

The Roman Pontiff is that
Antichrist
whose presence scripture prophesied

William Whitaker

Protestant Reformation Publications

Thesis put forward and defended in the Academy of
Cambridge on the day of the Assembly, in the year of the
Lord 1582.

Translated from the original Latin by Kenneth Bubb

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

In continuing our publication of rare treatises written by brilliant Protestant Reformers dedicated to proving the Pope of Rome is the Antichrist, we offer this, our latest translation from its original Latin. We must thank the Cambridge University Library, Rare Books Department, for supplying us with our copy of this 1583 edition.

English Reformer William Whitaker (1548-1595) was one of that rare breed of Christians given a mind to grasp the deeper things of God. Not only did he hold and defend the sovereignty of God in salvation, commonly called Calvinism,^[1] but he wrote extensively against the heresies of the Church of Rome, including their Douay version of the New Testament. In his view there was no greater enemy to the cause of Christ than the Roman Catholic Church and her hierarchy. However, his opposition did not stop there. He had discovered, after thorough investigation, that the Roman Pontiff, the Pope of Rome, was that Antichrist, the Man of Sin, of whom Scripture warns. The evidence declares he can be nothing but the Antichrist. Even in Whitaker's day there was controversy over the subject. Thus, he was strongly motivated to argue, in his doctoral dissertation of 1582, that the Roman Pontiff is that Antichrist and we should look for no other. It is this Latin thesis which we now translate for the first time into English.

A brief biographical sketch of William Whitaker, master of St. John's College, Cambridge, is in order, for few Christians in this age have ever heard of this learned, wise and courageous brother in Christ. William's education was nothing short of first-rate, due to the mentoring of his uncle, dean of St. Paul's. Soon Whitaker proved his excellent command of Greek and Latin by translating the Book of Common Prayer into Greek, as well as his uncle's own larger catechism from Latin into Greek. "He also became known as an indefatigable student of the scriptures, the commentators, and the schoolmen, and was very early in his career singled out by Whitgift, at that time master of Trinity, for marks of special favor."^[2] His prodigious output of writings leave a legacy equaled by few in Church history. "No English divine of the sixteenth century surpassed Whitaker in the estimation of his contemporaries. Churton justly styles him the 'pride and ornament of Cambridge.' Bellarmine so much admired his genius and attainments that he had his portrait suspended in his study. Joseph Scaliger, Bishop Hall, and Isaac Casaubon alike speak of him in terms of almost unbounded admiration."^[3]

With the publishing of this masterful work, Protestant Reformation Publications adds yet another witness, in an unbroken chain of witnesses, proving the perpetuity of the biblical Protestant doctrine identifying the Pope of Rome as the prophesied Antichrist, revealed first to the prophets of old and

confirmed by the prophets the Reformation.

*Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed;
and hid that shall not be known.*

This editor wishes to express his deepest gratitude to the translator, Kenneth Bubb,^[4] whose selfless giving of his time, expertise and efforts in this project will be the direct cause of a substantial increase in knowledge to the Body of Christ worldwide. Also, this editor extends his sincere thanks to his co-minister, brother in the Lord, and dearest friend, James Grippe, who has faithfully given of himself in total support of this ministry's efforts to educate, warn, encourage and rebuke. And finally, without the hard work, love and support of my wife and help meet, Amy, this project, as well as all projects, could not have come to fruition.

May our gracious God give the reader eyes to see and ears to hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the Church.

Preeminent men, I approach a matter of great import, one which is, admittedly, fraught with difficulties due to its divisive nature; namely, that he who professes himself to be the Supreme Vicar of Christ on earth, the successor of Peter, the head of the Christian Church, the chief of all bishops, the highest Catholic of Catholics, a religious man held as a mortal God among men.....I do maintain, in this so great a multitude of most learned men, this same one to be the very Antichrist, the enemy of God, the public enemy of Christ, the adversary of the true religion, the High Priest of Heretics, the murderer of the Church.

I sincerely ask the undivided attention of this esteemed body for a short time. Now if, beforehand, you were unable to form an opinion regarding this most evil monster because of the proliferation of deception and lies surrounding his person, it is time to put all conjecture aside and to judge with righteous judgment. For whom Scripture foretold, time has revealed. The Church of the Antichrist has existed throughout the ages. Recognize it! Spit on it! Curse it to the dreadful underworld!

Why should there be any hesitation to hold this opinion? Why should we not speak it openly and publicly? Why should we waver on a subject so requisite and so self evident? If the Roman Pontiff should be the Antichrist (and we cannot be ignorant of the fact that he is - unless judicious men wish to err), then why are there some among us who await another future Antichrist? Why should we not stand together naming the present Pope that Antichrist?

