

The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 112

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS WRITINGS

Volume 112

The Antichrist in the Early Church: A Source Book

c. AD 50 – 1200

S E R M O N I N D E X

The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 112: The Antichrist in the Early Church: A Source Book

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS VOLUME

How this book is arranged

This is the hundred and twelfth volume of a series that gathers the writings of the early Church. It is an addendum: it does not reprint any work, but gathers, from the works printed in the other volumes, what the early Church Fathers and some later writers said on one subject, the Antichrist. The first part is an essay and a note on method. The second part, the largest, takes sixteen questions that Christians have asked about the Antichrist, from who he is and where he comes from to what holds him back, how long he reigns and how he is defeated. The third part gathers what the Eastern churches, Greek, Syriac, Coptic and Orthodox, said and kept about the Antichrist, from Andrew of Caesarea and John of Damascus to the liturgy, the ascetic writers and the Old Believers; it is summary and not quotation, and each item says how well it is sourced. The fourth part is a short life of each of the ninety-four writers quoted, in seven periods from the apostles to the Middle Ages, and a list of the works quoted.

Each question begins with a summary of the answers the Fathers gave, set out as positions, with the Scripture on which they drew in the King James text. The quotations come after, in order of date. Every quotation has a number, such as 4.17, which is the seventeenth quotation printed under the fourth question; a quotation that bears on several questions is printed once, under the one it is most about, and is listed by its number under the others.

The quotations

There are 861 quotations from 94 writers and about 200 works. Each is word for word from the English translation named with it, which is the translation printed in this series or on the SermonIndex website. A script checked every quotation against the text of its work, and none is a paraphrase. Three dots in a quotation mean that the passage runs on in the original and the words between are left out. Square brackets and notes inside a quotation are the translator's. About one in five came from a translation that was read by machine from a scanned book and has not been proofread, and these are marked "scanned text".

The short note under each quotation, the label over it, the summaries of positions, the biographies and the essay were prepared for SermonIndex with the help of artificial intelligence. They are our reading of the quotations, and not a verdict, and they may be wrong. They leave out much, and the reader should go to the whole work, as the Method gives the reason.

Dates and authorship

The Fathers did not all agree, and this book does not hide it. They differ on whether the Antichrist is one man or many, whether the Roman empire holds him back, whether the temple of God is a rebuilt building or the Church, and how long he reigns. Augustine says he does not know what Paul means. Some of the writings quoted are not by the authors whose names they bear, and these are marked as the sources mark them: Pseudo-Hippolytus, Pseudo-Clement and others. The dates are those of the authors and the works as given in the series.

PART ONE

The Essay and the Method

*An essay on what the Fathers said about the Antichrist that
most readers never hear, and a note on how the study was
made.*

What Most Readers Never Hear: The Fathers on the Antichrist

SERMON INDEX

An essay on nine things the early Church Fathers said about the Antichrist that popular teaching rarely mentions, each set out in their own words.

1. HE IS KNOWN BY WHAT HE COPIES

The word antichrist occurs in only four verses, all in John's letters (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7), and there it names those who deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. The Fathers add Paul's man of sin, Daniel's little horn and the beast of Revelation. But what strikes a reader who goes through them in order is how often they describe the figure by what he imitates. Chrysostom puts the pattern in one sentence, about the devil's method.

"after the prophets, were the false prophets; and after the apostles, the false apostles; and after Christ, Antichrist For unless the devil see what to imitate" — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* (part 2 of 3)

Hippolytus, early in the third century, turns the idea into a long, point-by-point comparison. Christ was shown to us as a lamb, and so will the Antichrist appear, but "within he is a wolf".

"The Saviour was manifested as a lamb; so he too, in like manner, will appear as a lamb, though within he is a wolf. The Saviour came into the world in the circumcision, and he will come in the same manner. The Lord sent apostles among all the nations, and he in like manner will send false apostles." — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*

The writings that go under his name, which are later, stretch the list further: a counterfeit virgin birth, counterfeit healings, a counterfeit ascension, a counterfeit seal in place of the cross. They are gathered under Question 3, "How does he copy Christ?"

The Greek prefix anti- can mean "in place of" as well as "against", and what the Fathers describe fits the first sense. He is less an open enemy than a

substitute, who comes with Christ's name, tribe, signs and throne. Athanasius gives the picture of a man who steals children by copying their absent parents' faces.

"just as if a man wishing to get into his power some children not His own, should in the absence of the parents counterfeit their looks, and lead away the children who were longing for them. In every heresy then the devil says in disguise, "I am Christ, and with me there is truth." — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24)

If the chief mark of the Antichrist is his likeness to Christ, then the question is no longer "how frightening is this figure?" but "do I know Christ well enough to see where the copy fails?" Sulpicius Severus tells how a devil dressed as a king appeared to Martin of Tours and said, "I am Christ". Martin answered that the Lord had never said he would come in purple and a crown, and that he would not believe it was Christ unless the figure showed the wounds of the cross. The apparition vanished.

"the fiend himself being surrounded by a purple light, in order that he might the more easily deceive people by the brilliance of the splendor assumed, clothed also in a royal robe, and with a crown of precious stones and gold encircling his head ... I am Christ; and being just about to descend to earth, I wished first to manifest myself to thee ... The Lord Jesus did not predict that he would come clothed in purple, and with a glittering crown upon his head. I will not believe that Christ has come, unless he appears with that appearance and form in which he suffered, and openly displaying the marks of his wounds upon the cross" — Sulpicius Severus, *On the Life of St. Martin*

Cyril of Jerusalem gives his baptismal candidates the same test in a sentence.

"The true Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, comes no more from the earth. If any come making false shows in the wilderness, go not forth; if they say, Lo, here is the Christ, Lo, there, believe it not" — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*

2. THE FIRST WARNING IS ABOUT TEACHERS INSIDE THE CHURCH

John writes of antichrists who "went out from us", and the Fathers take him at his word. For Polycarp, the pupil of the apostles, the word applies to anyone who denies the incarnation or the cross.

"For everyone who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is an antichrist. Whoever does not confess the testimony of the cross is

of the devil. Whoever twists the sayings of the Lord to suit his own desires and says there is no resurrection and no judgment is the firstborn of Satan.” — Polycarp of Smyrna, Polycarp to the Philippians

The test is a confession of Christ, and it is applied to people inside and around the Church. Cyprian calls those who leave the Church’s unity anti-christs. Jerome counts every heresiarch as one. Athanasius calls Arianism the last heresy and a harbinger of the Antichrist, and Leo, two centuries later, applies John’s “this is Antichrist” to those who divide or deny Christ’s human nature. What they fear most is the deceiver who arrives in Christian dress. Jerome writes that heretics do this deliberately.

“they speak of Christ, and hide the Antichrist: for they know that no one can be led on, if they bring forth the Antichrist” — Jerome, Homilies on Psalms

Cyprian says the same in a phrase: the adversary equips his ministers as ministers of righteousness, so that they present “antichrist under the name of Christ”.

“the adversary is flattering and deceiving, who, according to the apostle’s word, transforms himself into an angel of light, and equips his ministers as if they were the ministers of righteousness, who maintain night instead of day, death for salvation, despair under the offer of hope, perfidy under the pretext of faith, antichrist under the name of Christ” — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 1. On the Unity of the Church

Hilary of Poitiers, writing under an Arian emperor, saw a further consequence. A Church that has been long deceived may no longer recognize the true Christ when he comes.

“But Christ coming in the end shall find His Church wearied, and tossed by the spirit of Anti-Christ, and by the troubles of the world. And because by their long experience of Anti-Christ they will be troubled at every novelty of trial, they shall have fear even at the approach of the Lord, suspecting deceitful appearances.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea*: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 2 (chapters 11–21)

None of this makes the final figure a figure of speech. Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem and Chrysostom all expect one man at the end. Chrysostom asks whether the man of sin is Satan, and answers at once.

“Here he discourses concerning the Antichrist, and reveals great mysteries ... But who is he? Is it then Satan? By no means; but some man, that admits

his fully working in him. For he is a man. ... For he will not introduce idolatry, but will be a kind of opponent to God; he will abolish all the gods, and will order men to worship him instead of God, and he will be seated in the temple of God, not that in Jerusalem only, but also in every Church ... For he will perform great works, and will show wonderful signs” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*

The Fathers hold both together: a man still to come, and a spirit already at work. The usual modern picture, of a distant political villain, leaves out the second half of what they said, and they said it first.

3. WHO HOLDS HIM BACK: ROME, AND WHY THEY PRAYED FOR IT

Paul says that something is holding the lawless one back, and that the Thessalonians know what it is (2 Thessalonians 2:6–7). He does not write it down. Tertullian, about AD 200, says it is the Roman state.

“What obstacle is there but the Roman state, the falling away of which, by being scattered into ten kingdoms, shall introduce Antichrist upon (its own ruins):” — Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*

Chrysostom, two centuries later and in the Greek East, weighs the other candidate and sets it aside.

“what is that which withholdeth, and after that would know, why Paul expresses it so obscurely. What then is it that withholdeth, that is, hindereth him from being revealed? Some indeed say, the grace of the Spirit, but others the Roman empire, to whom I most of all accede ... Because if he meant to say the Spirit, he would not have spoken obscurely, but plainly, that even now the grace of the Spirit, that is the gifts, withhold him. And otherwise he ought now to have come, if he was about to come when the gifts ceased; for they have long since ceased. But because he said this of the Roman empire, he naturally glanced at it, and speaks covertly and darkly” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*

Lactantius, who had lived through the Great Persecution, draws the practical conclusion.

“The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place; except that while the city of Rome remains it appears that nothing of this kind is to be feared. ... It is that city, that only, which still sustains all things; and the God of heaven is to be entreated by us and implored-if, indeed, His arrangements and decrees can be delayed-lest, sooner than we

think for, that detestable tyrant should come” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7

This explains a habit that surprises modern readers: Christians prayed for the empire’s survival because they thought its fall would bring the end. Tertullian says so openly in his *Apology*.

“We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation.” — Tertullian, *The Apology*

Not all of them were comfortable with this. The same Tertullian, in his treatise *On Prayer*, complains of those who pray for delay.

“how do some pray for some protraction of the age, when the kingdom of God, which we pray may arrive, tends unto the consummation of the age? Our wish is, that our reign be hastened, not our servitude protracted.” — Tertullian, *On Prayer*

Augustine, writing after the sack of Rome in 410, lists the guesses (Rome, or the hidden wicked within the Church) and then gives his own answer.

“they show that he was unwilling to make an explicit statement, because he said that they knew. And thus we who have not their knowledge wish and are not able even with pains to understand what the apostle referred to, especially as his meaning is made still more obscure by what he adds. For what does he mean by “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way: and then shall the wicked be revealed?” I frankly confess I do not know what he means. I will nevertheless mention such conjectures as I have heard or read.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3)

The idea that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit or the Church, taken out of the world before the tribulation, is not what the majority said. Chrysostom mentions the Spirit as the view of “some” and rejects it on the ground that the gifts of the Spirit had long ceased. Other readings exist (God’s power or the angels, the hidden wicked, God’s own permission), and we set them out under *Question 4*, “What holds him back?”, but a Church removed by a rapture is not among the ones we found.

4. THE SACRIFICE THAT CEASES IS THE CHURCH’S WORSHIP

Daniel says that in the middle of the final week the “sacrifice and the oblation” will cease. Modern readers usually picture the animal sacrifices of a re-

built Jewish temple. Hippolytus, the first to write at length on the subject, means something else.

“The sacrifice he speaks of is not that of sheep, but the prayers of the upright. And the holy city he speaks of is the righteous, i. e. [those] who are oppressed and trodden under foot by the horn that sprang up in the midst [Dan. vii. 8, 20, 21, 25], which is Antichrist, as Daniel said.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Commentary on Revelation*

In another fragment he says what he means by the offering that is removed.

“there will remain only one week, the last, in which Elias will appear, and Enoch, and in the midst of it the abomination of desolation will be manifested, viz., Antichrist, announcing desolation to the world. And when he comes, the sacrifice and oblation will be removed, which now are offered to God in every place by the nations.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*

The offering “now offered to God in every place by the nations” is the Church’s. And in a passage preserved by the Syriac writer Dionysius, Hippolytus describes the effect: the Antichrist “will scatter all men, so that there shall not be found two or three together to assemble, to offer sacrifice to God”.

“These things then are to be in the half of the week, when Antichrist will scatter all men, so that there shall not be found two or three together to assemble, to offer sacrifice to God. This then is to be fulfilled, that the sacrifice shall cease. When then these are killed there [ib. 7] by the false Christ, afterwards they are to stand up, in presence of many, and are to be caught upon the clouds to meet our Lord” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus

The writings under his name go further, and describe an empty church and a silent altar.

“because neither “oblation nor incense “is attended to, nor a service acceptable to God; but the sanctuaries of the churches will become like a garden-watcher’s hut, and the holy body and blood of Christ will not be shown in those days. The public service of God shall be extinguished, psalmody shall cease, the reading of the Scriptures shall not be heard” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*

The idea lasted. Six centuries later, in the Syriac church, Dionysius bar Salibi says the same.

“in the latter days of the world the Church shall suffer persecution for three years and a half, which period he identifies with the ‘half-week’ foretold by Daniel (ix. 27); and the ‘sacrifice caused to cease in the midst of the week,’ signifies accordingly the suppression of the public prayers of the Church by the tyranny of Antichrist” — Dionysius bar Salibi, *Commentary on Revelation*

And the nineteenth-century compilers Neale and Littledale, summing up the older readings of the Psalms, put it in terms of prayer.

“That is, they look forward to that time of Antichrist when the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and so the great oblation of the Church’s thanksgiving will come to an end: when from those few scattered servants of God who remain without a priest and without a temple, what can there be but earnest prayer, that, for the elect’s sake, those days may be shortened?” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2)

The Fathers did not choose between the temple in Jerusalem and the worship of the Church. Irenaeus says the Antichrist will sit in the temple at Jerusalem, Cyril of Jerusalem insists it is the Jewish temple and “not the Church”, and John of Damascus agrees; Chrysostom says it may mean both Jerusalem and every church. What the liturgical reading adds is a view of the goal. On this reading the last persecution is aimed first at the assembly and at the offering, and that is why, in the Orthodox churches, the feast of Elijah, the Gospels of Holy Week and the services of the Last Judgment all have the end in view..

5. THE DEFENCE IS THE TRADITION, NOT THE CALENDAR

In the same chapter in which he describes the man of sin, Paul gives his readers their defence: “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle” (2 Thessalonians 2:15, KJV). The Fathers say the same. Polycarp’s remedy for false teaching is plain.

