid waste all Galilee, and irritated a considerable number, who were in great expectation of a war then suddenly to arise among them.
  - Some people believe in the Anti-Christ because they have been persuaded by a particular theological bias.
  - Some people believe in the Anti-Christ in order to concentrate all of their fears and have a physical enemy to fight. The real battle is with the world, the flesh and the devil, all of which are spiritual in nature.
  - Some people believe in the Anti-Christ because there is money to be made in the market place by scaring God's people.
17. When will the belief in the Anti-Christ end? At the second coming of Christ for only then will all false teachings cease. There will be a new heaven and a new earth where in is righteousness.