It is my primary purpose and hope that, after I have presented my case, there will be no room for doubt, but that the distinct officeholder of the Papacy, its Pontiff who boasts so much, is the true and only Antichrist. As such, those who do not wish eternal perdition ought to curse him and flee from his fellowship. Moreover, I shall proceed according to the prescribed rules of debate. In this way, if there are contrary arguments which may appear to dispute my initial arguments, I will not pass over them that I may demonstrate scriptural authority has already satisfactorily answered them, leaving

no possibility of a differing interpretation. That being said, I now set forth to prove the matter at hand, refuting the arguments of our adversaries in my response.

I begin my thesis by asserting certain prerequisite truths. First, the Antichrist has been described in Scripture through the use of sure, certain and highly accurate signs. This truth I must need profess because once properly understood it is virtually impossible to conceive an Antichrist other than that described minutely in Scripture. Second, if there be one to whom all these signs most fittingly come together, then that one must be the Antichrist. Third, whatever description of the Antichrist we read in Scripture, let us affirm it is inspired and to be believed. For to doubt the marks of the Antichrist as defined by the Holy Spirit is to infer the Spirit has erred, which cannot be said without blasphemy. And so I will make this position the cornerstone of my purpose and defense; namely, that Scripture has given the Church all we need know pertaining to the identity of the Antichrist. This truth is as much to be believed without controversy, as is the truth that the Antichrist is that false Christ, the one in whom these marks adhere. These are the very marks by which the Holy Spirit willed to describe the Antichrist's living, unique portraiture that we may recognize him.

I stand before you today in truth to maintain the cause that all Scripture is united in agreement that, at every point, all references to the Antichrist corresponds to the Roman Pontiff, nor can it be attributed to any one besides him.

I should preface my remarks, however, that the name *antichrist* is used two ways in Scripture; either *generally* or *personally*. For example, the name of Christ is adapted to all those who share an anointing, such as the Lord's prophets, kings and priests. Of such a class the prophet speaks in Psalm 104:[5] *Don't attack my Christs*. Indeed, sometimes it is used *personally* to signify the very Son of God revealed in the flesh. In like manner, the name *antichrist* is taken for every adversary of Christ you please, as seen in 1 John 2: *There are many antichrists now*; that is, there are now many apostates, who try to corrupt the pure teaching of Christ. Already they have begun to rage. But, on the other hand, it is used *personally* for that supreme Antichrist, who is not simply one of the many apostate antichrists who

oppose Christ, but is, so to speak, the one who reigns from Christ's throne in the Church of Christ. This Antichrist boldly attacks Christ Himself. In this manner John speaks of the Antichrist in the same verse when he says: *Little children, it is the final hour, and as you have heard, the Antichrist will come, etc.*[6]

It is imperative we understand those things written by Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians, chapter 2, which also appertain to this same Antichrist. With this in mind, we must take care not to apply Paul's description to those many insignificant antichrists who have spread the seeds of future dreadful anti-Christian apostasy, *αποστασια*, but rather to that unique Antichrist who opposes Christ in all respects, whose forerunners already exist to clear his way.

Moreover, when I attest the Roman Pontiff to be that great Antichrist, I understand this to mean that he is the leader and head of that apostasy which Scripture prophesied, whose seat was foretold to be in the Church. Assuredly, we ought not interpret Scripture as speaking of the Antichrist rising to power in one individual Pontiff alone, for Scripture speaks of a reign of Pontiffs which is contrary to Christ's reign. For this reason is the name the *Antichrist* fitting, for the Pontiff reigns in the Church as her head. I call him the Antichrist to the utter annoyance of his body. But in so doing I unswervingly follow Scripture as my teacher and guide. For, when Scripture discusses that infamous Antichrist, it signifies the entire reign of this head over his body. This Paul teaches: *Unless the defection comes first and the mystery of iniquity is complete.*[7]

Paul describes the Antichrist as the one who claims to speak with supreme authority, is distinguished by his unparalleled position in this kingdom, upon whom the entire body of iniquity depends for its continued existence. This is clearly seen when he writes, *who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, showing himself to be God.*[8] These things should not be understood of the whole body, but of the head, the Roman Pontiff. Now that we know what is meant by the name of the Antichrist, let us address his kingdom and cause. Let us discuss that doctrine which has been handed down to us in the documents of the Scriptures. May all who have not been tainted by the Antichristian errors discern and confess, as I, that the Roman Pontiff is the Antichrist.

Daniel 11 Expounded

Let me be brief in my analysis as I attempt to embrace complex subjects in simple terms. Nearly all learned theologians of the past, as well as numerous recent and current doctors of the Church share the same opinion regarding the last portion of Daniel, chapter 11: the Antichrist is the one about whom Daniel speaks. Theologians concur that those things which are spoken, by way of example, of Antiochus Epiphanes may also be applied to the Antichrist. Antiochus prefigures the Antichrist in type, τυπικος. Indeed, no Pontiff, as far as I know, doubts that this passage relates to the Antichrist. This being so, it is then possible to exegete from these verses essential characteristics of the future Antichrist. Moreover, upon close examination of Daniel's prophecy, one can regard the prophetic image not as shadowy or hazy, applicable to any number of candidates, but rather as a clear, vivid description of the Roman Pontiff.