“So let us leave behind the emptiness of the crowd and their false teachings, and turn back to the word that was handed down to us from the beginning. Let us stay alert in prayer and persevere in fasting” — Polycarp of Smyrna, *Polycarp to the Philippians*

Cyril teaches the signs of the Antichrist to the candidates for baptism, and in the same breath forbids curiosity about the date.

“as to the time let no one be curious. For it is not far you, He says, to know times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. And venture not thou to declare when these things shall be, nor on the other hand supinely slumber ... that we may not die deceived and be led astray by that false Antichrist” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures

Athanasius finds a reason for this in the Lord's own words. Because the Son said that he did not know the day, anyone who speaks of the day, even one who claims to be Christ, can be disbelieved.

“because of the deceivers which shall be afterwards; that though demons should be transfigured as Angels, and should attempt to speak concerning the end, you should not believe, since they are ignorant ... and that, if Antichrist too, disguising himself, should say, 'I am Christ,' and should try in his turn to speak of that day and end, to deceive the hearers, ye, having these words from Me, 'No, not the Son,' may disbelieve him also” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Four Discourses Against the Arians

The Fathers did not always follow their own advice. Hippolytus reckoned six thousand years from creation and placed the end about five hundred years after Christ, and he was wrong.

“From the birth of Christ, then, we must reckon the 500 years that remain to make up the 6000, and thus the end shall be. ... in order that in the remaining half time the gospel might be preached to the whole world, and that when the sixth day was completed He might end the present life.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture

The same Hippolytus elsewhere counsels the opposite.

“the little horn, which is Antichrist, shall appear suddenly in their midst, and righteousness shall be banished from the earth, and the whole world shall reach its consummation. So that we ought not to anticipate the counsel of God, but exercise patience and prayer, that we fall not on such times.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture

Jerome records that a chronographer named Judas dated the Antichrist to about AD 202. Augustine rebuked a correspondent who thought the decade might be known. Gennadius says a chronicle built only on Scripture silences

idle guessing about the Antichrist's coming. And Neale and Littledale, with the long view of the nineteenth century, make an observation that remains true.

"They take it of the coming of Antichrist in the last times, when the faith of the Church has become weak, and from Augustine in the fifth century to Parez in the fifteenth, each accounts his own days as near the end, and finds all the marks of decrepitude in the belief and lives of Christians" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2)

The record is of each generation sure that it saw the signs and each corrected by the next. The Fathers' words about watchfulness stand, and so do their words against fixing a date.

6. HE IS IN THE HEART BEFORE HE IS ON THE THRONE

Augustine, preaching on John's first letter, turns the word on the listener.

"Let each one, looking well to his own conscience, if he be a lover of the world, be changed; let him become a lover of Christ, that he be not an antichrist. If one shall tell him that he is an antichrist, he is wroth, he thinks it a wrong done to him; perchance, if he is told by him that strives with him that he is an antichrist, he threatens an action at law. Christ saith to him, Be patient; if thou hast been falsely spoken of, rejoice with me, because I also am falsely spoken of by the antichrists: but if thou art truly spoken of, come to an understanding with thine own conscience; and if thou fear to be called this, fear more to be it." — Augustine of Hippo, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*

Gregory the Great gave the Western church the idea in its mature form: Antichrist is the head of a body, and all the wicked, in every age, are his members. The man at the end is the full revealing of what is already at work.

"every wicked person, who has already gone by, survives in his perverse imitators, and that the author of iniquity, who has not yet come, is already visible in those who do his works. Hence John says; Now are there become many Antichrists ... As if he were saying; Then Antichrist will be manifestly seen; for he now secretly works his hidden works in the hearts of the unrighteous." — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5)

Origen widens the test from persons to teaching and to virtue itself.

"For every discourse which professes to expound Scripture faithfully, and has not the truth, is Antichrist. For the truth is Christ, that which feigns it-

self to be the truth is Antichrist. So also all virtues are Christ, all that feigns itself to be virtue is Antichrist” — Origen of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea*: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28)

Cyprian finds the spirit of Antichrist in pride and in a person’s speech.

“Exaltation, and puffing up, and arrogant and haughty boastfulness, spring not from the teaching of Christ who teaches humility, but from the spirit of Antichrist, whom the Lord rebukes by His prophet” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*

“By his mouth, therefore, and by his words, is every one at once betrayed; and whether he has Christ in his heart, or Antichrist, is discerned in his speaking” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*

Bede puts both halves in a sentence: a man to come, and a presence already in the minds of those who resist Christ “by profession or by deed”.

“He comes with the imminent day of judgment, born into the world as that man more wicked than all others, the son of iniquity. And now he is already in the world, dwelling in the minds of those who resist Christ either by profession or by deed” — Bede, *Bede’s Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*

The Eastern monastic tradition calls this delusion prelest, in which a counterfeit of grace is taken for the real thing. Palladius’s story of the monk Valens is an early example: a demon dressed as the Saviour, with a host of lamp-bearing angels, deceived him into worshipping, and the elders cured his pride (the Syriac version and the Greek). Orthodox writers today connect this with the seal of chrismation, the anointing that marks a Christian from baptism. Neale and Littledale note that the sin of Satan at the first and of Antichrist at the last is the same: pride.

This does not make him a symbol. It puts the question differently, and the Fathers would say first. Before “who is he?” comes “how much of him is in me?”

7. WHAT IS OLDER THAN YOU THINK, AND WHAT IS NEWER

A reader who knows the modern charts will find that some of the pieces are old, and others are not found in these Fathers at all. We list both, since a fair reading has to include the first as well as the second.

FOUND IN THE FATHERS

A single man at the end of the age, among ten kings who divide the Roman empire, who reigns three and a half years (Irenaeus). Elijah and Enoch as the two witnesses, killed by him and raised (Hippolytus and Tertullian; Victorinus names Jeremiah with Elijah instead of Enoch; see Question 9). A final “week” of Daniel, with a gap between the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth: Hippolytus says that “there will remain only one week, the last”, in which Elias and Enoch appear and, in the middle of it, the Antichrist. A rebuilt temple at Jerusalem (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, John of Damascus). A people who receive him, which means the Jews for most of these writers, and which we treat with care under Question 16, “What did the Fathers say about the Jews and Antichrist?”. The tribe of Dan. A kingdom on earth after him for some, the “thousand years”, and a rejection of it by others.

NOT FOUND IN WHAT WE GATHERED

A removal of the Church before the tribulation. The nearest words are Irenaeus’s, who says that “in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this”. Some readers have taken this as a rapture before the tribulation. But the same sentence goes on to call the tribulation “the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned”, and elsewhere Irenaeus puts the resurrection of the just “after the coming of Antichrist”.

“And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, it is said, “There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be.” For this is the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned with incorruption.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*

Hippolytus’s use of the same verb is just as plain. The two witnesses are killed by the false Christ, and “afterwards they are to stand up ... and are to be caught upon the clouds to meet our Lord”. The catching-up comes at the end of the ordeal, not before it.

The Church or the Holy Spirit as restrainer, taken away. See section 3.

A seven-year treaty brokered by the Antichrist. Hippolytus and Bede both quote Daniel’s “he shall approve the covenant for many, one week” and place it at the end (Hippolytus, Bede). Hippolytus also has the Antichrist promise to restore the kingdom of Israel. But we found no Father who describes a

signed seven-year treaty, and in Hippolytus the week begins with the witnesses' preaching and not with the Antichrist.

The mark as a technology. For the Fathers, the mark and number are about worship and denial. Pseudo-Hippolytus describes a seal that requires a formal denial of the Creator and of baptism, Lactantius a mark whose refusers are tortured or burned, and Victorinus and Bede give names that add up to 666 (see Question 8).

A papal Antichrist. Gregory the Great does say that anyone who wants to be called "universal bishop" is a forerunner of Antichrist, but he said it to the Patriarch of Constantinople and the emperor, about a title. The later Protestant identification of the Antichrist with the papacy is not in these early writers.

A caution. What is absent from our quotations is not necessarily absent from every Father, because we selected passages, and some of the works are fragments.

8. WHERE THEY DISAGREED

None of the above should suggest a single Patristic view. They disagreed about whether the temple is the Jewish temple or the Church (see Question 6), about who restrains (Question 4), about whether Nero will return (Question 2), about the meaning of 666 (Question 8), about whether the Antichrist is of Dan (Question 2), and about whether there will be a thousand-year kingdom on earth (Question 14). Where they agree is on the outline: a final deceiver who comes in Christ's likeness, a short and fierce persecution, and a coming of Christ that ends it. Even that outline is treated differently by Aphrahat, who reads Daniel's little horn as Antiochus, already past, and by Clement of Alexandria, who reads the last week as already fulfilled.

9. THREE QUESTIONS THE FATHERS WOULD ASK

The Fathers did not leave their readers a timetable, and we do not offer one. What they leave is a set of questions. First: does it look like Christ, or does it only use his name? The deceiver comes in his name, with his titles and with signs, and the test is the cross and the wounds, humility, and the Father's name. Second: does it ask me to deny that he came in the flesh, or to give up the assembly of the Church? John's test is a confession, and Hippolytus's picture of the last persecution is a Church scattered and unable to gather. Third: am I standing on what was handed down, or on a timetable? Paul's remedy

was to stand fast in the traditions, Athanasius's was that no one can know the day, and Augustine's was to fear more to be an antichrist than to be called one.

That is perhaps what most readers never hear. The Fathers' main concern about the Antichrist was not prediction but fidelity: knowing Christ well enough to be unmoved by the counterfeit, and holding the common faith in a time when it will be hard to gather.

How This Study Was Made

SERMONINDEX

What the quotations are, how they were chosen, what was changed, and what is the work of SermonIndex.

WHAT THIS IS

This section collects what early Christian writers said about the Antichrist, sets their words in order, and lets you read them by question, by period, by author and by Bible passage. It is meant to be a place to read the Fathers, and not to push a view. Where the picture is complicated, we say so.

THE QUOTATIONS

There are 861 quotations from 94 voices and 200 works. Each one was taken from the public-domain English translation in this series or on the SermonIndex website and is word for word. A script checks each quotation against the text of its work, so none is a paraphrase. A line of three dots in a quotation means that the passage runs on in the original; we left out the words in between. Square brackets and notes in the text are the translator's, not ours.

We changed two things for display. The scan of one work printed “im-pending” and another “as- under”, and we have joined these as “impending” and “asunder”. We also stripped a stray line break or two. Nothing else has been changed, and the work named with each quotation holds the original.

Some translations come from scanned books, so a stray letter may be wrong. Those quotations are marked “scanned text”.

THE NOTES, THE QUESTIONS AND THE ESSAY

The short note under each quotation, the one-line label, the sixteen chapters of questions, the biographies, the summaries of the periods and the essay were prepared with the help of artificial intelligence, working from the quotations and from standard biographical knowledge. They are meant to help you read, and they are not authority. They can be wrong, and the quotation

is always the thing to check. The way each chapter of questions sorts the Fathers into positions is our judgment; the quotations printed in each chapter are there so that you can test it.

HOW THE QUOTATIONS WERE CHOSEN

We first searched every text on the site for the word antichrist and its forms (870 passages). From those, and from passages that discuss Daniel, Paul's man of sin and the beast of Revelation without using the word, we chose the ones that say something. Passages are marked "essential" (a star) when they are the clearest or earliest statement of a point, or are widely quoted. Every choice is a judgment, and we may have missed passages.

DATES AND AUTHORS

The site's own date and author fields are wrong for several works. The dates in this volume come from standard sources and are the ones to trust. Two things to know: the Instructions of Commodian are filed on the site under another author's name, and we have credited them to Commodian here; and several works are pseudonymous, such as the pieces ascribed to Hippolytus, which are shown separately as "Pseudo-Hippolytus".

CAUTIONS

The Fathers are not a single voice. They disagree about the temple, the restrainer, the meaning of 666, whether Nero will return, and whether there will be an earthly kingdom. We try to show these disagreements, and to avoid a simple "the Fathers taught". Some of their statements about Jews and Judaism are hard to read. We include them because they are part of the record, and each is discussed under Question 16 (The Jews and Antichrist), where we explain the context.

THE DATA

All 861 quotations are available as a spreadsheet. They are public-domain texts, and you may use them freely.

CORRECTIONS

If a quotation is wrong, a date is off, or a claim is overstated, please tell us, with the number at the end of the card's link (for example q0481).

P A R T T W O

The Sixteen Questions

*Sixteen questions, with how the Fathers answered each and 861
of their own sentences.*

The Sixteen Questions

QUOTATIONS FROM THE EARLY FATHERS, ARRANGED BY SER-
MONINDEX

c. AD 50 – 1200

Sixteen questions that Christians asked about the Antichrist, with how the Fathers answered them and 861 of their own sentences, each word for word from a translation in this series or on the SermonIndex site.

1. WHO, OR WHAT, IS THE ANTICHRIST?

The word antichrist appears only in John's letters (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7), and there it names people who deny the Son and are already in the world. The Fathers join it to Paul's "man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2), Daniel's little horn and the beast of Revelation, and out of those four texts they build one figure. Most of them expect a single man near the end of the age. But from the start they also say that the type, the spirit and the forerunners are already here, and they do not agree on how much of the portrait is a person, how much a kingdom, and how much a power working inside the Church.

In this chapter

This question draws on 215 quotations from 51 voices. 20 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 195 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

A single man, at the end (The majority answer: Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Lactantius, Chrysostom)

Five writers from five different centuries expect one man. For Irenaeus he is an apostate and robber who takes the devil's whole power to himself. Hippolytus draws a full biography from Scripture, and Lactantius a military career. Cyril describes a sorcerer who seizes Roman power. Chrysostom says outright that the man of sin is a man and not Satan.

The devil's instrument, not the devil (Cyril, Hippolytus, Origen, John of Damascus, Gregory the Great)

The writers who say he is human say with equal force that a greater power works in him. Cyril calls him Satan's instrument; Hippolytus says the devil works in the false Christ; Origen calls him the son of the devil. John of Damascus is careful: his coming is not an incarnation of the devil like Christ's, but a man who receives Satan's energy. Gregory the Great says the devil enters a vessel of perdition who will be called Antichrist.

A pattern already seen in history (Cyprian, Aphrahat, Victorinus, Sulpicius Severus, Athanasius)

Several of the Fathers read the portrait through rulers they had lived under. Cyprian takes Antiochus as a type in which Antichrist was set forth; Aphrahat reads Daniel's little horn as Antiochus, already past. Victorinus and the story reported by Sulpicius expect Nero to return, a belief Lactantius and Augustine reject. Athanasius, facing the Arian emperor Constantius, says the emperor fits Daniel's description of the enemy of the saints.

