

Antichrist in Scripture.

By the Rev. Prof. Dr. F. N. Lee

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Short Summary of the findings, extracted from a message given at the 1997 *Blue Banner Conference*.

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Let us now shortly summarize the above teachings of Holy Scripture, Martin Luther and Calvinistic Protestantism.

1. About 540 B.C., Daniel predicted the cessation of all new prophesying around the time of Christ's death. This, Daniel associated with the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem temple within that very same generation! Daniel 2:34-45; 7:7-19; 8:9-12, 20-25; 9:24-27; 11:30-45; 12:1-4.

2. Daniel also predicted that, beginning in AD 70, first the Pagan Roman Empire and then papal Rome as its successor would pollute God's true temple (the Christian Church). That would last for 1260 day-years, or till AD 1330. However, then the great plague called the 'Black Death' would sweep across the civilized world, killing most of its ungodly inhabitants. Daniel 7:24ff & 12:7 cf. Revelation 9:20ff; 11:2-9ff; 12:6-14; 13:1-7.

3. Daniel further predicted that the pollution of the Christian Church, starting in AD 70, would begin to cease after 1290 day-years. The latter would occur thirty years after the 1260 years and hence in AD 1360ff. Daniel 12:11 cf. 7:25 & 12:7. That was when God raised up John Wycliffe in the middle of the 'Black Death' with which He punished a deformed Church. See Revelation 9:20ff & 11:2-9ff. Cf. 'AIDS' today! Revelation 15:1-18:4.

4. Daniel last predicted that a further time of great blessing would start to occur at the end of 1335 day-years after AD 70. Daniel 12:4-12. This would occur when John Huss started preaching Wycliffe's Proto-Protestant views in Bohemia, in AD 1405. Cf. Revelation 14:6ff. Only yet thereafter, God told Daniel, would he himself be resurrected "at the end of the days." Daniel 12:13.

5. The appearance of Christ at His incarnation, elicited opposition from several minor antichrists. Matthew 23:2-36 & John 17:12. The apostle John predicted that these 'antichrists' had already emerged, even before the Holy Scriptures were finally completed. I John 2:18ff & 4:1-3, and II John 7. Yet that same John also insisted that the pagan Roman empire would later be replaced by another 'religious' Roman beast. That latter would look like a lamb, but speak like a dragon. Revelation 13:1-11ff cf. Daniel 7:7-25. Indeed, Paul too predicted a great apostasy and the emergence of 'the man of sin' who would rule in the temple, the very Church of God! II Thessalonians 2:3-8.

6. Probably from even before, and certainly from not long after AD 70, Britain in particular and much of Europe in general started becoming Christian. Especially around the fifth century, the Roman Empire broke up into ten "horns" or kingdoms followed by another diverse and blasphemous "horn." Daniel 2:41ff; 7:7, 20, 25; Revelation 13:1-18; 17:3-16. From around AD 600 onward, only the bishop at Rome was called 'pope' ('holy father'). The first papal missionary to Britain, (in AD 600ff) Austin of Rome, was then stoutly resisted by the Culdee or British Celtic Christians. Only after the 664 Synod of Whitby, from about AD 666 onward, did most of Europe and some of England but not Ireland, Scotland and Wales become increasingly Romanized. Thus, the Romish papal power or "horn" became strong or "stout" and long sat and ruled in the Temple of God, while claiming to be His spokesman. However, that spokesman was in fact 'the man of sin' *antichrist*! Daniel 7:25; 8:20-25; 11:36ff; 12:8-11; II Thessalonians 3:3-8, 12; II Peter 2:1-5ff; Revelation 13:11-18; 17:1-17.

7. In fulfillment of the prophecies, the Lord in AD 1330 sent the great plague called the 'Black Death.' Daniel 12:11 cf. Revelation 9:20ff; 11:2-9ff; 12:6-14. One major purpose of this, was to punish the deformed church which had departed from God's Word; exalted the pope; and worshipped the communion bread. Daniel 7:24ff & 12:11 cf. Revelation 13:1-13ff; 15:1-8; 16:1-11.

8. Thirty years later, in AD 1360, God raised up John Wycliffe. He asserted the sole sufficiency of the long-completed Holy Scriptures. Accordingly, he ridiculed transubstantiation and assailed the pope as antichrist. Daniel 12:11 ff cf. Revelation 14:6ff.

9. Forty-five years later, at the end of 1335 years after AD 70, God further raised up John Huss in Bohemia. He promoted Wycliffe's Proto-Protestant views, and inaugurated a time of great blessing in the very heart of Europe. Daniel 12:12 cf. Revelation 14:8ff.

10. In AD 1415, Rome burned Huss (the "goose") for his Biblical views. This was just after he had announced that though the "unclean birds" of the papacy were then roasting a 'goose' after a hundred years a 'swan' would arise to vindicate him. Cf. Revelation 14:8ff & 18:1-2.