The Prophet first says, *He shall truly act according to his own will.*^[9] And indeed, for many centuries the Pope has done whatever pleased him, not only in ecclesiastical matters, but political as well. By his own authority he makes laws and changes laws at will.^[10] He removes kings from their thrones, freeing subjects from their lawful oaths of fidelity. He takes upon himself the authority and power of rooting out, throwing down, destroying, and ruining, as well as building and planting. This power he has exercised in our age towards kings and emperors, just as he has desired to wield power over our head. ^[11]

Moreover, in sacred matters the Pope grants himself much greater liberty. All of his words, opinions and decrees are to be considered as prophesies of the Holy Spirit. Whatever pleases him is Catholic; whatever displeases him must be judged heretical. If he will have dragged innumerable souls of men to hell, nevertheless it is against divine law to say to him, What are you doing?^[12] There is a well known axiom among the Pontiffs, which none of them would dare deny, that the will of the Pope is before reason.

Second, in the same place, the Prophet says, *He will exalt himself above every God,* which description of the Antichrist Paul

eloquently recounts.[13] Because this Scripture uncannily fits the Pontiff, it will deserve our special attention when we approach this passage of Paul's.

Third, in this verse, the Prophet adds that *he will succeed and prosper until the anger of God consumes him*. Who is ignorant of the amazing growth of the papal rule? Has not this aspect of the Antichrist been given us by the Lord that He might reveal him to His people?

Fourth, in the verse which follows, we are told *he will not understand the God of his Fathers*, another apt description fitting the Pontiffs, who have contrived a strange God for us; one who is not the God of Christians. They have a false God, a false Christ, and a false heaven. Their religion is one which the Apostolic Fathers never taught, but one which they themselves invented and fashioned by their imagination. This point I intend to clarify in short order.

Fifth, the Prophet writes, *He will not care for the love of women*. Indeed, although the Pontiffs are not attracted to women as are other men, nevertheless, they condemn just and licit marriages among their own, placing unspeakable Sodomite passion and foul baseness before honorable and holy marriage.

Sixth, *He will worship God with gold and silver and with precious stone*.^[14] Spiritual and true worship has perished with the Pontiffs. Their religion consists solely in external splendor, magnificent trappings of sanctuaries and statues, and in parades of Masses.

And last, verse 39, Daniel adds, *He will increase the glory of a strange god having him rule over his followers; also, he will divide the land among them*. What luxury, what glory, what magnificence, what power, and what riches can be greater than those of the Pontiffs? I ask, what is there in false Christianity which may be considered by its adherents as pleasant, fruitful, delightful, luxuriant and desirable that has not yet been assumed by the Pontiffs as their own? Wherefore, I indeed think that no unbiased person can possibly doubt that all these things appertain and fit no other mortal more appropriately than the Roman Pontiff. But because there may be some who still doubt

Daniel spoke of the Antichrist prefigured in type, who are not yet convinced by the proofs offered, let us come to the New Testament, where this Antichrist is candidly revealed, having been splendidly described to us by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, I will not pursue minute matters, but will concern myself with the most clear and famous passages.

2 Thessalonians 2 Expounded

In the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter 2, no Christian has ever questioned its application to the Antichrist. Wherefore, let us with much diligence weigh this passage. Let us compare the Roman Pontiff with the Apostle's authoritative description of the Antichrist, so that by understanding the inspired, personal signs as described by Paul we might come to recognize the reality itself. The Thessalonians falsely believed that the coming of Christ was at hand, as well as the imminent destruction of the world. The Apostle corrects their erroneous views while presenting an absolutely essential doctrinal truth for the edification of all Christians. It is an axiom which, simply stated, teaches this: Before Christ can come, the Antichrist must first come. Paul describes the Antichrist in a variety of ways so that, however adept Antichrist is at covering his true identity, he will be recognized by all churches. Let us now consider the prophetic description one at a time.

Paul says, in verse 3, *unless the apostasy, αποστασια, will have first come.* Here we are to understand apostasy from the Faith, not the overthrowing of kingdoms or governments. The Greek word for *apostasy* means exactly this in 1 Timothy 4: *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, αποστησονται τινες της πιστεως, for doctrines of demons.....that is, they will desert sound teaching.* Furthermore, all the Fathers foretell that the coming of the Antichrist would be conjoined with the deplorable destruction of religion and piety. In context, the Apostle speaks of a future, universal apostasy rather than one particular apostasy. This will become even more certain and manifest from a comparison of other relevant passages; Luke 18: *When the Son of man will have come, shall he find faith in the earth?* The Lord is speaking of that same apostasy from the faith, the loss and forfeiture of biblical truth. Matthew 24: *iniquity will abound, the*

love of many shall grow cold. And John, in the Apocalypse, foretells the kings of the earth will one day whore with the Harlot, and the inhabitants of the earth would become intoxicated with the wine of this fornication. All peoples will drink of this wine. Finally, this I say, that the historical fulfillment of these prophecies, which is the only reliable interpreter of these disputed controversies, has proven this thesis to be most true. For, indeed, faith as taught by Mohammedanism and the Papacy has all but extinguished the ancient true faith from the world.