Many antichrists, and one still to come (Polycarp, Origen, Jerome, Cyril of Jerusalem, Hilary)

John's own sentence, that many antichrists have come, is taken seriously. Polycarp uses the word for anyone who denies that Christ has come in the flesh. Origen calls Antichrist one kind with many species; Jerome counts every heresiarch; Cyril says many already say they are the Christ and that the abomination of desolation is still to come. Hilary calls the Arians forerunners of the one who will speak their denial himself.

A body as well as a head (Tyconius (through Bede), Augustine, Irenaeus)

The African tradition saw more than a ruler. Tyconius, as Bede reports him, reads the beast as the devil's whole body across the ages; Augustine takes the beast of Revelation to be the wicked city. Irenaeus's Antichrist "recapitulates" all earlier wickedness, that is, sums it up in himself. On this view the man at the end is the full flower of something that has been growing all along.

The opposite of Christ (Origen, Chrysostom, Hippolytus)

Many describe him by contrast. Origen: as Jesus is the extreme of virtue, Antichrist is the opposite extreme of wickedness. Chrysostom: the devil's tares follow the true sowing, false prophets after prophets, false apostles after

apostles, Antichrist after Christ. The next question after this one, “How does he copy Christ?”, takes up that thought.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Even now are there many antichrists (1 John 2:18–23)

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. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. [1 John 2:18–23]

He is antichrist that denieth (2 John 1:7–11)

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. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. [2 John 1:7–11]

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1–17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not,

that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

The four beasts and the little horn (Dan 7:2-8)

Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. [Daniel 7:2-8]

The fourth beast explained (Dan 7:15-28)

I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which

shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and ... [*Daniel 7:15-28*]

The beast and his number (Rev 13:1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the ... [*Revelation 13:1-18*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Didache, The world-deceiver as a 'son of God' (3.1); Epistle of Barnabas, Ten kingdoms and a little king (5.1); Polycarp of Smyrna, Antichrist as denier of the incarnation (11.3); Ascension of Isaiah, Beliar, the angel of lawlessness (2.1); Ascension of Isaiah, Beliar descends as a lawless matricide king (2.2); Ascension of Isaiah, He persecutes the apostles' plant (15.6); Justin Martyr, The man of apostasy persecutes Christians (11.4); Justin Martyr, Daniel's fourth beast and the horn (5.3); Justin Martyr, Daniel's blasphemer already at the door (7.2); Justin Martyr, Man of lawlessness reigns 'a time, times, half' (7.3); Irenaeus of Lyons, The lion is antichrist (14.6); Irenaeus of Lyons, Exalted above idols (3.5); Irenaeus of Lyons, Apostate robber who wants worship (3.6); Irenaeus of Lyons, Becomes the one idol (3.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, 'Another' in his own name (3.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Gathers all apostasy; cast into fire (11.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Beast like leopard, bear, lion (5.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Recapitulation of all wickedness (8.2); Irenaeus of Lyons, Lion = Antichrist (Irenaeus) (2.7); Clement of Alexandria, Antichrist denies Jesus is the Christ (12.2); Tertullian, Falling away: empire falls (4.3); Tertullian, Man of sin is Antichrist (6.7); Tertullian, False prophets are forerunners (12.5); Hippolytus of Rome, 42 months: Church persecuted (7.6); Hippolytus of Rome, Sacrifice = prayers of the upright (6.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Abomination of desolation = Antichrist (7.7); Hippolytus of Rome, 2 Thess 2 means Antichrist (6.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Little horn kills witnesses (5.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Beast's body is the devil (14.15); Hippolytus of Rome, Little horn restores Judah's kingdom (16.3); Hippolytus of Rome, Dan, the lion's whelp (2.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Dan the serpent is Antichrist (2.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Samson partial, Antichrist full (2.11); Hippolytus of Rome, A man claiming 'I am God' (14.16); Hippolytus of Rome, Rome's beast; Jewish kingdom raised (2.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Four kingdoms, ten horns summarised (5.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Restores the wounded Roman empire (5.19); Hippolytus of Rome, Unjust judge and widow Jerusalem (6.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Programme of the treatise (8.21); Hippolytus of Rome, Christ a lion, Antichrist a lion (3.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Matthew 24: Antichrist, not AD 70 (6.18); Hippolytus of Rome, Vespasian not the Man of Sin (6.20); Hippolytus of Rome, Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah (9.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Devil works in him; Jerusalem (6.22); Origen of Alexandria, The last lion is the man of sin (2.14); Commodian, Nero raised; Elijah

half, Nero half (9.12); Commodian, Nero raised from hell, Elias first (9.14); Gospel of Bartholomew, Satan: 'I will be as he is' (2.15); Origen of Alexandria, One genus, many Antichrists (13.3); Origen of Alexandria, Pharaohs, Sennacheribs, Herods: types (5.21); Origen of Alexandria, The man of sin permitted by God's judgment (4.9); Origen of Alexandria, Antichrist as the opposite extreme to Christ (13.5); Origen of Alexandria, Evil peaks by simulating the good (2.16); Origen of Alexandria, The son of the devil (2.17); Origen of Alexandria, Even the man of sin is permitted by God (4.11); Origen of Alexandria, The wicked one's 'son' opposed to Christ (2.18); Cyprian of Carthage, Pride is the spirit of Antichrist (13.7); Cyprian of Carthage, Antiochus is a type of Antichrist (2.19); Cyprian of Carthage, Isaiah: the man who disturbs kings (5.22); Victorinus of Pettau, Beast arises among the Caesars (4.12); Victorinus of Pettau, Secretly at work in the prince (4.13); Victorinus of Pettau, Antichrist among the seven Roman kings (5.24); Victorinus of Pettau, Seven kings counted to Domitian (5.25); Victorinus of Pettau, Nero raised up, received as Christ (2.20); Victorinus of Pettau, Sent from Rome; three kings killed (5.26); Lactantius, Rejects Nero redivivus (12.13); Lactantius, Ten kings; northern enemy kills three (2.21); Lactantius, Syrian king, evil spirit's offspring (2.22); Lactantius, Claims to be God's Son (3.23); Lactantius, Antichrist falsely calls himself Christ (3.24); Eusebius of Caesarea, Other deceivers came before the final one (12.15); Aphrahat, Little horn is Antiochus, already past (5.28); Aphrahat, Little horn read as Antiochus (5.29); Aphrahat, The horn's war fulfilled under Antiochus (7.15); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Roman fourth beast; Antichrist restores Judah (16.9); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dan the serpent (2.23); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Born of Dan, not Judah (2.24); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Pseudo-virgin birth; phantom flesh (2.25); Revelation of Esdras (apocryphal), Claimed to be the Son of God (3.29); Revelation of Esdras (apocryphal), Inscribed 'Antichrist'; child or old man (3.30); Revelation of John (apocryphal), The denier called Antichrist (3.31); Hilary of Poitiers, Abomination = Antichrist in the holy place (6.34); Hilary of Poitiers, Antichrist the Synagogue's branch (16.14); Hilary of Poitiers, Barabbas prefigures Antichrist (16.15); Hilary of Poitiers, Arians, forerunners of Antichrist (2.26); Hilary of Poitiers, Feigns the Father's name (3.34); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius fits Daniel's portrait (5.30); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius, forerunner of the lawless one (6.35); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius 'as it were Antichrist himself' (12.28);

Apostolic Constitutions, The deceiver of the world, prince of lies (14.39); Cyril of Jerusalem, Division prepares his way (4.17); Cyril of Jerusalem, A magician seizes Rome (2.27); Cyril of Jerusalem, Eleventh king, three-and-a-half years (5.31); Cyril of Jerusalem, Daniel's fourth kingdom is Rome (5.32); Cyril of Jerusalem, Heretics already say 'I am Christ' (12.32); Cyril of Jerusalem, Many Antichrists; one still to come (12.33); Gregory of Nazianzus, Julian's own book titled 'Antichrist' (12.35); Tyconius, Tyconius: the beast as the whole body of the devil (14.42); Ambrose of Milan, Abomination: Antichrist in the temple (6.37); Ambrose of Milan, Man of sin as synagogue's leaves (16.17); Ambrose of Milan, The hour of darkness (3.41); Macarius Magnes, The Slanderer is that Antichrist (2.28); John Chrysostom, Thief and robber alludes to him (3.42); John Chrysostom, Proclaims himself God (16.18); John Chrysostom, Antichrist follows Christ as imitation (2.29); John Chrysostom, Antichrist and his ministers (12.39); John Chrysostom, Antichrist's guise versus lightning (3.44); John Chrysostom, 1290 days applied to Antiochus (7.18); John Chrysostom, Rejects nursery tales about him (15.38); John Chrysostom, A man, not Satan (6.40); John Chrysostom, Nero his type; Rome removed (4.21); John Chrysostom, He comes in his own name (16.20); John Chrysostom, Matt 24 deceivers include him (3.49); John Chrysostom, Nero the mystery of Antichrist (14.49); Jerome, Conception, not birth, of Antichrist (7.19); Jerome, Abomination: Hadrian's statue (6.43); Jerome, All heresiarchs are Antichrists (12.40); Jerome, Jews will support Antichrist (16.22); Jerome, A new apostle of Antichrist (12.42); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (2.30); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (5.33); Sulpicius Severus, Daniel foretold Antichrist's coming (7.20); Sulpicius Severus, Nero expected to return before Antichrist (2.31); Augustine of Hippo, Jews expect an Antichrist (16.24); Augustine of Hippo, Abomination fulfilled at Jerusalem (6.44); Augustine of Hippo, Augustine doubts that reading (16.25); Augustine of Hippo, Man of sin completes all false prophets (2.32); Augustine of Hippo, The Jews will receive 'another' in his own name (16.27); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist honours his own name (13.29); Augustine of Hippo, Fire from heaven: the saints' firmness (14.55); Augustine of Hippo, Beast is a wicked city; false prophet (14.56); Augustine of Hippo, Apostate, the day of the Lord (6.45); Augustine of Hippo, Daniel's fourth beast's king; 3.5 years (5.34); Augustine of Hippo, Seeks his own glory; the Jews receive him (16.28); Augustine of Hippo, Not sent, only

permitted; seek not own glory (13.41); Augustine of Hippo, Legislator = Antichrist's tyranny (11.68); Cyril of Alexandria, Another in his own name: the son of transgression (16.29); Cyril of Alexandria, Jews attach themselves to Antichrist (16.30); Cyril of Alexandria, The worthless shepherd is Antichrist (16.31); Testament of Our Lord, Son of Perdition boasts and works signs (15.49); Testament of Our Lord, Son of Perdition, the Adversary, foretold (7.24); Testament of Our Lord, A godless king arises in the West (5.37); Philoxenus of Mabbug, Jews await the lying Christ (16.32); Cave of Treasures, Danite in Jerusalem temple (2.35); Gregory the Great, Antichrist proven not to be God (16.33); Gregory the Great, Antichrist passes himself off as 'day' (14.61); Gregory the Great, Head of the wicked, whose members are all the wicked (13.43); Gregory the Great, The devil enters a man called Antichrist (2.36); Gregory the Great, Elijah and Enoch rebuke him (9.41); Gregory the Great, Engrafted into the body of Antichrist (13.44); Gregory the Great, Chief of all hypocrites (16.35); Gregory the Great, Antichrist: the devil's vessel (13.45); Gregory the Great, Pretends to be God above men (6.50); Gregory the Great, Satan enters Antichrist (2.37); Gregory the Great, Lifted up, then undone by the true Judge (14.63); Gregory the Great, Jews believe the man of lies to be God (16.38); Gregory the Great, Some say he comes from the tribe of Dan (2.38); Gregory the Great, Judaea awaits Antichrist instead of Christ (16.39); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Last Arab king numbered 666 (8.27); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Godless last king (11.87); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Fourth beast is Ishmael's kingdom (2.44); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Eleventh king: 42 months (7.31); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, 17th king numbered 666 (8.29); Bede, Jews wait for Antichrist (16.42); Bede, Abomination: Antichrist or a statue (6.52); Bede, Heretics, last and greatest Antichrist (12.52); Bede, Doeg as Antichrist (14.68); Bede, A man born more wicked than all; already in minds (13.51); Bede, Comes in his own name, calls himself Son of God (16.44); Bede, Abomination: Antichrist, Caesar's image or Hadrian's statue (6.53); Bede, A man in whom Satan dwells bodily (8.30); Bede, Mimics Christ's death and resurrection (3.58); Bede, Eighth king; ten kings; born from Babylon (2.47); Bede, The beast: devil, Antichrist or impious city (14.70); John of Damascus, General and special Antichrist (12.54); John of Damascus, Offspring of fornication, not incarnation (2.50); Paulician Church of Armenia, Satan as 'son of perdition' (13.53); Alcuin, Comes in his own name (16.48); Rabanus,

Enoch and Elijah versus Antichrist's spirit (9.51); Theophylact, Dwelling-place of every sin (11.96); Bruno, Impenitent see their king overthrown (14.74); Dionysius bar Salibi, Editor: public prayer suppressed (15.64); Solomon of Basra, Born where Christ's woes fell (2.53); Solomon of Basra, Sits in temple as Christ (6.58); Kebra Nagast, Ethiopia holds faith against False Christ (15.66); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Pharaoh earliest type (2.57); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Boasting ungodly: Antichrist in the temple (6.59); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Types: Pharaoh, Antiochus, fourth empire (2.58); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Satan and Antichrist: same pride (13.54); Neale and Littledale (compilers), 666 culminates temptation (8.32); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Proud = the Lawless One (3.66); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Singular beast = Antichrist (2.59); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Spiritual Assyrians under Antichrist (14.84); Neale and Littledale (compilers), 'Like the Most High' but smitten (3.67); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Awaiting 'another Messiah' = Antichrist (16.52).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

1.1. Shepherd of Hermas: The sea-monster with fiery locusts

"The sun shone out a little, and look, I saw an enormous beast, like some sea monster, with fiery locusts coming out of its mouth. The beast was about a hundred feet long, and its head looked like pottery." — Shepherd of Hermas, The Shepherd of Hermas. Note: Hermas sees a huge sea monster with fiery locusts issuing from its mouth. [Revelation 13:1]

1.2. Irenaeus of Lyons: 'Wicked one' is Antichrist

"For he does not mean that the coming of the Lord is after the working of Satan; but the coming of the wicked one, whom we also call Antichrist." — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: Irenaeus identifies Paul's 'wicked one' with Antichrist and explains the phrase 'after the working of Satan' applies to his coming, not the Lord's. [2 Thessalonians 2:8-9]

1.3. Irenaeus of Lyons: Wonders by magic and demons

"After this he likewise describes his armour-bearer, whom he also terms a false prophet ... Let no one imagine that he performs these wonders by divine

power, but by the working of magic. And we must not be surprised if, since the demons and apostate spirits are at his service, he through their means performs wonders” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The false prophet, Antichrist's armour-bearer, works wonders by magic through demons, not by divine power. [*Revelation 13:11-14*]

1.4. Origen of Alexandria: A bold king who destroys the saints

“there shall arise a king, bold in countenance, and understanding riddles. And his power shall be great, and he shall destroy wonderfully, and prosper, and practise; and shall destroy mighty men, and the holy people.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2 of 2). Note: He quotes Daniel's king bold of countenance, powerful and destroying the holy people, as the Antichrist. [*Daniel 8:23-25*]

1.5. Cyprian of Carthage: The serpent as Antichrist's pioneer

“you, by God's will, when you confessed, not only frightened back the great serpent himself, the pioneer of Antichrist, (but) have conquered him” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*. Note: A confessor's testimony before magistrates is said to have repelled the great serpent, the pioneer of Antichrist.

