

The OTHER Prince of Peace (Antichrist)

INTRODUCTION – There has been much speculation about the person the Bible calls the Antichrist. Scripture cautions us about being deceived regarding Bible doctrine – including eschatology (future events).

A. Speculation about the end of the world

About 300 years ago the most famous preacher and popular writer in New England was a Puritan, Cotton Mather (1663 - 1728). He calculated and predicted that the world would end in 1697, then in 1716, and then in 1736. It didn't.

Few people alive today recall anything significant that took place on February 3, 1962. However, Hindu astrologers and some doomsday forecasters asserted that a rare alignment of six planets, the Sun, the Moon, and Earth would destroy the world. Many in India prayed, fasted, and made sacrificial fires to try to prevent the destruction.

Included in that group of doomsday forecasters was American psychic Jeane Dixon, who predicted the heavenly phenomenon and earthly catastrophe would occur the next day, February 4th. Right afterwards (Feb. 5, 1962) she claimed to have had a vision at dawn that day of famous Egyptian Queen Nefertiti (ca 1370-1330 B.C.) and husband King Akhenaten holding a baby that she said was born shortly after 7 a.m. EST that day “somewhere in the Middle East” as a descendant of that royal pair. She predicted this child would grow up to revolutionize the world, bringing global peace to Earth by 1999 or 2000 and uniting all religions into one. Years later in *The Call to Glory* she wrote that this world leader would actually reveal be the Antichrist, he would try to conquer the world by 1999, and Armageddon would take place around 2020.

B. Speculation about the Antichrist – Numerous different views have arisen about the Antichrist.

1. Impersonal ideas (Rev 13:18 – “the number is that of a man”)

a. The Roman Empire – This was the view of medieval Jewish Talmudists.

b. Frederick II (Holy Roman Emperor) – labelled by two popes (Gregory IX and Innocent IV) as a precursor or predecessor of Antichrist – Gregory IX excommunicating him in 1227 for delaying a crusade and Innocent IV actually deposing him at the First Council of Lyon in 1245. Frederick returned the “compliment,” calling Innocent IV the Antichrist.

c. The Papal System – Protestant Reformers, some modern conservatives, and the Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses identify the Antichrist with the papacy – which some say began with Pope Leo the Great (A.D. 440-461), though the doctrine of papal infallibility was not officially defined as dogma till July 18, 1870 (during the First Vatican Council).
1) However, Antichrist is a person – not an influence or force or kingdom (so not papacy as Reformers had said)
2) Jews deny Jesus is Christ, and Unitarians deny He came in flesh, but Roman Catholicism affirm both, so it can't be Antichrist (according to 1Jn 4:3).

3) The mother of harlots rides the beast (Antichrist – Rev 17:4f), so Roman Catholicism can't be the beast.
4) Popes have never claimed to **BE God** (as Antichrist does in 2Th 2:4), just “Vicar of Christ.”
5) At His coming Jesus will come to Jerusalem – not Rome – to destroy Antichrist.

d. The Reformation Churches – This is held by some post-Reformation Roman Catholic writers.

2. Personal ideas – Numerous individuals have been called Antichrist.

a. Past persons – Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan 11:21-32), **Judas** (Jn 17:12), **Emperor Nero**, Emperor Domitian, Mohammed, Napoleon, Kaiser, Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, JFK, FDR (by #s corresponding to his full name = 666 = Franklin (51) + Delano (550) + Roosevelt (55) + Rex (10 – he added it because he wanted to be king) I V X L C D M

Henry Kissinger has also been suggested, partly due to numbers for letters in his name – “H. Kissinger” in English alphabet numerical equivalent = h(8) k(11) i(9) s(19) s(19) i(1) n(14) g(7) e(5) r(18) = 111 > multiplied by 6 [# of man] = 666

b. Future persons (Rev 13:3 “wounded unto death ... deadly wound was healed” >

1) **Nero** raised from dead

2) **Judas** restored (“son of perdition” – Jn 17:12; 2Th 2:3) – BUT Rev 13:14 “slain w/sword” (Judas was hung)

3) FDR – Gerald Winrock (ed of *The Defender*) believes that FDR never died and will return to public life as Antichrist.

Let's look at Scripture and see why all these speculative guesses have proven to be wrong.