As we proceed further in Paul's prophecy, we read of the distinguishing signs which point out and reveal the Antichrist, the man of Sin, the son of perdition, who is our adversary. By using these words, he presents the Antichrist as if he were one certain individual. Although the truth of the matter reveals the Antichrist not to be limited to one literal person, nevertheless he is described by the Apostle by name as if he were one literal person. His reasons for this are two-fold: On the one hand, on account of the reign, rule and office itself which opposes Christ, yet is one; and on the other hand, on account of the one and same spirit of Satan by which all anti-Christians are stirred up. Just as the kingdom of Christ is one, so the kingdom of the Antichrist is one. And for this reason, as Daniel once proclaimed, [15] the kingdoms themselves, by virtue of the singular names of Panther, Lion and Bear, also represented the succession of many kings and men in these kingdoms, so also, in like manner, did the Apostle wish to describe the kingdom of the Antichrist by using the image of one very wicked man to represent the entire body of men who would rule as Antichrist.

Therefore, when the Papal kingdom fights and contends with the kingdom of Christ, and the supreme ruling monarch of that kingdom is the Pope, we rightly have just cause to name the Pope, who is preeminent above all in his kingdom, the Antichrist. The Apostle says it is fitting that this man be revealed to us as the one who openly occupies the throne in this Antichristian kingdom, exercising tyranny - tyranny which the Pope has most certainly exercised for more than 90 years,[16] demanding he be recognized as Head of the Church, holding the Primacy.

In order for us all to perceive clearly that the Roman Pontiff is

that Antichrist, as I have asserted, let us further expound his description from the rest of the Apostle's prophecy. In the fourth verse, Paul points out three specific attributes by which the Antichrist may be identified. First, he will elevate himself above all that is called God, and in so doing oppose God. Second, he will sit in the temple, the sanctuary of God, as if God. Third, he will declare himself to be God. All of these traits are worthy of infinite discourse, but out of necessity, I must limit myself to a systematic, yet brief, teaching.

The Antichrist Opposes Christ

To begin, the Antichrist must be in opposition, *αντικειμενος*, against Christ, an adversary hostile to Christ inasmuch that he, indeed, places himself before Christ. Thus, in addition to human honors the Antichrist will assume to himself divine honors. Is there a person who doubts that this most appropriately corresponds with the Roman Pontiff? Does he not desire to be greater than God while openly opposing Him? To better understand this desire let us now consider the power and authority with which each of his honors is endowed.

The Antichrist rules, as God, over the consciences of men

One God prescribes the laws of conscience, who alone has dominion over our consciences. The Roman Pontiff, on the other hand, wishes to rule the consciences of men by attributing the divine law to himself. And what is even more shameless and grave, he prescribes what he thinks is the way God ought to act. Who does not know that to profane the divine laws is viewed with much greater impunity than the profanation of Pontifical laws? Or that he who offends the Pontiff suffers more severe punishment than he who is openly impious toward God? For contamination caused by debauchery, adultery, even unspeakable, shameful acts, the Pontiff wishes no great atonement. Sins of this kind are easily removed by the slightest, small price. But to have tasted the flesh of swine or oxen on Friday, that sin cannot be cleansed except by the blood of the sinner. Here we see clearly God prohibiting one thing, while the Pontiff, by his own authority, prohibits another. To violate the divine

law is viewed as almost laughable in comparison to neglecting the Papal law, which is considered a capital offense. Offending God by swearing blasphemous perjured words in His name is, in the mind of the Pope, no great sin. But, on the other hand, to speak of the Pontiff with less honor than is his due is judged a high crime worthy of the severest punishment imaginable. We have the historical evidence of the past 600 years whereby the Pontiffs have all determined that their authority exceeds divine authority in nobility and holiness.

Therefore, what else can Paul possibly mean when he states that the Antichrist will place himself above God? Is there any other possibility, but that this is the case? Or do we interpret this passage literally, expecting the Antichrist to drag God down from heaven so that he may ascend the heavenly throne? My intent is to teach, in no small degree, plainly and fully, how the Pontiff opposes Christ. For though hot is opposed to cold as black is to white, much more so is the Papacy opposed to Christianity and Pontifical teaching to Evangelical doctrine.

The Antichrist commands worship of images

The Pope's idolatries circumscribe the globe in obedience to his God who demands homage be paid to innumerable idols. Where, I ask, whether among the Greeks, Egyptians or ancient Romans, has there ever been more graven images, more foul idol madness, εἰδωλομανία,[17] than that which we see in the Pontifical Church to this very day?