1.6. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist will come as a man

“118. Also of Antichrist, that he will come as a man.” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Treatise 12. Three Books of Testimonies Against the Jews*. Note: Cyprian's *Testimonia* heading says Antichrist will come as a man, citing Isaiah. [*Isaiah 14:16-17*]

1.7. Victorinus of Pettau: Raised up by God's command

“but he is not raised up by his own power, nor by that of his father, but by command of God, of which thing Paul says in the same passage: “For this cause, because they have not received the love of God, He will send upon them a spirit of error” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: Antichrist rises not by his own power but by God's command, who sends a spirit of error on those who rejected the love of truth. [*2 Thessalonians 2:11*]

1.8. Eusebius of Caesarea: Ecclesiastes' second young man

“The “second young man” who is said to rise up in his place, I take to be the antichrist.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Prophetic Extracts*. Note: Eusebius reads

Ecclesiastes's second young man rising in the wise king's place as the anti-christ. [*Ecclesiastes* 4: 15]

1.9. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Wonders over the elements

“Under the eye of the spectators he will remove mountains from their places, he will walk on the sea with dry feet, he will bring down fire from heaven, he will turn the day into darkness and the night into day, he will turn the sun about wheresoever he pleases” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces* Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: A catalogue of Antichrist's displayed wonders: moving mountains, walking on the sea, fire from heaven, darkening day and night, turning the sun. [*2 Thessalonians* 2: 9; *Revelation* 13: 13]

1.10. Pseudo-Hippolytus: 'What god is there but I?'

“Ye peoples, and tribes, and nations, acquaint yourselves with my mighty authority and power, and the strength of my kingdom. What prince is there so great as I am? What great God is there but I? Who will stand up against my authority? ” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces* Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Antichrist, revealed in his true character, proclaims himself greater than any god. [*2 Thessalonians* 2: 4]

1.11. Cyril of Jerusalem: Satan's instrument; illusory miracles

“Whose coming, he says, is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders ; implying, that Satan has used him as an instrument, working in his own person through him; for knowing that his judgment shall now no longer have respite, he wages war no more by his ministers ... the father of falsehood will make a show of the works of falsehood, that the multitudes may think that they see a dead man raised, who is not raised, and lame men walking, and blind men seeing, when the cure has not been wrought” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: Satan uses him as an instrument, fighting openly in person; the wonders are illusions, such as seeming resurrections and cures that never happened. [*2 Thessalonians* 2: 9]

1.12. Jerome: Hippolytus wrote On the Antichrist

“On the Antichrist” — Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men*. Note: Jerome's catalogue of Hippolytus's writings includes a work 'On the Antichrist' among commentaries on Daniel and the Apocalypse.

1.13. Augustine of Hippo: Prosperous, thought to be God

“which will especially be the case in that Antichrist, who will seem to man blessed to that degree, that he will even be thought God.” — Augustine of Hippo, *On the Psalms* (part 1 of 4). Note: Augustine reads Psalm 10 as saying that the sinner’s prosperity under God’s anger will be most true of Antichrist, who will seem so blessed that he will be thought God. [*Psalm 10: 3-4*]

1.14. Testament of Our Lord: His power is to blaspheme

“for his way is in error and his power is to blaspheme, and his hand for deception, his right hand in misery, and his left hand in darkness.” — Testament of Our Lord, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Cooper and Maclean translation); scanned text. Note: The Adversary’s way is error, his power blasphemy and his hands deception, misery and darkness.

1.15. Gregory the Great: Gifts, honours and marvels draw followers

“whereas our old enemy, having entered into his vessel, that son of perdition, whilst he bestows gifts on the wicked, whilst he exalts them with honours in this world, whilst he exhibits marvels to their eyes, has all drifting souls admiring and following him in his marvels” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory says that the ‘son of perdition’ will bestow gifts, honours and marvels on the wicked, so that drifting souls admire and follow him. [*Job 21: 33*]

1.16. Gregory the Great: Honour of the world and power of miracles

“that latter end of the ancient enemy, when he enters, doubtless, that ruined man, his peculiar vessel, who is specially called Antichrist ... as a cedar leaves behind other trees by increasing in height, in like manner will Antichrist, possessing in temporal things the glory of the world, surpass at this time the standard of man both in the height of his honour, and in the power of his miracles.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the devil’s end is to enter the man specially called Antichrist, who will surpass mankind in worldly honour and in the power of his miracles. [*Job 40: 17*]

1.17. Gregory the Great: First beast = Antichrist; second = his preachers

“He had spoken indeed of the first beast, that is, Antichrist, in a former description; after whom this other beast is said to have also come up, because the multitude of his preachers after him boasts in his earthly power.” —

Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory takes the first beast of Revelation 13 to be Antichrist and the beast from the earth to be the multitude of his hypocritical preachers. [*Revelation 13: 11; Job 41: 10*]

1.18. Bede: Armageddon: the devil in a man with usurped divinity

“the place of the wicked can be understood as the devil, who in a lost man, inflated with the pride of usurped divinity, will rejoice in recovering former deceptions” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede reads Armageddon as the devil, who in a lost man inflated by the pride of usurped divinity will rejoice to recover his former deceptions, rather than only as a place. [*Revelation 16: 16; Revelation 20: 8-9*]

1.19. Theophylact: Deceives for a time; followers lost

“He alludes to Antichrist, who shall deceive for a time, but Aug. lose all his followers when he dies.” — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact says the stranger the sheep will not follow alludes to Antichrist, who will deceive for a time but lose his followers at his death. [*John 10: 5*]

1.20. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Only the unwritten worship him

“Lastly, in the Apocalypse, what saith the Spirit of GOD, when the Scripture is speaking of Antichrist's oppressions? "All shall worship him whose names are not written in the Book of Life.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: A sermonic comment on Psalm 69 cites the Apocalypse on Antichrist's oppressions: all whose names are not in the Book of Life will worship him, so the written elect will not. [*Psalm 69: 28; Revelation 13: 8*]

2. WHERE DOES HE COME FROM?

Four answers recur. He comes from the tribe of Dan; from Rome and its emperors; from the East, a Syrian or later an Ishmaelite; or from the devil, in a parody of Christ's birth. The Danite tradition rests on a short chain of texts (Genesis 49:17, Jeremiah 8:16, and the tribe missing from the sealed list in Revelation 7) that Irenaeus began and many repeated. The Roman and Nero traditions come from reading Revelation 13 and 17 beside the history the writers knew. As empires changed, the portrait was repainted: the late Coptic and Syriac apocalypses place him among the Arabs and the Ethiopians, and

Solomon of Basra's Book of the Bee keeps the Danite and adds Gog and Magog.

In this chapter

This question draws on 65 quotations from 26 voices. 59 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 6 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

From the tribe of Dan (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Gregory the Great, Bede, Solomon of Basra)

Irenaeus (about AD 180) notes that Jeremiah's horses come from Dan and that Revelation leaves Dan out of the sealed tribes. Hippolytus sets the two tribes against each other: Christ the lion of Judah, Antichrist the lion's whelp of Dan. Gregory the Great reports it as what some say; Bede repeats the omission of Dan; Solomon of Basra treats it as settled.

From Rome and its emperors (Ascension of Isaiah, Sibylline Oracles, Victorinus, Hippolytus)

The earliest sources make Beliar come in the likeness of a Roman emperor, a lawless king who is a matricide (an allusion to Nero). Victorinus finds the beast among the Caesars. Hippolytus has Antichrist rise as the little horn among the ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire is divided, and then raise up a Jewish kingdom.

Nero returned (Victorinus, Commodian, Sulpicius Severus; doubted by Augustine)

A tradition that Nero would be raised from the dead or hell appears in Victorinus and Commodian and in the report of Martin of Tours that Sulpicius gives. Lactantius and Augustine do not accept it; Augustine says he is astonished that anyone could believe it.

From the East: a Syrian, an Ishmaelite, an Ethiopian (Lactantius, Samuel of Kalamoun, Coptic Daniel, Solomon of Basra)

Lactantius, in the time of Constantine, has a powerful enemy from the far north and a Syrian king born of an evil spirit. Seven centuries later, under Muslim rule, the Copts place him among the Ishmaelites: Samuel of Kalamoun's last king has an Ishmaelite father and a Frankish mother, and the Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel gives a nineteenth king of mixed parentage with the number 666. In Solomon of Basra the last emperor is of Ethiopian descent.

Born of a counterfeit virgin, or of fornication (Pseudo-Hippolytus, John of Damascus, Solomon of Basra)

A separate strand asks how he is born. Pseudo-Hippolytus has him born of an impure woman posing as a virgin. John of Damascus rules out a true incarnation of the devil: he is a man born of fornication who receives Satan's energy. Solomon of Basra calls him a man of a married Danite woman, made a dwelling for devils, an inverted incarnation.

Pharaoh, Antiochus, the fourth empire: types before the man (Cyprian, Neale and Littledale)

Cyprian reads the persecution under Antiochus as a type of Antichrist. Neale and Littledale, summing up the older readings in 1869, list Pharaoh as the earliest type, Antiochus Epiphanes as the second, and Daniel's fourth iron empire as the third.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Dan, a serpent by the way (Gen 49:16–18)

Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD. [Genesis 49:16–18]

Dan's snorting heard (Jer 8:16–17)

The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing of his strong ones; for they are come, and have devoured the land, and all that is in it; the city, and those that dwell therein. For, behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the LORD. [Jeremiah 8:16–17]

The sealed tribes (Rev 7:4–8)

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed

twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. [*Revelation 7: 4-8*]

The four beasts and the little horn (Dan 7: 2-8)

Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. [*Daniel 7: 2-8*]

The beast and his number (Rev 13: 1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blas-

phemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword ... [Revelation 13: 1-18]

The woman on the scarlet beast (Rev 17: 1-18)

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the ... [Revelation 17: 1-18]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Hippolytus of Rome, Programme of the treatise (8.21); Origen of Alexandria, Antichrist can father the sinner (13.1); Victorinus of Pettau, Beast arises among the Caesars (4.12); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Last Arab king numbered 666 (8.27); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, 19th king, mixed

race, 666 (8.28); Bede, A man born more wicked than all; already in minds (13.51).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

2.1. Ascension of Isaiah: Beliar, the angel of lawlessness

“for the angel of lawlessness, who is the ruler of this world, is Beliar, whose name is Matanbûchûs.” — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: Beliar is named as the angel of lawlessness who rules this world. [2 Thessalonians 2: 7]

2.2. Ascension of Isaiah: Beliar descends as a lawless matricide king

“After it is consummated, Beliar the great ruler, the king of this world, will descend, who hath ruled it since it came into being; yea, he will descend from his firmament in the likeness of a man, a lawless king, the slayer of his mother” — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: Beliar, ruler of this world, descends in the likeness of a lawless king who is a matricide. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

2.3. Sibylline Oracles: Beliar from the Caesars

“From the great Cæsars Beliar shall come / Hereafter, and shall stand on mountain height, / And stay the sea, and the great fiery sun, / And shining moon, and make the dead stand up, / And perform many miracles with men.” — Sibylline Oracles, The Sibylline Oracles (Terry translation); scanned text. Note: Beliar will arise from the Roman emperors, halting sea, sun and moon, raising the dead and working miracles. [Revelation 13: 13]

2.4. Irenaeus of Lyons: Unjust judge; kingdom moved to Jerusalem

“This is also the unjust judge, whom the Lord mentioned as one “who feared not God, neither regarded man,” to whom the widow fled in her forgetfulness of God,-that is, the earthly Jerusalem,-to be avenged of her adversary. Which also he shall do in the time of his kingdom: he shall remove his kingdom into that [city], and shall sit in the temple of God, leading astray those who worship him, as if he were Christ.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: The unjust judge of Luke 18 is Antichrist, who moves his

kingdom to earthly Jerusalem and sits in the temple deceiving his worshippers as if he were Christ. [Luke 18: 2-8; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4]

2.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: From the tribe of Dan

“And Jeremiah does not merely point out his sudden coming, but he even indicates the tribe from which he shall come, where he says, “We shall hear the voice of his swift horses from Dan; the whole earth shall be moved by the voice of the neighing of his galloping horses: he shall also come and devour the earth, and the fulness thereof, the city also, and they that dwell therein.” This, too, is the reason that this tribe is not reckoned in the Apocalypse along with those which are saved.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Jeremiah's 'horses from Dan' indicate Antichrist's tribe; Irenaeus adds that Dan is omitted from the sealed tribes in Revelation. [Jeremiah 8: 16; Genesis 49: 17; Revelation 7: 5-8]

2.6. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Dan's prince is Satan

“For I have read in the book of Enoch, the righteous, that your prince is Satan, and that all the spirits of wickedness and pride will conspire to attend constantly on the sons of Levi, to cause them to sin before the Lord.” — *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: In Dan's testament, citing Enoch, the tribe of Dan has Satan as its prince. [Genesis 49: 17]

2.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Lion = Antichrist (Irenaeus)

“There is much variety of explanation, beginning with that of S. Irenæus, which is that the asp, erecting and swelling itself, and making men cold with its bite, is sin; the basilisk, or king-serpent, is death, once sovereign over the world; the lion is Antichrist, and the dragon Satan himself.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81-118) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale give Irenaeus's reading of Psalm 91's four beasts: asp is sin, basilisk is death, lion is Antichrist, dragon is Satan. [Psalm 91: 13]

2.8. Hippolytus of Rome: Proclaimed king; 1290 and 1335 days

“He shall be proclaimed king by them, and shall be magnified by all, and shall prove himself an abomination of desolation to the world, and shall reign for a thousand two hundred and ninety days. “Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days;