I. His identity – The Bible gives no name for Antichrist, just descriptive titles – He will be a unique man (Rev 13:4 “who is like the beast?” – cf. the 4th beast of Daniel 7 [the Roman Empire] – different from all other kingdoms – Dan 7:19,23,24)

A. Main title – “antichrist” = Greek, *antichristos*

1. Its usage – It occurs 5x in the NT (1Jn 2:18,22; 4:3; 2Jn 7) – in the singular and plural, with the present and future tense.

a. One – OT, Jesus (Jn 5:43), Paul, Rev

b. Many – Mt 24 (false Christs)

2. Its meaning – *anti* (opposition to and/or substitution for) Christ

B. Other titles – man of lawlessness (2Th 2:3), the son of perdition (2Th 2:3; cf. Rev 17:8,11), the Wicked [=

lawless] (2Th 2:8), the prince that shall come (Dan 9:26), a beast out of the sea (Rev 13:1), a little horn (Dan 7:8,20-26)

II. His ascendancy (origin)

A. From the sea (Rev 13:1) – Opinions vary on what this signifies; suggestions include (1) a literal sea (seafaring person/nation), (2) the sea of Gentile humanity (which would seem to contradict D. below), and (3) a sea of demons.

B. From the abyss (rendered “the bottomless pit” [Rev 9:1,2,11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:3] and “deep” [Lk 8:31; Rom 10:7])

C. From the revived Roman Empire (Dan 7:7-8 – the 4th of 4 world empires that were revealed to both Daniel and King Nebuchadnezzar in dreams – i.e., Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome)

D. From Judaism (Dan 11:37 – no regard for his fathers’ God) – cf. Jn 5:43 (“him ye shall receive”)

III. His ability

A. Its origin (3 sources)

1. Human power (10 kings “give their power and strength” to “the beast” – Rev 17:12,13)

2. Hellish power (Satan – 2 Th 2:9; cf “who gave him his power, throne, & authority” (Rev 13:4; Ezk 28:2)

3. Heavenly power (the Restrainer – namely, the Holy Spirit – steps aside from his work of restraining sin and this “man of sin” – 2Th 2:6,7)

B. Its outcome – The Antichrist will have great power in three major areas:

1. Military power – “who is able to wage war with him?” (Rev 13:4)

2. Religious power – “will worship him” (Rev 13:8)

3. Economic power – “no man might buy or sell” (Rev 13:17)

IV. His activity

A. Blasphemy (Dan 8:11; 2 Th 2:8; Rev 13:5,6)

1. Theological ability = God’s (“there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things & blasphemies” – Rev 13:5,7,14,15; Dan 7:8,11,20) – cf other permissions and power granted by God (Rev 6:4,8; 7:2; 9:5)

2. Diabolical activity = man’s (“a name of blasphemy” on his 7 heads – Rev 13:1) – He will blaspheme (Rev 13:6):

- God and His name
- God’s tabernacle (His dwelling place)
- Heaven dwellers

B. Militancy – aggression against:

1. Nations – worldwide rule (Rev 13:7b “power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations” – cf. Rev 6:1-2; 12:1-5)

2. Israel (Rev 13:5,7; see Dan 11:41-45)

3. Saints (“make war with” – 13:7) – This will result in multitudes being killed for their faith (13:15; 20:4).

4. The harlot – false world religion (Rev 17:5,7-8; 18:10,21)

C. Duplicity = “double dealing” (treachery) – 2 Th 2:9-11

1. His deception / lie (He’ll get away with it due to two things:

a. The world will wonder (13:3) and worship (13:4) his power, wisdom, leadership, military might. (He’ll honor only ‘the god of fortresses.’ – Dan 11:38)

b. Because the world as a whole will not receive “the love of the truth,” the Lord will send strong delusion, so that people will believe his lie (2 Th 2:10-11).

2. His double-crossing – He will make a covenant with the Jews (him they will “receive” – Jn 5:43) and then break it (Dan 9:26).

D. Trickery (2 Th 2:9) – NOT all miracles are God’s (Ex 7:11; 8:7,18; 1:20; 2:2,27; 4:7,9; 5:11; Mt 7:22-23; 12:27; Ac 8:9-12; 13:6-12; 16:16; 19:13; 2Co 11:13-14).

V. His longevity (occupancy) – 1 week (Dan 9:27) 42 months

A. Starts after the Rapture

1. The rise – He’ll gain power probably **before** the Rapture.

2. The revelation – He’ll be shown later for who he is (a) at the agreement OR (b) at the abomination.

3. The regime – He'll be in power for the 7-year Tribulation but really exert it for the last 42 months (Rev 13:5; cf 11:2)

B. Ends at the Revelation (2Th 2:8 – He's destroyed by Christ (at His 2nd Advent) and cast into the lake of fire (Rev 19:20-21).

CONCLUSION – You've heard or read the opening words of *A Tale of Two Cities* ("It was the best of times")

A. Bad time – The worst time (and worst human time) in human history is coming.

B. Good time – The Church leaves first!! So, be trusting and thankful.