The Antichristian Mass is idolatry

And is it not insanity, a sacrilege which is blasphemy against God, my dearest brothers, that from a modest shell[18] God is commanded to come forth a sacrifice by virtue of a few words breathed from an impure mouth?! Therefore they have no God, much less Christ, when they continually violate, tear apart and attack Christ, the God-man, in so many amazing ways. For instance, we are taught in Scriptures that Christ is truly man, yet He is also infinite, indescribable and invisible. This poses no problem to the Papists who readily give us such a man in their Mass by means of employing a foolproof mathematical religious formula guaranteed to make Christ

both man and God every time.[19] I challenge the Papists to explain to me how it is they are able to distinguish, in that small body,[20] the divine and human nature of Christ? Will they have me to believe that the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ resides in bread which does not appear to our human senses as a man either in its appearance, its lack of motion, or its lack of ability to communicate, yet which may nonetheless be eaten and see corruption? Will they contend that that Divinity which occupies infinite and remote places may be found in its fullness in their wafer? If so, by these outrageous assertions they tear down the person of Christ. Indeed, I will show that in doing service in the name of Christ the Pontiffs do err even more basely and perniciously.

The Antichrist replaces Christ

I ask in all honesty, what work does the Roman Pontiff, as self-appointed High Priest, Prophet and King, leave for Christ to perform? If Christ be our High Priest His work is two-fold: (1) offering up to the Father His perpetual and unique sacrifice on our behalf;[21] and (2) as our Mediator always praying to the Father on our behalf.[22] Yet the Pontiff, and his priests, as Christs and mediators, take it upon themselves to offer daily another sacrifice, another Christ.[23] If Christ be our Prophet why then are they not content with His doctrine alone? Why must they insist on following human traditions and human laws? If Christ be our King why is another king necessary? The Pontiff, as king, rules over our consciences, as well as all things of the Church of Christ.

The Antichrist denies Christ

If, as John taught, the one who denies Jesus to be the Christ is the Antichrist,[24] is it not certain on this account alone that the Roman Pontiff is the Antichrist? Has he not, for all intent and purpose, destroyed Christ's divine offices of Priest, Prophet and King? It is not expedient for me to elaborate all Evangelical doctrines in order to further prove the Pontiff contradicts Christ in every essential. I have touched upon this first section of II Thess. 2:4 lightly and hastily because otherwise I would not have the time to properly treat the other parts of this verse. In so doing it has been my intent today to explain briefly the nature and grounds of my defense.

The Antichrist sits in the Church of Christ

Let me continue with my exegesis of verse 4 by affirming that I will now prove that all doctrine which the Pontiff proposes as the cause and means of our salvation, as well as that which he prescribes as holy worship of God, whether external or internal, is nothing less than the corruption and destruction of biblical truth. And because the Pope corrupts and destroys, it can truly be said that he is ἀντικείμενον, *the one who sets himself against, who opposes*. But lest anyone imagine for one moment that the Antichrist was prophesied to be an external enemy, such as Mohammed, Paul puts him in the temple of God, that is, as one about to sit in the very midst of the Church. Therefore, he will be a member of the family of God, a false Christian, not an external enemy. Furthermore, he will attack Christ secretly, not openly, although he will, in fact, be the supreme enemy of Christ. He will accomplish this by pretending to be Christ's closest friend,[25] feigning the true faith, religion and practice. By means of such cunning deception we must understand him to be all the more dangerous, a most pernicious enemy of the Church, unlike any other.

So it is that the Roman Pontiff has set up a seat for himself in the midst of the temple and people of God, though he opposes Christ in all things. For he asserts himself to be the vicar of Christ, his synagogue the true Church of Christ, his Catholic adherents followers of the true faith, declaring those who separate from him to be heretics. Thus, the Popes all assume to themselves the authoritative title of *Christ's vicar*, as well as assuming headship of the Church. In this we are to understand what Paul meant when he prophesied the Man of Sin would sit in the temple of God. *Many will come in my name*, Christ said, *saying I am the Christ*. What is it to come in the name of Christ but to lay claim to be the vicar of Christ?

The Pope claims to be God

No one but the Pope has ever made such exaggerated claims before, let alone so openly. Does not the Pontiff openly boast that he is God? Read Gratian, *dist.* 21.[26] He acknowledges the name, takes it and makes it his as it pleases him. Therefore, when his followers

worship him as God, greeting him by that name, in practicality they believe his commandments and authority to be of considerably more worth than the Divine. I imagine nothing, but speak only that which is well known fact and clear to all. The Roman Pontiff proclaims himself an earthly God. Whatever the attributes of God, the Pope glories that he, too, possesses them; that is, if we overlook his sin of impudent and blasphemous shamelessness! So, in this point it is clearly evident that it fits none but the Pope. But we have not yet explored all of the Apostle's description of the Antichrist. If these proofs do not suffice, listen to what follows.