"for when the abomination cometh and makes war upon the saints, whosoever shall survive his days, and reach the forty-five days" — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: Antichrist, hailed as king first by Edom, Moab and Ammon, reigns 1,290 days; those who survive and reach the further 45 days are blessed. [Daniel 11: 41; Isaiah 11: 14; Daniel 12: 12]

2.9. Hippolytus of Rome: Dan, the lion's whelp

"For Moses speaks thus: "Dan is a lion's whelp, and he shall leap from Bashan." But that no one may err by supposing that this is said of the Saviour, let him attend carefully to the matter. "Dan," he says, "is a lion's whelp;" and in naming the tribe of Dan, he declared clearly the tribe from which Antichrist is destined to spring. For as Christ springs from the tribe of Judah, so Antichrist is to spring from the tribe of Dan." — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: Moses' 'Dan is a lion's whelp' names the tribe of Antichrist, set in parallel with Christ from Judah. [Genesis 49:16-17; Deuteronomy 33: 22]

2.10. Hippolytus of Rome: Dan the serpent is Antichrist

"And that the case stands thus, we see also from the words of Jacob: "Let Dan be a serpent, lying upon the ground, biting the horse's heel." What, then, is meant by the serpent but Antichrist, that deceiver who is mentioned in Genesis, who deceived Eve and supplanted Adam" — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: The serpent of Jacob's blessing on Dan is Antichrist, the same deceiver who tempted Eve in Genesis. [Genesis 49: 17; Genesis 3: 1-15]

2.11. Hippolytus of Rome: Samson partial, Antichrist full

"That it is in reality out of the tribe of Dan, then, that that tyrant and king, that dread judge, that son of the devil, is destined to spring and arise, the prophet testifies when he says, "Dan shall judge his people, as (he is) also one tribe in Israel." But some one may say that this refers to Samson ... Well, the prophecy had its partial fulfilment in Samson, but its complete fulfilment is reserved for Antichrist." — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: Dan's judging of his people was partly fulfilled in Samson but completely in Antichrist, the tyrant and son of the devil. [Genesis 49: 16; Jeremiah 8: 16]

2.12. Hippolytus of Rome: Rome's beast; Jewish kingdom raised

"A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible; it had iron teeth and claws of brass." And who are these but the Romans? which (kingdom) is meant by the iron —the kingdom which is now established ... And under this was signified none other than Antichrist, who is also himself to raise the kingdom of the Jews." — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The fourth beast is Rome; the little horn that rises among its ten horns is Antichrist, who will raise up a kingdom of the Jews. [*Daniel 7: 7-8; Daniel 2: 41-43*]

2.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Gathers the dispersion of Israel

"For he will call together all the people to himself, out of every country of the dispersion, making them his own, as though they were his own children, and promising to restore their country, and establish again their kingdom and nation, in order that he may be worshipped by them as God" — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Antichrist will gather the Jewish dispersion, promising to restore their land and kingdom, so as to be worshipped by them as God. [*Jeremiah 17: 11; Isaiah 14: 13-14*]

2.14. Origen of Alexandria: The last lion is the man of sin

"For the first lion is the opposing devil, "the murderer" himself. The last, at the end of the age, is "the man of sin, the son of destruction, who exalts himself above everything called god or object of worship." — Origen of Alexandria, *Fragments on Jeremiah*. Note: Origen reads Jeremiah's two lions as the devil first and, at the age's end, the man of sin. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 3; Jeremiah 27*]

2.15. Gospel of Bartholomew: Satan: 'I will be as he is'

"I am fire of fire, I was the first angel formed, and shall I worship clay and matter? ... I will set my throne over against his throne, and I will be as he is." — Gospel of Bartholomew, *The Questions of Bartholomew* (James translation); scanned text. Note: The devil recounts refusing to worship Adam and aiming to set his throne against God's and be as he is. [*Isaiah 14: 13-14*]

2.16. Origen of Alexandria: Evil peaks by simulating the good

"evil is specially characterized by its diffusion, and attains its greatest height when it simulates the appearance of the good, for that reason are signs, and marvels, and lying miracles found to accompany evil, through the co-operation of its father the devil." — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2

of 2). Note: Evil reaches its peak by imitating the good, so lying wonders accompany it with the devil as its father. [2 *Thessalonians* 2:9]

2.17. Origen of Alexandria: The son of the devil

“the other, who is diametrically opposite, be termed the son of the wicked demon, and of Satan, and of the devil.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2 of 2). Note: The opposite extreme to the Son of God is called the son of the wicked demon, of Satan and the devil.

2.18. Origen of Alexandria: The wicked one's 'son' opposed to Christ

“in order that having delivered them from the wicked one, and his son, in whom was falsehood and unrighteousness and war and everything opposed to that which Christ is, and also from the profane spirit who transforms himself into the Holy Spirit” — Origen of Alexandria, *Commentary on Matthew*. Note: Origen describes Christ delivering from the wicked one and his son, the opposite of Christ, and from a spirit mimicking the Holy Spirit.

2.19. Cyprian of Carthage: Antiochus is a type of Antichrist

“The king Antiochus, their enemy-yea, in Antiochus Antichrist was set forth-sought to pollute the mouths of martyrs, glorious and unconquered in the spirit of confession, with the contagion of swine's flesh” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Treatise 11. Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus*. Note: Cyprian treats Antiochus persecuting the Maccabean martyrs as a type in which Antichrist was set forth. [2 *Maccabees* 7; *Daniel* 11:31]

2.20. Victorinus of Pettau: Nero raised up, received as Christ

“Now that one of the heads was, as it were, slain to death, and that the stroke of his death was directed, he speaks of Nero. ... Him therefore, when raised up, God will send as a worthy king, but worthy in such a way as the Jews merited. And since he is to have another name, He shall also appoint another name, that so the Jews may receive him as if he were the Christ.” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: Victorinus identifies the wounded head as Nero, who will be raised up and sent under another name so the Jews receive him as Christ. [*Revelation* 13:3; *Revelation* 17:11,16]

2.21. Lactantius: Ten kings; northern enemy kills three

“until ten kings arise at the same time, who will divide the world, not to govern, but to consume it. ... Then a most powerful enemy will suddenly arise

against him from the extreme boundaries of the northern region, who, having destroyed three of that number who shall then be in possession of Asia, shall be admitted into alliance by the others, and shall be constituted prince of all.” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7. Note: Ten kings divide the world; then a powerful enemy from the far north destroys three of them, is allied with the rest and becomes prince of all. [*Daniel* 7:7-8,24]

2.22. Lactantius: Syrian king, evil spirit's offspring

“a great prophet shall be sent from God to turn men to the knowledge of God, and he shall receive the power of doing wonderful things. ... another king shall arise out of Syria, born from an evil spirit, the overthrower and destroyer of the human race ... He shall fight against the prophet of God, and shall overcome, and slay him, and shall suffer him to lie unburied; but after the third day he shall come to life again; and while all look on and wonder, he shall be caught up into heaven.” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7. Note: A great prophet turns many to God; a Syrian king, born of an evil spirit, kills him, but the prophet rises on the third day and is caught up.

[*Revelation* 11:3-12; *2 Thessalonians* 2:4]

2.23. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Dan the serpent

“Wherefore, as he prophesied with respect to Judah, so did he also with respect to his son Dan. ... “Let Dan be a serpent sitting by the way, that biteth the horse’s heel?” And what serpent was there but the deceiver from the beginning, he who is named in Genesis, he who deceived Eve, and bruised Adam in the heel?” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces* Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Jacob’s blessing on Dan the serpent refers to Antichrist as the same deceiver who beguiled Eve. [*Genesis* 49:17]

2.24. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Born of Dan, not Judah

“For it is certain that he is destined to spring from the tribe of Dan, and to range himself in opposition like a princely tyrant, a terrible judge and accuser ... For as Christ is born of the tribe of Judah, so Antichrist shall be born of the tribe of Dan. And as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was spoken of in prophecy as a lion on account of His royalty and glory, in the same manner also has the Scripture prophetically described the accuser as a lion” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces* Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Antichrist will be born of the tribe of Dan,

matched against Christ of Judah, and is called a lion for his tyranny. [*Jeremiah 8: 16; Deuteronomy 33: 22; Judges 13-16*]

2.25. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Pseudo-virgin birth; phantom flesh

“in the same manner also will the accuser come forth from an impure woman upon the earth, but shall be born of a virgin spuriously. ... But the accuser, though he take up the flesh, will do it only in appearance; for how should we wear that flesh which he did not make himself, but against which he warreth daily?” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: Antichrist will be born spuriously of an impure woman posing as a virgin, taking flesh only in appearance. [*Matthew 1: 23; Genesis 3: 15*]

2.26. Hilary of Poitiers: Arians, forerunners of Antichrist

“It is the suggestion of that Evil One, uttered now through these prophets and forerunners of his coming; he will utter it himself hereafter when he comes as Antichrist ... For they who hold that Christ is but a creature, must regard Christ as Antichrist” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 1 of 2). Note: Hilary says the Arian denial is the Evil One's suggestion through prophets and forerunners; he will utter it himself hereafter as Antichrist. [*1 John 2: 18*]

2.27. Cyril of Jerusalem: A magician seizes Rome

“so now, since the true Christ is to come a second time, the adversary, taking occasion by the expectation of the simple, and especially of them of the circumcision, brings in a certain man who is a magician, and most expert in sorceries and enchantments of beguiling craftiness; who shall seize for himself the power of the Roman empire, and shall falsely style himself Christ; by this name of Christ deceiving the Jews, who are looking for the Anointed, and seducing those of the Gentiles by his magical illusions” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: As the devil prepared false pagan births before Christ's incarnation, so before the second coming he brings a sorcerer who seizes Roman power and falsely styles himself Christ. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 9*]

2.28. Macarius Magnes: The Slanderer is that Antichrist

“As those who believe the Son are brought to the Father as His heirs, so those who believe the Slanderer are dragged from their true Father by that Antichrist, and brought to his father who is the opposite of God.” — Macarius

Magnes, Apocriticus. Note: Macarius calls the Slanderer, the devil, 'that Anti-christ', parallel to the Son and Father. [*John 8: 44*]

2.29. John Chrysostom: Antichrist follows Christ as imitation

"He here shews that error arose after truth, as indeed the course of events testifies; for the false prophets came after the Prophets, the false apostles after the Apostles, and Antichrist after Christ. For unless the Devil sees somewhat to imitate, and some to lay in wait against, he does not attempt any thing." — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom says the devil's tares always follow the true sowing: false prophets after prophets, false apostles after apostles, and Antichrist after Christ, since he must have something to imitate. [*Matthew 13: 25*]

2.30. Sulpicius Severus: Nero destroyed by Antichrist

"Nero and Antichrist have first to come ; that Nero will rule in the Western portion of the world, after having subdued ten kings; and that a persecution will be carried on by him, with the view of compelling men to worship the idols of the Gentiles ... Antichrist, on the other hand, would first seize upon the empire of the East, having his seat and the capital of his kingdom at Jerusalem; while both the city and the temple would be restored by him. He added that his persecution would have for its object to compel men to deny Christ as God, while he maintained rather that he himself was Christ, and ordered all men to be circumcised, according to the law. ... Antichrist, having been conceived by an evil spirit, was already born, and had, by this time, reached the years of boyhood" — Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogues*. Note: Reporting Martin of Tours: Nero rules the West, Antichrist seizes the East, restores Jerusalem and the temple, claims to be Christ and commands circumcision, and was conceived by an evil spirit and already born. [*Daniel 7: 24; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

2.31. Sulpicius Severus: Nero expected to return before Antichrist

"It was he who first began a persecution; and I am not sure but hew will be the last also to carry it on, if, indeed, we admit, as many are inclined to believe, that he will yet appear immediately before the coming of Antichrist." — Sulpicius Severus, *The Sacred History*. Note: Sulpicius says Nero began persecution and may carry it on last, since many believe he will appear again just before Antichrist's coming. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 7*]

2.32. Augustine of Hippo: Man of sin completes all false prophets

“Where then is the wonder, if that man of sin too, who is to fill up all the wickedness and ungodliness, which all false prophets have begun, and to do such “great signs; that, if it were possible, he should deceive the very elect,” shall say in his heart” — Augustine of Hippo, *On the Psalms* (part 1 of 4). Note: Augustine says the man of sin will fill up all the wickedness begun by false prophets and do great signs to deceive the elect, as Simon sought heaven by magic. [*Psalm 10: 6; Matthew 24: 24*]

2.33. Augustine of Hippo: Nero redivivus rejected as rash

“he alluded to Nero, whose deeds already seemed to be as the deeds of Antichrist. And hence some suppose that he shall rise again and be Antichrist. Others, again, suppose that he is not even dead, but that he was concealed that he might be supposed to have been killed, and that he now lives in concealment in the vigor of that same age which he had reached when he was believed to have perished, and will live until he is revealed in his own time and restored to his kingdom. But I wonder that men can be so audacious in their conjectures.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine mentions the belief that Nero would rise again, or never died, and return as Antichrist, and expresses astonishment at such audacious conjectures. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 7*]

2.34. Cave of Treasures: Greek king's crown on the Cross

“As soon as the son of perdition is revealed the king of the Greeks will go up and stand upon Golgotha, where our Lord was crucified; and he will set the royal crown upon the top of the holy Cross” — Cave of Treasures, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The Greek king gives up his crown on Golgotha when Antichrist appears (Budge's summary of the Bee). [*Matthew 11: 21; Psalm 68: 31*]

2.35. Cave of Treasures: Danite in Jerusalem temple

“Then will the son of perdition appear, of the seed and of the tribe of Dan; and he will show deluding phantasms, and lead astray the world ... He will go into Jerusalem and will sit upon a throne in the Temple, saying, “I am the Christ,”” — Cave of Treasures, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Antichrist is Danite, works illusions and enthrones himself in the Jerusalem temple claiming to be Christ. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Genesis 49: 17*]

2.36. Gregory the Great: The devil enters a man called Antichrist

“the head of the wicked is the devil. And he in his own person having in the last times entered into that vessel of perdition, shall be called ‘Antichrist,’ who will endeavour to spread his name far and wide” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory says the devil, the head of the wicked, will in the last times enter a vessel of perdition who will be called Antichrist, seeking to spread his name far and wide. [*Job 18:17*]

2.37. Gregory the Great: Satan enters Antichrist

“entering into Antichrist, he scorned to seem like God, and, when condemned, counts Him as his inferior” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the devil, who fell by wishing to be like God, will enter into Antichrist and scorn even to seem like God. [*2 Thessalonians 2:4; Isaiah 14:14*]

