



“ANTICHRIST” What does it mean?

(Continued from Front)

“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.”

(1 John 2:18)

John spoke about the term “antichrist” in both the singular and the plural. He also spoke about “the last time.” From the context, it is apparent that he was living in the last time. How could this be?

We must understand that God’s plan is being gradually developed through periods of time or dispensations. In John’s day, they were at the end of the Mosaic age. The nation of Judah was on the verge of a major judgment for their rejection of the Messiah.

Jesus prophesied of this judgment when he said: “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” (Luke 21:24)

When John wrote, it was the “last time” for that dispensation. We are now living in the last of the Gentile times. Today, God is calling out a people for His name from the Gentile nations. (See Acts 15: 14-17)

(How fortunate for us that we still have this opportunity for salvation in Christ)

THE WORD -ANTICHRIST

The word antichrist only appears 4 times in the Bible. All of these occur in the Epistles of John.

The word means “an opponent of Christ.” (The plural application only occurs once. It refers to more than one opponent of Christ.)

HOW IS IT USED?

Antichrist appears 4 times

- (1 John 2:18-19) The term has reference to a number of individuals who left the congregation in John’s day. They no longer believed the truth of the gospel, and they left in opposition to Christ.
- (1 John 2:22) Antichrist was someone who denied Christ. In fact, it was someone who denied that there was both the Father, and his son.
- (1 John 4:3) Antichrist is someone who has denied that Jesus was a man.
- (2nd John 1:7) The same application is used. The antichrist is someone who has denied that Jesus came in the flesh.

FALSE TEACHINGS

From all of these Bible examples we conclude that those who leave Christ, or who teach half-truths are opponents of Christ. **They were ANTICHRIST** in John’s day, and those who display the same characteristics are **ANTI-CHRIST today**.

Things Concerning

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“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come,”

THE ANTICHRIST

There are many stories about the coming of the ANTICHRIST. Most of the popular tales are a curious mixture of Bible verses, and exploded fantasies.

These are mixtures of truth and lies and are a perversion of the Bible message. They are misleading and dangerous. They may well convince many people to reject the true Christ when he comes.

LION OR LAMB?

When Jesus preached the gospel of the coming kingdom of God during his ministry in the first century AD, he was rejected and crucified.

His people were expecting a bold leader who would be “the lion of the tribe of Judah.” He came instead as a sacrificial lamb, to take away the sin of the world, through the voluntary offering of his own life.

When Jesus returns to this earth to establish his Kingdom, he will be a powerful leader, a roaring lion, who will take vengeance on his enemies.

Many people will be deceived again. They have become so accustomed to his meek and loving character, that they will not recognize him as a powerful King.

Ironically, Scripture indicates that they will reject him because they will identify him as the ANTICHRIST.

WHY THE CONFUSION?

Most of the confusion is due to a lack of understanding about what the Bible teaches. People prefer to spend their time reading books that are presented with drama and excitement. The people “of this world,” often see the Bible as dull and boring.

They would rather listen to the “Christian” authors, who have a flare for embellishing Bible prophecies.

We all need to examine the issue. Did our understanding of the antichrist come from the Word of God, or from a novel?

WHAT ABOUT THE VERSE IN THE BOX AT THE TOP?

Please notice that we have only quoted part of the verse at the top of this page. This illustrates why many people are confused on this and other Bible subjects.

The entire verse reads: “ 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. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (1 John 2: 18-19)

When we see more of the story, our conclusions change. (Note that there were “antichrists”, even in John’s day.)

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“For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.”

The Real ANTICHRIST?

This study of antichrist would not be complete without giving some consideration to another aspect of the subject.

The quotation above is taken from 2 Thessalonians 2: 1- 12. We are told about a **MAN OF SIN** that opposes God.

In addition to this “man of sin,” the Bible plainly reveals that there will also be forces that oppose Christ when he returns, and that there will be a falling away from the true faith before that time.

666

In the book of Revelation we are introduced to another picture of one of the powers that opposes Christ. This power is identified as a BEAST which controls all trade, preventing those who do not have the **number of the beast** from buying or selling. (See Revelation 13:11-18)

MYSTERY BABYLON

Also introduced in Revelation is the “**Mother of Harlots**” who leads the kings of the earth to make war with the lamb (Christ).

This “harlot” is used as a symbol of the power behind a great system of false worship that rises up in opposition to Christ when he comes.

These symbolic pictures are difficult to understand and interpret. Consequently, the Bible is easily manipulated for the benefit of men.

All of the inhabitants of the earth have been intoxicated by the deceitful doctrines of these powers. They are the real **antichrist**.

SHIFTING THE FOCUS

The powers that are identified in these symbols use their influence to remove suspicion from themselves, by shifting the focus to Christ.

The fables that have been promoted about the mythical ANTI-CHRIST will be used by those who are really antichrist, to instigate a war with the real Christ when he comes.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

In all of this confusion, who do we believe? Will we be deceived by the teachings of a false religion?

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Our best defense is to become very familiar with the truth of God’s Word.

It is certain that the Bible tells us that there will be a falling away from the true faith in the last days, and that great powers, such as the “mother of harlots” and the “man of sin” will rise up in opposition to Christ.

We must do all that we can to identify these promoters of false religion so that we will not be consumed along with them when they are destroyed. (See Revelation 18:1-5)

Who are these great systems of false religion that are deceiving the inhabitants of the earth? If you are not able to identify these powerful leaders and their religions, that are based more on philosophy, superstition and tradition, than on the Bible, you are in a dangerous position.

They may present a splendid show of religion, but if they deny the real Christ and teach perversions of the gospel, they are opponents of Christ.

“The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed” Psalm 2:2

Psalm 2

Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us.” He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, “I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.” I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.”

You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth.

Serve the LORD with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. Happy are all who take refuge in him.” (NRSV)

We have taken the space to quote the whole of this very important Psalm.

This prophetic Psalm speaks about the actual events that will come about when Christ returns to this earth to set up his Kingdom.

Reaction of the Nations

The Psalm portrays the reaction of the nations when they are told to submit to this new King in Jerusalem.

What do you think the nations will do when the Son of God asks them to bow down to his authority, and relinquish their power?

The Psalm tells us that they will try to resist. That they will oppose Christ. (That they will be antichrist)

WHY WOULD THEY RESIST?

We might wonder. Why would any resist the authority of Jesus when he returns? There is only one logical answer to this question. **THEY THINK THAT JESUS IS THE ANTI-CHRIST.**

Why would they think such a thing? Because they have been deceived. Their own religious leaders have both accepted and taught the popular myth about the antichrist.

False teaching and fictional drama has led them to believe that the antichrist will be a powerful ruler who will set himself up in Jerusalem.

They have been taught that he will be a Jew. That he will perform miracles. That he will claim to be the Jewish Messiah, and that all nations must submit to his authority.

FALSE IDENTITY

Think about this incredible situation. Everything that the Bible has prophesied that Jesus will do when he returns, has been promoted as a characteristic of this fabricated antichrist.

When Jesus came as a lowly lamb, the people rejected him as their Messiah. Now, when he returns as their powerful King, his true identity will again be mistaken.

THE WITNESS

Psalm 2 stands as a powerful witness to this great case of deception. The nations will believe anything that will preserve their own power.

They will willingly offer their support in a united effort of both church and state, to destroy the true Messiah, all to no avail. Those who oppose Christ will “perish in the way.”