The Roman Empire and its Emperor that which restrains the coming of the Antichrist

Truly, Paul says, you know what obstructs the Antichrist from being revealed in his time. He then states what delays the coming of this Antichrist, speaking of that which impedes him. Tertullian, Jerome and Chrysostom all understood that which holds him back, *το κατεχον*, to be the Roman Empire. The Antichrist was not able to achieve power and greatness while the Empire remained and flourished. Wherefore, in order that there might be a fitting position for the Antichrist, the Roman Emperor could do nothing but yield. That this is proven in history we will easily see.

In John's prophecy of the Apocalypse we are to understand Rome to be the capital city and seat of the Antichrist's reign.^[27] Therefore, since the Antichrist had to rule at Rome, it was necessary that the emperor leave Rome vacant for him. It was impossible that the two reign at the same time. The most illustrious and credible interpreter of this prophecy is its fulfillment, even in the minutest detail. First, Constantine transferred power from Rome, Italy to Byzantium, Greece. Then, gradually, the Greek emperors lost their power in Italy. Finally, Rome, the seat of the Roman Empire, as well as the sovereign power over a large part of Italy, became the center of power of the Pontiff.

Let me take a moment and comment on this passage, because a popular interpretation of certain men teaches that the Apostle is referring to the promulgation of the Gospel throughout the whole

world. Personally, I am not opposed to the fact that both may be understood, that the empire had to be moved from Rome, and the Gospel had to be proclaimed in all the world. Indeed, the historical account agrees with each.

Mystery of Iniquity

The Apostle writes that the mystery of iniquity is already being accomplished in his day, (verse 7). By this he means that the foundations of the Papal apostasy, *αποστασια*, was, in his time, already being laid.

Antichrist to be destroyed by Christ - not before

He also clearly testifies that the Antichrist would endure until the Second Coming of Christ when he says, *The Lord will destroy that One by the Spirit of his mouth, and by his illustrious coming will he abolish him*. Though the Antichrist may well be weakened and his power lessened by the word of Christ, he cannot be totally destroyed but by the second coming of Christ. Paul clearly elucidates the means by which the Antichrist will effectuate his reign of tyranny. His coming will be wrought in signs and prodigious lies whose origin lies in the efficacy of Satan. Those who receive this fraud and all his injustice are those who are to perish. Do not these prophecies precisely fit no other but the Papal rule? Truly, it can be said that had not the Pontiff the backing of efficacious and strong Satanic power by which he perpetrates fraud, lies, deception, and false miracles, he could never have advanced to his current position.

Therefore, if we accept Paul to be a true prophet of God, which he most certainly is, then we must also accept the Pauline prophecy on the Antichrist to be equally true. Thus, the Roman Pontiff *must, by necessity*, be the Antichrist. In this thesis we pursue only the main points of the prophecy. To elaborate further at length is beyond the scope of our study at this time.

The Antichrist in the Apocalypse

Let us now proceed to the Apocalypse in which are detailed, not in obscure language, prophecies concerning the Antichrist. Let us examine some of the more relevant and important prophecies.

Chapter 13

In Chapter 13, John describes a beast with seven heads, of which one head is wounded by a fatal plague, but afterward healed. This beast can be none other than the Roman Empire. Then follows verse 11: *And I saw another beast ascending from the earth, having two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.* Even the Pontiffs themselves agree that this beast is the Antichrist. I will now offer convincing proof that it is none other than the Roman Pontiff who professes himself to be the vicar of the Lamb, similar to the Lamb. However, if we listen carefully to his speech we cannot help but recognize the voice of the Dragon, Satan. For who has ever vomited forth more monstrous blasphemies against God than this monster? Follow the succeeding verses to the end of the chapter and you will see all the prophecies come together by divine influence.

Image of the Beast

Who is it that has given life to the image of the wounded beast, restoring it back to life, but the Pontiff who has expressly represented his living rule by that of the dead, idolatrous ancient Roman rule? For whatever cruelty, avarice, wantonness, debauchery, and idolatry were once practiced by the first Roman Emperors, the Roman Pontiffs have revived these worldwide.

Mark of the Beast

It is equally as obvious that the Pontiff compels all mortals to take his mark upon their foreheads and right hands, if they wish to make a living, providing support for themselves and their families, or if they wish eternal life. For all who refuse his mark, who refuse to acknowledge him the vicar of Christ, head of the Church, worthy of worship in words and all duty, cannot be saved - be they Kings,

Caesars, Bishops, rich, poor, common people, the learned and unlearned. All must serve him, kiss his feet and adore this beast.

Name of the Beast

Truly did Irenæus, our ancient father who lived close to the time of the Apostles, explain the number of his name which is 666.^[28] If this name was ascribed by Apostolic tradition, why then should we not judge this tradition to be Apostolic and worthy of our trust? It is most certain that the Roman Pontiff wishes all his people to be Latin, in race, faith and public liturgy. Anyone not Latin is broadcast a Greek schismatic or heretic. If the name seemed probable to Irenæus, who judged future things by using sound logic, how much more credible should his conclusion be for those in this present age, who have the Latin Antichrist before them already known and easily proven?