2.38. Gregory the Great: Some say he comes from the tribe of Dan

“For some say, that Antichrist is coming out of the tribe of Dan, because in this place Dan is asserted to be a serpent, and a biting one. Whence also, when the people of Israel were choosing their position, in the partition of the camp, Dan most rightly first pitched his camp to the north; signifying him in truth, who had said in his heart; I will sit upon the mount of the testament, in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the height of the clouds. I will be like the Most High. [*Is. 14, 13, 14. Of whom also it is said by the Prophet; The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan.*” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory reports the view that Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan, based on Jacob’s blessing of Dan as a serpent and Jeremiah’s reference to horses snorting from Dan. [*Genesis 49:17; Jeremiah 8:16; Isaiah 14:13-14*]

2.39. Gregory the Great: Flatterer first, then persecutor

“Dan therefore becomes a serpent in the way, because he compels those, whom he flatters by seeming to spare them, to walk in the broad way of the present life: but he bites them in the way, because he destroys with the poison of his error those on whom he confers liberty. He becomes a horned serpent in the path, because those whom he finds to be faithful, and to be confining themselves to the narrow paths of the heavenly precept, he not only assails with the wickedness of crafty persuasion, but also oppresses with the terror of his power. And, after the kindness of pretended sweetness, he employs the

horns of his power in the torture of persecution. ... And, because Antichrist strives to seize the latter end of the world, this horned serpent is said to bite the horses' hoofs." — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory describes the horned serpent as one who first flatters and spares, then assails the faithful with crafty persuasion and the horns of power; he strives to seize the end of the world. [*Genesis 49:17*]

2.40. Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery: Enoch exposes the Son of Iniquity

"He shall go up unto the cities, wherein I did My mighty works and they believed not on Me, Chorazin and Bethsaida: he shall lead forth a multitude following after him and crying out: 'Thou art God, our Christ and our King.' Then Enoch shall say unto them in that day: 'This is not God: believe not on him! But this is the Son of Iniquity: this is the Devil, who from the beginning hath led men astray from life.'" — Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, *New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarius* (Evelyn White translation); scanned text. Note: The Devil goes up to Chorazin and Bethsaida; crowds acclaim him as God and Christ, but Enoch denounces him as the Son of Iniquity. [*Matthew 11:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

2.41. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Ishmaelite father, Frankish mother

"He will not follow the ordinances of his father, because he will be an Ishmaelite, nor the profession of his mother, because she will be a Frank : he will love drunkenness, he will be bloodthirsty" — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: The last Ishmaelite king has an Ishmaelite father and Frankish mother, forsakes both, and is a drunken, bloodthirsty ruler.

2.42. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Gog and Magog five months

"This race will soil the ground for five months; and after that the Lord will send his angel who will exterminate them in one hour." — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: Gog and Magog ravage the earth for five months before an angel destroys them in an hour. [*Revelation 20:3*]

2.43. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Gog and Magog arise

"Then two nations will rise, by the name of Gog and Magog; they will shake the ground for several days; their number is as great as the grains of sand." — Coptic *Apocalypse of Daniel*, *The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel*. Note:

After the Roman victory Gog and Magog arise in countless numbers. [*Revelation* 20: 8; *Ezekiel* 38]

2.44. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Fourth beast is Ishmael's kingdom

“The fourth animal which you saw, who resembles a lion, is the king of the sons of Ishmael. He will reign for a long time over the land and will be very powerful during many days.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: In this Coptic reworking the fourth beast of Daniel 7 is the Ishmaelite (Arab) kingdom, not Rome. [*Daniel* 7:7; *Genesis* 16:11-12]

2.45. Bede: Simon Magus first Antichrist

“many Antichrists came in the name of Christ, the first of whom was Simon Magus, to whom the Samaritans, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, listened” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede says many Antichrists have already come in Christ's name, and names Simon Magus as the first. [*Mark* 13:6; *1 John* 2:18]

2.46. Bede: Barabbas as a type of Antichrist

“Since Barabbas means son of the father or son of the master, he can carry the type of the Antichrist, whom those of whom it is said: “You are of your father the devil” (*John* VIII), will prefer to the true Son of God.” — Bede, *Commentary on Luke* (part 2 of 2). Note: Bede says Barabbas, ‘son of the father’, can be a type of Antichrist, whom the Jews will prefer to the true Son of God, called the devil's son by imitation, not birth. [*Luke* 23:24; *John* 8:44]

2.47. Bede: Eighth king; ten kings; born from Babylon

“The Antichrist, who is to rule at the end of the world, because of the unity of the same body of the wicked, of which he is the head, belongs to the number of the kingdoms of the world ... and that the Antichrist, born from Babylon, will overcome the king of Egypt and of Africa and Ethiopia” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede calls Antichrist, head of the wicked, the beast that ‘is the eighth’, and reports views that ten kings divide the world and Antichrist, born from Babylon, defeats the kings of Egypt, Africa and Ethiopia. [*Revelation* 17:11-12; *Daniel* 7:8]

2.48. Bede: Dan omitted from the sealed tribes

“he omits Dan, from whom it is said the Antichrist is to be born, as it is written: Let Dan be a serpent by the way” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede notes that Revelation omits Dan from the sealed tribes because Antichrist is said to be born from Dan, citing Jacob’s blessing of Dan as a serpent. [Revelation 7: 5; Genesis 49:17]

2.49. Bede: Jews await Antichrist as their savior

“taught them to believe rather in the Antichrist, whom they await as their savior at the end, indeed the son of the devil” — Bede, Commentary on Samuel. Note: Bede says the Jewish leaders, seeing Gentiles believe, taught the people to believe rather in Antichrist, whom they await as savior, the son of the devil. [1 Samuel 25: 44; 1 Peter 5: 8]

2.50. John of Damascus: Offspring of fornication, not incarnation

“The devil himself , therefore does not become man in the way that the Lord was made man. God forbid! but he becomes man as the offspring of fornication and receiveth all the energy of Satan.” — John of Damascus, An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith. Note: Antichrist is not an incarnation of the devil like Christ’s; he is a man born of fornication who receives Satan’s energy. [2 Thessalonians 2: 9]

2.51. John of Damascus: Hidden upbringing, feigned sanctity

“He is, therefore, as we said, the offspring of fornication and is nurtured in secret, and on a sudden he rises up and rebels and assumes rule. And in the beginning of his rule, or rather tyranny, he assumes the role of sanctity .” — John of Damascus, An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith. Note: He is raised in secret, suddenly seizes power and at first feigns holiness before persecuting the Church.

2.52. Solomon of Basra: Gog and Magog burst out

“At the end of the world and at the final consummation, when men are eating and drinking and marrying wives, and women are given to husbands; when they are planting vineyards and building buildings, and there is neither wicked man nor adversary, on account of the assured tranquillity and certain peace; suddenly the gates of the north shall be opened” — Solomon of Basra, The Book of the Bee (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Gog, Magog and twenty other peoples burst from Alexander’s northern gate

at a time of deep security, as in the days of Noah. [Ezekiel 38:2; Revelation 20:8; Matthew 24:38]

2.53. Solomon of Basra: Born where Christ's woes fell

“In a week and half a week after the destruction of these wretches shall the son of destruction appear. He shall be conceived in Chorazin, born in Bethsaida, and reared in Capernaum.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Antichrist appears three and a half years after Gog and Magog's destruction; the Gospel woes upon three Galilean towns mark his conception, birth and upbringing. [Matthew 11:21]

2.54. Solomon of Basra: Last emperor of Ethiopian seed

“The holy Cross will be taken up to heaven, and the royal crown with it; and the king will die immediately. The king who shall deliver over the kingdom to God will be descended from the seed of Kûshath the daughter of Pil, the king of the Ethiopians” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The last emperor, who dies after handing over the kingdom, is of Ethiopian descent through Kushath, a Roman king's wife. [Psalm 68:31]

2.55. Solomon of Basra: Of Dan; deluding phantasms

“Then will the son of perdition appear, of the seed and of the tribe of Dan; and he will shew deluding phantasms, and lead astray the world” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Antichrist is of the tribe of Dan and misleads the world by illusory wonders. [Genesis 49:17]

2.56. Solomon of Basra: Devil-indwelt man of Dan

“He becomes a man incarnate by a married woman of the tribe of Dan. When this son of destruction becomes a man, he will be made a dwelling-place for devils, and all Satanic workings will be perfected in him.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: He is born as a man of a married Danite woman and is made a dwelling-place of devils, an inverted incarnation. [Genesis 49:17]

2.57. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Pharaoh earliest type

“BlaspHEME God; as Pharaoh, the earliest type of Antichrist, when he said, “Who is the LORD, that I should let Israel go?” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval*

Writers, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers call Pharaoh the earliest type of Antichrist, citing his blasphemous question about the LORD. [*Psalm 10: 14; Exodus 5: 2*]

2.58. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Types: Pharaoh, Antiochus, fourth empire*

“just so awful are the symbols, whether in history or in prophecy, of that Antichrist who must be revealed before the end of all things: types, such as those of Pharaoh, Antiochus Epiphanes, and that fourth empire of iron which Daniel beheld” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers list Pharaoh, Antiochus Epiphanes and Daniel’s fourth iron empire as types of the Antichrist who must be revealed before the end. [*Psalm 10: 3; Daniel 7: 7*]

2.59. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Singular beast = Antichrist*

“Next, they take the words of the Church, vexed by the devil, typified by the boar, as the emblem of brutal passions, and by Antichrist, the singular beast.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers report a reading of Psalm 80’s boar as the devil and the ‘singular beast’ of the Vulgate as Antichrist. [*Psalm 80: 13*]

3. HOW DOES HE COPY CHRIST?

This is the question the Fathers return to most, and the one a modern reader is least prepared for. In their working picture the Antichrist is less a monster than a rival: the Greek prefix *anti* can mean “in place of” as well as “against”. He comes in his own name, gathers the scattered, appears as a man, works wonders, rebuilds a temple, and in some accounts stages a death and a rising. Hippolytus lists the points one by one. Chrysostom gives the rule in a sentence: wherever God sows true seed, the devil sows false after it.

In this chapter

This question draws on 106 quotations from 37 voices. 67 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 39 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Point by point, like Christ (Hippolytus, Pseudo-Hippolytus)

Hippolytus lays out the pattern: Antichrist appears as a lamb though a wolf within, gathers the scattered people, gives a seal, comes as a man, sends out false apostles and raises a stone temple in Jerusalem. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon lengthens the list to include counterfeit miracles of cleansing and raising the dead, a mock birth, and a counterfeit ascension.

In his own name (Irenaeus, Hilary, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Bede, Alcuin)

The Fathers read John 5:43, “another shall come in his own name”, as a prophecy of him. Where Christ came in the Father’s name and sought the Father’s glory, Antichrist comes in his own and seeks his own. Chrysostom adds that he will not claim to be sent but will take divine honour for himself; Hilary says he will pretend to come in the Father’s name.

The second coming counterfeited, and the test that exposes it (Rufinus, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Eusebius, Hilary)

Rufinus says the enemy counterfeits Christ’s second advent with prodigies and lying signs. The Fathers’ answer is not a better prediction but a test. Chrysostom: Christ’s coming will be open and everywhere at once, like lightning, so any Christ shown in a desert or an inner room is false. Athanasius reads even “the Son does not know the day” as protection against a deceiver who would claim to know it.

Dressed in the Church’s own clothes (Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Athanasius, Origen)

The counterfeit does not come against Christ’s name but under it. Cyprian: the adversary’s ministers present antichrist under the name of Christ. Ambrose: he will argue from Scripture that he is Christ. Jerome: heretics speak of Christ while hiding Antichrist, since no one would follow if they revealed him. Origen: evil reaches its peak by imitating the good.

Wonders like the magicians of Egypt (Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, Irenaeus, Solomon of Basra)

Origen compares his wonders to the Egyptian magicians who copied Moses: lying signs unlike Christ’s saving works. Cyril says they are illusions, such as seeming resurrections and cures that never happened. Chrysostom adds that God permits it so that unbelievers lose their excuse.

A counterfeit death and rising (Bede, Gregory the Great, Victorinus)

Several late sources expect a staged resurrection. Bede says Antichrist will present himself as mortally wounded and risen so as to be accepted in Christ's place; Gregory the Great says he will feign death and resurrection; Victorinus has the false prophet make the dead seem to rise.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Another shall come in his own name (John 5: 43-44)

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? [John 5: 43-44]

The man of sin (2 Thess 2: 1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2: 1-17]

Satan transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor 11:13–15)

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. [2 Corinthians 11:13–15]

Wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15–23)

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. [Matthew 7:15–23]

Take heed that no man deceive you (Matt 24:4–14)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. [Matthew 24:4–14]

The abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15–28)

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. [Matthew 24:15–28]

The beast and his number (Rev 13:1–18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the ... [*Revelation 13: 1-18*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Ascension of Isaiah, He speaks like the Beloved and claims deity (6.1); Sibylline Oracles, Beliar from the Caesars (2.3); Irenaeus of Lyons, Sits in Jerusalem temple as Christ (6.3); Hippolytus of Rome, Rebuilds Jerusalem; taken for Christ (6.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Gathers the dispersion of Israel (2.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Imitates Christ point by point (6.16); Commodian, Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (16.5); Commodian, The Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (6.23); Gospel of Bartholomew, Satan: 'I will be as he is' (2.15); Origen of Alexandria, Evil peaks by simulating the good (2.16); Origen of Alexandria, The wicked one's 'son' opposed to Christ (2.18); Victorinus of Pettau, Nero raised up, received as Christ (2.20); Victorinus of Pettau, Calls to circumcision; rises from hell (16.8); Lactantius, Syrian king, evil spirit's offspring (2.22); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Longer list of imitations (6.31); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Pseudo-virgin birth; phantom flesh (2.25); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Begins gentle, pious, loves the Jews (16.10); Hilary of Poitiers, They receive Antichrist, not Christ (16.16); Cyril of Jerusalem, A magician seizes Rome (2.27); Cyril of Jerusalem, Jewish temple, not the Church (6.36); John Chrysostom, Antichrist follows Christ as imitation (2.29); John Chrysostom, A man, not Satan (6.40); John Chrysostom, He comes in his own name (16.20); Rufinus of Aquileia, The enemy counterfeits the second advent (6.42); Jerome, A painted face belongs to Antichrist (13.21); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (2.30); Sulpicius Severus, False Elias; Antichrist at hand (13.22); Cave of Treasures, Danite in Jerusalem temple (2.35); Gregory of Tours, Circumcision, then his statue in the Jerusalem temple (6.49); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, 19th king, mixed race, 666 (8.28); Bede, Comes in his own name, calls himself Son of God (16.44); Bede, Barabbas as a type of Antichrist (2.46); Bede, 666 as Titan; Solomon's 666 talents (8.31); Bede, Witch's calf as Antichrist's birth and reign (16.45); John of Damascus, Offspring of fornication, not incarnation (2.50); John of Damascus, Hidden upbringing, feigned sanctity (2.51); Alcuin,