11. A century after Huss, God raised up the "swan" Martin Luther! He powerfully propagated the views of Wycliffe and Huss, that the pope was antichrist. He also predicted the destruction of that papal antichrist through the powerful preaching of the Gospel. These Reformation doctrines were well reflected in the *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of England, which declare: that "transubstantiation . . . is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture . . . and hath given occasion to many superstitions"; that "the sacrifices of Masses . . . were fables and dangerous deceits"; and that "the bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England" (Articles 28, 31 & 37).

12. Said Luther against the papal antichrist: "We must slay him with words; the mouth of Christ must do it . . . See what effect this . . . preaching and writing this truth has had; how the papists' cover has shrunk . . . Let us be wise, thank God for His Holy Word, and be bold with our mouths . . . Let us keep boldly on: earnestly inculcate the Word; and

drive out the laws of men . . . This is the way Christ is, through us, slaying the papacy."
"Christ is with His saints, and wins the victory!"

13. John Calvin took over and systematized Luther's Biblical views. Calvin called Luther "my much respected father" who had denounced "the darkness of the papacy." Calvin himself then further repeatedly exposed the Roman pontiff as antichrist.

14. Calvin indicated that though the AD 600 Gregory the Great was the first bishop at Rome to be called sole pope, Gregory himself had regarded that new title as a mark of antichrist! Yet Calvin saw especially the AD 1415 papal burning of Huss as a clear evidence of the antichristian nature of the papacy. On Daniel 12:4ff, Calvin commented in 1561: "At the present time, in the papacy . . . impiety prevails."

15. Calvin especially insisted that both II Thessalonians 2:3ff and I John 2:18 & 4:4ff clearly brand the pope as antichrist. Romanists, said Calvin, were wrong to regard antichrist as a yet-future tyrant who would harass the church for but three and a half years. Even a ten-year-old, stated Calvin, can see that the centuries-long papacy is itself indeed antichrist! Yet the papal "antichrist will be annihilated by the Word of the Lord . . . Paul does not think the Christ will accomplish this in a moment . . . Christ will scatter the darkness . . . before His coming" by "the preaching of this doctrine." For "we fight by Christ's power, and are armed with God's weapons . . . We are victorious . . . We can no more be conquered, than can God Himself . . . Victory is certain!"

16. Calvin's views were expounded in Britain especially by his student John Knox together with the rest of the "six John's" in the 1560 *First Scots Confession*. There, the Protestants' "True Kirk is distinguished from the filthy synagogues" of Romanism. Especially against the latter, the Confession sounds the trumpet blast: "Arise, O Lord, and let Thy enemies be confounded . . . Give Thy servants strength to speak Thy Word in boldness, and let all nations cleave to Thy true knowledge!"

17. The Calvinistic *Second Scots Confession* of AD 1580 also known as the Scottish *National Covenant* denounces "all kinds of papistry in general. We detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman antichrist. Many are stirred up by Satan and that Roman antichrist to subvert secretly God's true religion . . . We therefore . . . protest!" Indeed, this Protestant 'protest' was effective. For the Preamble to the 1618ff international Calvinistic *Decrees of Dordt* declared that also in Holland "the Church was delivered by the mighty hand of God from the tyranny of the Romish antichrist and the terrible idolatry of the papacy." Christians were leaving Romanism, Revelation 18:2-4!

18. The 1646 Calvinistic *Westminster Confession of Faith* denounces "popish monastical vows." It denies "the pope any power or jurisdiction" over magistrates, citing here not only II Thessalonians 2:4 but also the '666' passage of Revelation 13:15-17. It calls "papists . . . idolaters." It describes "the popish sacrifice of the 'mass' . . . [as] most abominably injurious to Christ's one sacrifice." Indeed, it terms "transubstantiation . . . repugnant not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason" and indeed "the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries."

19. More specifically, the *Westminster Confession* further insists about deformed churches, that "some have so degenerated as to become synagogues of Satan. Revelation 18:2; Romans 11:18-22 . . . The pope of Rome . . . is that antichrist . . . that exalteth himself in the church against Christ and all that is called God. Matthew 23:8-10; II Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8-9; Revelation 13:6."

20. Finally, the Calvinistic *Westminster Larger Catechism* insists that, in the Lord's Prayer, the petition 'Thy Kingdom come!' is a plea for the destruction also of the ecclesiastical antichrist and indeed precisely through the good works of the Spirit-empowered Church as Christ's own spiritual weapon! "We pray that the kingdom of sin and Satan may be destroyed, the gospel propagated throughout the world, the Jews called, the fullness of the Gentiles brought in, [and] the Church furnished with all gospel-officers and . . . purged from corruption." Further, "we pray that God would so over-rule the world and all in it that our sanctification and salvation may be perfected [and] Satan trodden under our feet. Romans 16:20!"

So Scripture, Luther, Calvin and Calvinism all teach that antichrist's days are numbered! The papacy will be brought down by the powerful Protestant preaching of the Word of God! II Thessalonians 2:8f cf. Revelation 14:6-8. When that is done:

'Who shall not fear Thee,
O Lord, and glorify
Thy Name? For
Thou only art
holy.

For all nations shall come, and worship before Thee!' Revelation 15:4