Time of the Antichrist's coming

As to the time of the Antichrist's coming, I will not quibble with the differing opinions. If, for example, we count 666 years forward from the time John wrote the Apocalypse in the year 97, we discover the year 763. In considering the state of the Church at that time we have no difficulty perceiving the Antichrist grown into adulthood, ruling in Rome by means of his terrible double-edged sword, as if he were God, deserving adoration of Christian men. I ask you, what further need have I to continue my thesis? What, pray tell, is left needing further clarity or demonstration? Need I light torches that you might see? Nevertheless, there are additional truths which may be elucidated for greater enlightenment, though there be those who vehemently oppose our conclusions, despite the powerful and convincing arguments I now bring forth.

Revelation 17

The Holy Spirit has prophesied that place where the Antichrist should be sought and found, from which city he was destined to rule his kingdom. It was the will of the Spirit that Christians know and understand in what city the Antichrist was to have his throne. Truly,

the city described by the Spirit is none other than Rome, which John calls by the name Babylon. Rome is described as a woman sitting on seven mountains, ruling the land through tyranny. I find it incredulous that anyone can doubt or not perceive this to be symbolic of Rome. The ancient Fathers perceived this mystery. Tertullian, for example, in his work, *Against the Jews*, admits Babylon to be representative of Rome. According to our John, Babylon is figurative of Rome. Read Jerome, chapter 47. Isais, in the letter to Asella, at the end of book 2, *Against Jovinianus*, found in the prologue of the book on the Holy Spirit, testifies Rome to be Babylon, and calls it the purple harlot. Augustine, in his *City of God*, book 18, chapter 22, says Rome is another Babylon, calling it the daughter of the former Babylon. Orosius, in book 2, chapter 3, shows, by many arguments, that Rome corresponds to Babylon in every respect. But why do we seek the testimonies of men? Why do we seek their arguments when the Apostle John, himself, declares this city to be that which sits on seven mountains?

Let the naysayers offer to me, if they can, their solution by comparing this prophecy to any other city in the world, be it in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the New Indies, including that recently discovered America. Where, I ask, can another city be found, situated on seven mountains, other than the most beautiful Rome, which, unlike any other city, has surrounded its seven citadels with a wall. In addition, the famous names of the mountains are still retained to this day - the Capitoline, Palatine, Aventine, Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, and Quirinal. Let the skeptic find, if he can, another city known for its seven mountains which also fulfills the prophecy whereby it *rules the kings of the earth*. Why then should there be any controversy whatsoever in identifying Babylon as Rome? And so, gentleman, it is Rome that is called Babylon, which truth the Pontiffs are not able to escape, themselves conceding this very city described in Scripture to be Rome. By Babylon is signified not only its former rule by tyrants, but also the succession of rulers, one after another, which holds true for the Papal dynasty. This I will prove irrefutably from their very own words.

Further analysis of the Papal Kingdom

That John is describing both the ancient and renewed Roman Empires in Chapter 13 of the Revelation is well known, for the ancient Empire had collapsed, having been restored by the Pontiff. This is exemplified by the text, *he had the power to give life unto the wounded beast*. Therefore, he means another state similar to the original fallen state. Thereupon in Chapter 17, verse 8, it is truly the ancient Roman Empire, the ruling power in John's day, about which he openly speaks, calling it the beast that was and is not, yet is about to arise from out of the abyss. Assuredly, by the last form of the beast is meant the Papal rule of the Roman Empire which had not yet emerged. This beast is also seven-headed.^[29] Hence it is understood by all that in describing the last seven-headed beast John speaks of the rule of the Papal monarchy. If we reject this fundamental truth, we leave ourselves open to misinterpretations and disputes on all levels.

Conclusion

It is possible to bring forward multitudes of contradicting testimonies of men as to the identity of the Antichrist, all theories grounded in uncertainty and of a highly dubious nature. Yet not one will stand up to the light of the divine testimonies which are both so clear and so certain. Therefore, I now conclude by summarizing the proofs thus far presented:

If it is true that the Antichrist must oppose Christ; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must present himself above everything that is called God or spirit; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must introduce apostasy into the Church; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must sit in the temple of God; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must show himself to be God; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must seize tyrannical power from the overthrown Roman Italian Empire by assuming the role of

monarch; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must have precursors who began soon after the ascent of Christ; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must continue until the end of the world; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must work the works of Satan; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must boast of working signs and lying wonders; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must feign himself like unto the Lamb; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must restore the image of the prior beast; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must in every way be the Latin ruler, Λατεινος, who occupies Rome, Mystery, Μυστηριον, Babylon; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must rule from a seven-mountain city, who is known for its purple color; and