Comes in his own name (16.48); Solomon of Basra, Sits in temple as Christ (6.58); Solomon of Basra, Devil-indwelt man of Dan (2.56).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

3.1. Didache: The world-deceiver as a 'son of God'

"Then the deceiver of the world will appear, claiming to be a son of God. He will do signs and wonders, and the earth will be handed over to him, and he will commit lawless acts such as have never happened since the beginning of the world." — Didache, The Didache. Note: The earliest Christian handbook describes the world-deceiver posing as a son of God, working wonders, ruling the earth and committing unprecedented lawlessness. [Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9]

3.2. Ascension of Isaiah: Sun rises at night at his word

"And at his word the sun will rise at night and he will make the moon to appear at the sixth hour." — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: His powers include making the sun rise at night and the moon appear at midday. [2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:13]

3.3. Ascension of Isaiah: His image set up in every city

"10. And there will be the power of his miracles in every city and region. 11. And he will set up his image before him in every city." — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: He works miracles in every city and sets up his image in each. [Revelation 13:14-15]

3.4. Sibylline Oracles: Beliar will come working signs

"And Beliar will come, and many signs / Will work for men. And then of holy men / Elect and faithful there will be confusion, / And a plundering of them and of the Hebrews." — Sibylline Oracles, The Sibylline Oracles (Terry translation); scanned text. Note: The Sibyl says Beliar will come working many signs, bringing confusion and plundering of the elect. [2 Thessalonians 2:9; Matthew 24:24]

3.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: Exalted above idols

"And again, speaking of Antichrist, he says, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." He points out

here those who are called gods, by such as know not God, that is, idols. For the Father of all is called God, and is so; and Antichrist shall be lifted up, not above Him, but above those which are indeed called gods, but are not.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Antichrist exalts himself above idols (so-called gods), not above the true God. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 4]

3.6. Irenaeus of Lyons: Apostate robber who wants worship

“he, being an apostate and a robber, is anxious to be adored as God; and that, although a mere slave, he wishes himself to be proclaimed as a king. For he (Antichrist) being endued with all the power of the devil, shall come, not as a righteous king, nor as a legitimate king, [i.e., one] in subjection to God, but an impious, unjust, and lawless one” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Antichrist is an apostate and robber with the devil's full power who claims kingship and divine worship, not a lawful king under God. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 3-4]

3.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Becomes the one idol

“setting aside idols to persuade [men] that he himself is God, raising up himself as the only idol, having in himself the multifarious errors of the other idols. This he does, in order that they who do [now] worship the devil by means of many abominations, may serve himself by this one idol” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: He removes the many idols and sets himself up as the one idol, gathering all idolatrous error into his own person.

[2 *Thessalonians* 2: 3-4]

3.8. Irenaeus of Lyons: 'Another' in his own name

“The Lord also spoke as follows to those who did not believe in Him: “I have come in my Father's name, and ye have not received Me: when another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive,” calling Antichrist “the other,” because he is alienated from the Lord.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The 'other' who comes in his own name (John 5:43) is Antichrist, alienated from the Lord. [John 5: 43; Luke 18: 2-5]

3.9. Hippolytus of Rome: Conquers all ten, seeks worship

“And amid these another little horn shall rise, which is that of Antichrist. And it shall pluck by the roots the three others before it; that is to say, he shall subvert the three kings of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, with the view of acquiring for himself universal dominion. And after conquering the remaining seven horns, he will at last begin, inflated by a strange and wicked

spirit, to stir up war against the saints, and to persecute all everywhere, with the aim of being glorified by all, and being worshipped as God.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: Antichrist conquers three kings, then the other seven, and puffed up by a wicked spirit persecutes everywhere, aiming to be worshipped as God. [Daniel 7: 8,20-25]

3.10. Hippolytus of Rome: Lamb-horns: imitates the Son of God

“By the beast, then, coming up out of the earth, he means the kingdom of Antichrist; and by the two horns he means him and the false prophet after him. And in speaking of “the horns being like a lamb,” he means that he will make himself like the Son of God, and set himself forward as king. And the terms, “he spake like a dragon,” mean that he is a deceiver, and not truthful.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The earth-beast is Antichrist's kingdom, its two horns are he and the false prophet; the lamb-like horns mean he makes himself like the Son of God, speaking falsely as a dragon. [Revelation 13: 11-14]

3.11. Hippolytus of Rome: Partridge luring others' young

“For he will allure mankind to himself, wishing to gain possession of those who are not his own, and promising deliverance to all, while he is unable to save himself.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The partridge simile: Antichrist lures people who are not his own with promises of deliverance he cannot give. [Jeremiah 17: 11]

3.12. Hippolytus of Rome: Christ a lion, Antichrist a lion

“Now, as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also God, was prophesied of under the figure of a lion, on account of His royalty and glory, in the same way have the Scriptures also aforetime spoken of Antichrist as a lion, on account of his tyranny and violence. For the deceiver seeks to liken himself in all things to the Son of God. Christ is a lion, so Antichrist is also a lion; Christ is a king, so Antichrist is also a king.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Scripture speaks of Antichrist as a lion for his tyranny, because the deceiver seeks to resemble the Son of God in everything. [Genesis 49: 9; Revelation 5: 5]

3.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Lamb outside, wolf within

“The Saviour was manifested as a lamb; so he too, in like manner, will appear as a lamb, though within he is a wolf. The Saviour came into the world in

the circumcision, and he will come in the same manner. The Lord sent apostles among all the nations, and he in like manner will send false apostles.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Antichrist will appear as a lamb though a wolf within, come in circumcision like Christ, and send out false apostles. [*John 10: 12; Revelation 13: 11*]

3.14. Origen of Alexandria: Not every sign proves God

“There are different kinds of signs. According to the apostle, the man in the law does them, and so does the lawless one whom the Lord will destroy with the breath of his mouth, with all power, signs and wonders of falsehood. God also does them through the prophets.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Fragments on the Gospel of John*. Note: Signs differ in kind: God, and the lawless one whom the Lord destroys, both work signs. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8-9*]

3.15. Origen of Alexandria: Antichrist's wonders like Egypt's magicians

“For as the power of the Egyptian magicians was not similar to the divinely-bestowed grace of Moses, but the issue clearly proved that the acts of the former were the effect of magic, while those of Moses were wrought by divine power; so the proceedings of the antichrists, and of those who feign that they can work miracles as being the disciples of Christ, are said to be lying signs and wonders” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 1 of 2). Note: Antichrist's wonders are likened to the Egyptian magicians' imitation of Moses: lying signs, unlike Christ's saving works. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 9; Exodus 7: 11*]

3.16. Origen of Alexandria: The man of sin imitates true wonders

“the Apostle about the man of sin, the son of perdition, that, “with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceit of unrighteousness,” he shall be manifested to them that are perishing, imitating all kinds of wonders, to-wit, those of truth.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Commentary on Matthew*. Note: The man of sin imitates true wonders, as Egypt's magicians imitated Moses. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 9; Exodus 7: 11*]

3.17. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist under the name of Christ

“the adversary is flattering and deceiving, who, according to the apostle's word, transforms himself into an angel of light, and equips his ministers as if they were the ministers of righteousness, who maintain night instead of day, death for salvation, despair under the offer of hope, perfidy under the pretext of faith, antichrist under the name of Christ” — Cyprian of

Carthage, Treatise 1. On the Unity of the Church. Note: The adversary's ministers pose as ministers of righteousness, presenting antichrist under the name of Christ. [2 Corinthians 11:14]

3.18. Acts of Archelaus: Mani as Antichrist's forerunner vessel

"You are a vessel of Antichrist; and no vessel of honour, in sooth, but a mean and base one ... And so it is that your king, Antichrist, has despatched you in a similar character, and as it were destined to death" — Acts of Archelaus, The Acts of the Disputation with the Heresiarch Manes. Note: Archelaus tells Mani he is a base vessel of Antichrist, sent ahead to test the Church's strength. [2 Corinthians 11:14]

3.19. Acts of Archelaus: Mani claims to be the Paraclete

"I, in sooth, am the Paraclete, whose mission was announced of old time by Jesus" — Acts of Archelaus, The Acts of the Disputation with the Heresiarch Manes. Note: In the Acts, Mani presents himself as the promised Paraclete, claim that Archelaus rejects. [John 14:16]

3.20. Victorinus of Pettau: False prophet; counterfeit resurrections

"He is speaking of the great and false prophet who is to do signs, and portents, and falsehoods before him in the presence of men. "And he had two horns like a lamb—that is, the appearance within of a man—and he spoke like a dragon." ... so that even the dead appear to rise again." — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The second beast is the false prophet who does signs and falsehoods before Antichrist, even making the dead seem to rise. [Revelation 13:11-12]

3.21. Pseudo-Clement: The false precedes the true

"as the true Prophet has told us, a false prophet must first come from some deceiver; and then, in like manner, after the removal of the holy place, the true Gospel must be secretly sent abroad for the rectification of the heresies that shall be. After this, also, towards the end, Antichrist must first come, and then our Jesus must be revealed to be indeed the Christ" — Pseudo-Clement, Clementine Homilies. Note: In the Homilies the false always comes before the true: a false prophet before the true, and Antichrist before the manifestation of Jesus as Christ. [Matthew 24:5]

3.22. Pseudo-Clement: Tenth pair: Antichrist and Christ

“the seventh, the tempter and the Son of man; the eighth, Simon and I, Peter; the ninth, all nations, and he who shall be sent to sow the word among the nations; the tenth, Antichrist and Christ.” — Pseudo-Clement, *Clementine Recognitions*. Note: The *Recognitions'* ten pairs end with Antichrist and Christ, after Simon Magus and Peter.

3.23. Lactantius: Claims to be God's Son

“But that king will not only be most disgraceful in himself, but he will also be a prophet of lies; and he will constitute and call himself God, and will order himself to be worshipped as the Son of God” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7. Note: The Syrian king is also a prophet of lies who calls himself God and demands worship as the Son of God. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

3.24. Lactantius: Antichrist falsely calls himself Christ

“Now this is he who is called Antichrist; but he shall falsely call himself Christ, and shall fight against the truth, and being overcome shall flee; and shall often renew the war, and often be conquered, until in the fourth battle, all the wicked being slain, subdued, and captured, he shall at length pay the penalty of his crimes.” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7. Note: The wicked one is Antichrist, who falsely calls himself Christ, is repeatedly defeated and finally punished after a fourth battle. [*1 John 2: 18; Revelation 20: 10*]

3.25. Eusebius of Caesarea: Do not follow the false appearing

“If at the coming of Antichrist, his fame shall be spread abroad, as though Christ had appeared, go not out, nor follow him. For it cannot be that He who was once seen on earth, shall any more dwell in the corners of the earth. It will therefore be he of whom we speak, not the true Christ.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Eusebius says that if Antichrist's fame spreads as though Christ had appeared, believers must not follow, since the true Christ's return will light the whole world like lightning.

[*Luke 17: 23; Luke 17: 24*]

3.26. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Gathers disciples like Christ's apostles

“For this reason also is he to be born of a virgin, as if a spirit, and then to the rest he will be manifested as flesh. ... And even as Christ chose His apostles, so will he too assume a whole people of disciples like himself in wickedness.” —

Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: He will be born of a virgin as if a spirit, appearing as flesh to others, not truly circumcised, and gather disciples as Christ chose apostles. [*Exodus* 13: 2]

3.27. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: Counterfeits Christ's miracles*

"And then he will work wonders, cleansing lepers, raising paralytics, expelling demons, proclaiming things remote just as things present, raising the dead, helping widows, defending orphans, loving all, reconciling in love men who contend" — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: He will counterfeit Christ's miracles: cleansing lepers, raising paralytics, casting out demons, raising the dead. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 9; *Matthew* 24: 24]

3.28. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: Counterfeit ascension*

"And in the presence of all he exhibits himself as taken up into heaven with trumpets and sounds, and the mighty shouting of those who hail him with indescribable hymns; the heir of darkness himself shining like light, and at one time soaring to the heavens, and at another descending to the earth with great glory" — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Antichrist will stage a counterfeit ascension and glorious descent with demon hosts masquerading as angels. [*Revelation* 13: 13; *Acts* 1: 9-11]

3.29. *Revelation of Esdras (apocryphal): Claimed to be the Son of God*

"And I asked: Who is this? And he said to me: This is he who said, I am the Son of God, that made stones bread, and water wine." — *Revelation of Esdras* (apocryphal), *Revelation of Esdras*. Note: Esdras sees a man bound in chains who claimed to be the Son of God, turning stones to bread and water to wine. [*Matthew* 4: 3]

3.30. *Revelation of Esdras (apocryphal): Inscribed 'Antichrist'; child or old man*

"and in his face an inscription, Antichrist. He has been exalted to heaven; he shall go down to Hades. At one time he shall become a child; at another, an old man." — *Revelation of Esdras* (apocryphal), *Revelation of Esdras*. Note: His face bears the inscription Antichrist; he is exalted to heaven, cast to Hades, and changes shape between child and old man. [*Revelation* 13: 5]

3.31. Revelation of John (apocryphal): The denier called Antichrist

“Then shall appear the denier, and he who is set apart in the darkness, who is called Antichrist.” — Revelation of John (apocryphal), Revelation of John. Note: In the apocryphal Revelation of John the voice calls the future figure the denier called Antichrist. [*Revelation 13: 5*]

3.32. Hilary of Poitiers: Draw the distracted into his service

“false prophets promising to shew aid present from Christ, will falsely affirm that Christ is present in divers places, that they may draw into the service of Antichrist men discouraged and distracted.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary says that false prophets, amid great tribulation, will claim Christ is present in various places in order to draw the discouraged into Antichrist’s service. [*Matthew 24: 23-24*]

3.33. Hilary of Poitiers: Desert and chambers: under his rule

“The false prophets, of whom He had spoken above, shall say of Christ one while, Lo, He is in the desert, in order that they may cause men to wander astray; another while, Lo, He is in the secret chambers, that they may enthrall men under the dominion of Antichrist.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary says false prophets will point to Christ in the desert or in secret chambers to bring people under Antichrist’s dominion. [*Matthew 24: 26-27*]

3.34. Hilary of Poitiers: Feigns the Father’s name

“Then, another coming in the same name they will receive: but he is one from whom men will expect glory, and to whom they will give glory in return, though he will feign to have come in the name of the Father. By this, doubtless, is signified the Antichrist, glorying in his false use of the Father’s name.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 2 of 2). Note: Hilary reads John 5:43 as foretelling Antichrist, who will pretend to come in the Father’s name and seek glory from men. [*John 5: 43*]