If it is true that that city must also be known as a woman and a harlot; and

If it is true that the Antichrist must have all these identifying marks as described so clearly and precisely in Scriptures by the Holy Spirit;

Then, unless we ascribe a deficiency to the Holy Spirit's description of the Antichrist, we must acknowledge and believe the unavoidable conclusion drawn from the overwhelming evidence: the Roman Pontiff is the Antichrist and there can be no other. Truly, it can be said, without contradiction, that he came before and will follow after.[30]

Up until this point I have explained the underlying nature of the structure upon which the kingdom of Antichrist is built. I will now defend my cause, Christ willing, against the destructive ravages of the most clever learned men.[31]

FINIS

APPENDIX

The Lambeth Articles, A.D. 1595 [32]

- I. God from eternity has predestined some men to life, and reprobated some to death.
 - II. The moving or efficient cause of predestination to life is not the foreseeing of faith, or of perseverance, or of good works, or of anything in the person of the predestinated, but only the will of the good pleasure of God.
 - III. There is a determined and certain number of predestined, which cannot be increased or diminished.
 - IV. Those not predestinated to salvation are inevitably condemned on account of their sins.
 - V. A true, lively and justifying faith, and the sanctifying Spirit of God, is not lost, nor does it pass away either totally or finally in the elect.
 - VI. The truly faithful man - that is, one endowed with justifying faith - is sure, by full assurance of faith, of the remission of sins and his eternal salvation through Christ.
 - VII. Saving grace is not granted, is not made common, is not ceded to all men, by which they might be saved, if they wish.
 - VIII. No one can come to Christ unless it be granted to him, and unless the Father draws him; and all men are not drawn by the Father to come to the Son.
 - IX. It is not in the will or the power of each and every man to be saved.
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- [1] Whitaker was numbered among the English divines who drafted *The Lambeth Articles*, enumerated in the Appendix.
- [2] *Dictionary of National Biography*.
- [3] *Ibid*.
- [4] Mr. Bubb's credentials include an MA in Theology from the University of Dayton, as well as an MA in Latin from San Francisco State University. He is currently adjunct faculty at Santa Rosa Junior College and Solano Community College.
- [5] Whitaker quotes the *Septuagint* version.
- [6] I John 2:18.
- [7] II Thess. 2:3 ff.
- [8] verse 4.
- [9] Daniel 11:36.
- [10] Cf. Daniel 7:25
- [11] In his Bull against Queen Elizabeth, Pope Pius V. states, "He that reigns in the highest, to whom has been given all power in heaven and earth, entrusted the government of the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, (outside of which there is no salvation), to one man alone on the earth, namely Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and to Peter's successor, the Roman Pontiff, in fulness and power. This one man he set up as chief over all nations and all kingdoms, to pluck up, destroy, scatter, dispose, plant and build." *Documents of the Christian Church*, Henry Bettenson, Editor; [New York & London: Oxford University Press, 1961].
- [12] Bull of Boniface VIII., "Thus you see all must be judged by me, and I of no man. Yea, and though I, Pope of Rome, by my negligence or evil demeanor, be found unprofitable or hurtful, either to myself or others; yea, if I should draw with me innumerable souls by heaps to hell, yet may no mortal man be so hardy, so bold, or so presumptuous, to reprove me, or to say to me, '*Sir, why do you do this?*'" (Dist. 40; c. Si Papa)
- [13] II Thess. 2:4.
- [14] Verse 38.
- [15] E. g., Daniel 7:23.
- [16] It is this Editor's opinion that *ninety years* is a Latin typo. Nine hundred years is a more appropriate time span.
- [17] Idol mania.
- [18] I. e., the Eucharist, or Host.
- [19] I. e., speaking of their doctrine which guarantees Transubstantiation of the Host into Christ, *ex opere operato*, 'by virtue of the work performed.'
- [20] I. e. the consecrated Host, or *Corpus Christi*, the Body of Christ.
- [21] E. g., Hebrews 10:14.
- [22] I Timothy 2:5; John 17:9.
- [23] The Roman priest is called *alter Christo*, '*another Christ*.'
- [24] I John 2:22.
- [25] As did Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition.
- [26] John Foxe (vol. 4) offers the reader numerous instances of papal pronouncements whereby the Pope declares himself God on earth. For example, he quotes Gregory IX, '*Quanto*': "Wherefore, if those things that I do be said to be done not of man, what can you make me but God?"
- [27] Rev. 17:9; 18.
- [28] *Lateinos* = Λατῆννοσ = Latin Man, King of the Latin Empire.
- [29] Cf. Rev. 17:3.
- [30] I. e., initially in the form of Caesar, the persecutor of the saints, and finally in the form of the Pope, a more cruel persecutor of the saints; Rev. 17:8, *the beast that was and is not and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit*.
- [31] I. e., the Jesuits.
- [32] *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge*, H. C. Porter, [Cambridge: University Press, 1958].