3.35. Athanasius of Alexandria: Devil hides behind a desirable name

“For seeing that the devil is the hateful inventor of evil, what he himself is he conceals, but craftily assumes a name desirable to all” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24)

(quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Athanasius says the devil, the inventor of evil, conceals what he is and craftily assumes a name desirable to all. [Luke 21: 8]

3.36. *Athanasius of Alexandria: Devil counterfeits Christ in heresy*

“just as if a man wishing to get into his power some children not His own, should in the absence of the parents counterfeit their looks, and lead away the children who were longing for them. In every heresy then the devil says in disguise, “I am Christ, and with me there is truth.” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Athanasius compares the devil to a man counterfeiting absent parents’ looks to lead children away; in every heresy the devil says in disguise ‘I am Christ’. [Luke 21: 8]

3.37. *Athanasius of Alexandria: Ignorance of the day protects*

“because of the deceivers which shall be afterwards; that though demons should be transfigured as Angels, and should attempt to speak concerning the end, you should not believe, since they are ignorant ... and that, if Antichrist too, disguising himself, should say, ‘I am Christ,’ and should try in his turn to speak of that day and end, to deceive the hearers, ye, having these words from Me, ‘No, not the Son,’ may disbelieve him also” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Four Discourses Against the Arians*. Note: Athanasius reads ‘neither the Son’ as protection against deceivers: if Antichrist, disguised, claims to be Christ and speaks of the day, believers may disbelieve; ignorance of the time also keeps men attentive. [Mark 13: 32; Matthew 24: 36]

3.38. *Cyril of Jerusalem: Christ comes from heaven*

“The true Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, comes no more from the earth. If any come making false shows in the wilderness, go not forth; if they say, Lo, here is the Christ, Lo, there, believe it not” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: The true Christ no longer comes from the earth; claims that he is here or there in the wilderness are to be disbelieved. [Matthew 24: 26–27]

3.39. *Ambrose of Milan: Antichrist comes in his own name*

“since Christ came in the oneness of the Name, but Antichrist will come in his own name” — Ambrose of Milan, *On the Holy Spirit*. Note: Ambrose contrasts Christ, who came in the unity of the Father’s Name, with Antichrist, who will come in his own name. [John 5: 43]

3.40. Ambrose of Milan: Argues from Scripture he is Christ

“he desires to impress firmly on the affections the footstep of his unbelief, disputing from the Scriptures that he is Christ. Then shall come desolation, for very many falling away shall depart from the true religion.” — Ambrose of Milan, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose says Antichrist will argue from the Scriptures that he is Christ, and many will fall away from true religion. [*Luke 21: 20; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

3.41. Ambrose of Milan: The hour of darkness

“He rightly says, night, for Antichrist is the hour of darkness, because he pours a dark cloud over the minds of men while he declares himself to be Christ.” — Ambrose of Milan, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose calls Antichrist the hour of darkness, who dulls men's minds while claiming to be Christ. [*Luke 17: 34*]

3.42. John Chrysostom: Thief and robber alludes to him

“There is an allusion here to Antichrist, and to certain false Christs who had been, and were to be.” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom finds in the ‘thief and robber’ who climbs another way an allusion to Antichrist and to false Christs past and future. [*John 10: 1*]

3.43. John Chrysostom: Christ's coming needs no herald

“For it shall not be then as at His former coming, when He appeared in Bethlehem, in a corner of the world, unknown of any; but He shall come openly so as not to need any to announce His approach” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom says Christ's second coming will be open and self-evident, unlike His hidden first coming, so claims that He is here or there are to be rejected. [*Matthew 24: 23; Matthew 24: 27*]

3.44. John Chrysostom: Antichrist's guise versus lightning

“As He had above described in what guise Antichrist should come, so here He describes how He Himself shall come. For as the lightning needeth none to herald or announce it, but is in an instant of time visible throughout the

whole world” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom contrasts Antichrist’s guise with Christ’s own coming, which like lightning is visible everywhere at once. [Matthew 24:27]

3.45. *John Chrysostom: Antichrist removes every excuse*

“That these very men who are perishing will be put to silence. How? Because both if he had come, and if he had not come, they would not have believed in Christ; He comes therefore to convict them. For that they may not have occasion to say, that since Christ said that He was God,—although He nowhere said this openly,—but since those who came after proclaimed it, we have not believed. Because we have heard that there is One God from whom are all things, therefore we have not believed. This their pretext then Antichrist will take away. For when he comes, and comes commanding nothing good, but all things unlawful, and is yet believed from false signs alone, he will stop their mouths ... For if thou believest not in Christ, much more oughtest thou not to believe in Antichrist. For the former said that He was sent from the Father, but the latter the contrary” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*. Note: God permits his coming so that unbelievers lose their excuse: he commands only unlawful things yet is believed for false signs, and unlike Christ he claims a different origin. [2 Thessalonians 2:10; John 5:43]

3.46. *John Chrysostom: Compare the signs: Christ and Antichrist*

“But many and great signs were also wrought in the case of Christ” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*. Note: Christ also worked great signs, so more reason to believe Him; Antichrist is foretold as lawless, son of perdition, coming by Satan’s working, whereas Christ is Saviour. [2 Thessalonians 2:9–10]

3.47. *John Chrysostom: Thieves who skip the Scriptures*

“Antichrist and the false Christs, Judas and Theudas” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John* (part 2 of 2). Note: Chrysostom lists Antichrist with false Christs, Judas and Theudas as thieves who do not enter by the Scriptures, which are the door that bars the heretics. [John 10:1]

3.48. *John Chrysostom: Error follows truth: Antichrist after Christ*

“after the prophets, were the false prophets; and after the apostles, the false apostles; and after Christ, Antichrist For unless the devil see what to imitate”

— John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 2 of 3). Note: Falsehood follows truth: false prophets after prophets, false apostles after apostles, Antichrist after Christ, since the devil only acts where he has something to imitate. [*Matthew 13: 25*]

3.49. John Chrysostom: Matt 24 deceivers include him

“For some in the days of the apostles deceived the multitude, “for they shall come,” saith He, “and shall deceive many;” and others shall do so before His second coming, who shall also be more grievous than the former. “For they shall show,” He saith, “signs and wonders, so as to deceive if possible the very elect:” here He is speaking of Antichrist, and indicates that some also shall minister to him ... Of him Paul too speaks on this wise. Having called him “man of sin,” and “son of perdition,” He added, “Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3). Note: Deceivers appeared in apostolic days and worse ones will come before the second coming; Chrysostom takes Christ’s signs-and-wonders warning as speaking of Antichrist, linking it to Paul’s man of sin. [*Matthew 24: 24; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-9*]

3.50. John Chrysostom: Antichrist is local; Christ like lightning

“For great then will be the deceiving, because that even deceiving miracles are wrought ... Having told them how Antichrist cometh, as, for instance, that it will be in a place; He saith how Himself also cometh” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3). Note: Because deceiving miracles will be wrought, believers must not go out to desert or inner room; Antichrist comes in a place, Christ visibly everywhere like lightning. [*Matthew 24: 26-27*]

3.51. Jerome: Heretics hide Antichrist behind Christ

“they speak of Christ, and hide the Antichrist: for they know that no one can be led on, if they bring forth the Antichrist” — Jerome, Homilies on Psalms. Note: On Psalm 5, Jerome says heretics speak of Christ while hiding Antichrist, since no one would follow if they revealed him. [*Psalm 5: 9*]

3.52. Jerome: Antichrist pretends to be Christ

“As antichrist pretends to be Christ, such virgins assume an honorable name” — Jerome, Letters (part 1 of 3). Note: In Letter 22, Jerome says heretical ‘vir-

gins' take an honourable name to cloak a disreputable life, as antichrist pretends to be Christ. [Matthew 7:15]

3.53. Palladius of Galatia: Valens worships a false Christ

“that devil, who had completely led him astray, went and made unto himself a form wherein he resembled our Redeemer; and he came unto him by night, together with phantoms of angels in great numbers who marched along bearing lamps and wax candles, and they advanced with chariots and carriages of fire, as if that devil were Christ Himself ... and Antichrist himself sitting upon a chariot of fire—now he was distant from him about a mile—he fell down and worshipped him.” — Palladius of Galatia, *The Lausiac History of Palladius*, first book (Syriac version, Budge translation); scanned text. Note: In the Syriac Palladius the devil imitates the Redeemer with phantom angels, and Valens sees 'Antichrist himself' sitting on a chariot of fire and worships.

3.54. Palladius of Galatia: Demon plays Christ

“went away and disguised himself as the Saviour, and came by night in a vision of a thousand angels bearing lamps and a fiery wheel ... So he went out and saw them in ranks carrying lamps, and antichrist about a stade away, and he fell down and worshipped.” — Palladius of Galatia, *The Lausiac History*. Note: In Palladius's story of the monk Valens, a demon disguised as the Saviour, with a host of lamp-bearing angels and 'antichrist' nearby, deceives him into worshipping; the fathers cured his pride.

3.55. Sulpicius Severus: Martin and the devil as 'Christ'

“the fiend himself being surrounded by a purple light, in order that he might the more easily deceive people by the brilliance of the splendor assumed, clothed also in a royal robe, and with a crown of precious stones and gold encircling his head ... I am Christ; and being just about to descend to earth, I wished first to manifest myself to thee ... The Lord Jesus did not predict that he would come clothed in purple, and with a glittering crown upon his head. I will not believe that Christ has come, unless he appears with that appearance and form in which he suffered, and openly displaying the marks of his wounds upon the cross” — Sulpicius Severus, *On the Life of St. Martin*. Note: Sulpicius tells how the devil, dressed in royal splendour, claimed to be Christ to Martin, who refused to believe unless Christ appeared in the form in which He suffered, with the wounds. [Matthew 24:23-26]

3.56. Gregory the Great: Antichrist feigns death and resurrection

“What else can I call these but preachers of Antichrist, who, when he comes, will cause the Sabbath day as well as the Lord’s day to be kept free from all work. ... because he pretends to die and rise again, he wishes the Lord’s day to be had in reverence; and, because he compels the people to judaize” — Gregory the Great, Register of Epistles (part 2 of 2). Note: Gregory calls those who forbid work on the Sabbath preachers of Antichrist, who will keep both the Lord’s Day and the Sabbath because he feigns to die and rise again and compels Judaizing. [*Jeremiah 17:24*]

3.57. Coptic Texts from St. Macarius’ Monastery: Antichrist bound; Devil claims God

“In that day I will cause the Angels of Wrath to go forth in the whole world, that they may bind the anti-Christ and them that are with him and cast them into chains of fire. Straightway the Shameless One shall wax wroth, the Great Devil shall arise: ‘he shall show himself forth in the world, he shall cause error, he shall make the multitudes to err, (saying): I am God; there is none other save me.’” — Coptic Texts from St. Macarius’ Monastery, New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarius (Evelyn White translation); scanned text. Note: Angels bind Antichrist and followers in chains of fire, whereupon the Great Devil arises claiming to be God. [*Revelation 20:2; Matthew 11:21*]

3.58. Bede: Mimics Christ’s death and resurrection

“The Antichrist, pertaining to the heads of the earthly kingdom, in imitation of our true head, dares to present himself as if he were mortally wounded and had resurrected, to be accepted in place of Christ, who truly accomplished this. It is said that the deception in Simon Magus prefigured this deceit.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede says Antichrist, imitating Christ, will present himself as mortally wounded and risen so as to be accepted in Christ’s place, a deceit said to be prefigured by Simon Magus. [*Revelation 13:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:9*]

3.59. Bede: Two phases: hidden, then open

“Who is like the beast? They say: Who is like Christ? Or who can defeat him? [*Revelation 13:5*] -- And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. He exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped ... For the first three and a half years, he does not openly blaspheme but acts in the mystery of iniquity” — Bede, Commentary on Revela-

tion. Note: Bede says Antichrist's followers will say 'Who is like the beast?' in imitation of Christ; for the first three and a half years he acts in the mystery of iniquity, afterwards blaspheming openly. [*Revelation 13: 4-5; 2 Thessalonians 2: 7*]

3.60. *Bede: False mediator between God and followers*

"just as he claims to constitute himself as God and mediator between himself and his followers, unlike our Lord Jesus Christ, who has no other mediator between himself and his followers." — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede says Antichrist will claim to make himself both God and mediator for his followers and pretend to give them the spirit of truth, whereas Christ needs no other mediator. [*Revelation 13: 14-15*]

3.61. *Paulician Church of Armenia: Satan's twelve disguises*

"At the first this gate of hell took the form of a serpent; secondly, of a raven; thirdly, of a calf; fourthly, of wild beasts; fifthly, of light; sixthly, of women; seventhly, of men; eighthly, of clerics; ninthly, of teachers of the school; tenthly, of apostles; eleventhly, of bishops; twelfthly, of monks." — Paulician Church of Armenia, *The Key of Truth: a Manual of the Paulician Church of Armenia* (Conybeare translation); scanned text. Note: The Paulicians list twelve disguises of the Adversary, culminating in clerics, apostles, bishops and monks. [*2 Corinthians 11: 14*]

3.62. *Solomon of Basra: Mimics Christ's healings*

"for the simple will see the lepers cleansed, the blind with their eyes opened, the paralytic walking, the devils cast out, the sun when he looks upon it becoming black, the moon when he commands it becoming changed" — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: His apparent miracles copy Christ's healings, and include commanding sun and moon, but are illusions. [*Matthew 11: 5*]

3.63. *Neale and Littledale (compilers): Five marks: guile, opposition*

"They take occasion then to point out five characteristics of the empire of Antichrist. 1. It will be an empire of guile, "the crafty wiliness" of David, the "deceivableness of unrighteousness," of S. Paul. 2. Of direct opposition to GOD" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1-38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: Drawing on the Fathers' reading of the psalm, the compilers list the first characteristics of Antichrist's empire: guile, and open opposition to God. [*Psalms 10: 3; 2 Thessalonians 2: 10*]

3.64. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Appearance of goodness; flattery

"4. That it will have a certain appearance of goodness, "He falleth down and humbleth himself: "He doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men," and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles. 5. That it will be an empire of flattery" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: Further characteristics: an appearance of goodness with wonders and fire from heaven that deceive earth-dwellers, and an empire of flattery. [*Psalm 10: 5; Revelation 13: 11-14*]

3.65. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Parody: Antichrist's incarnation, resurrection

"it seems to be one of Satan's chief delights to parody the works of GOD ... In like manner, that which those saints who most deeply studied the Apocalypse tell us, of the probable Incarnation, the Resurrection from the dead, of the Antichrist." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say Satan delights to parody God's works, and the saints who studied the Apocalypse speak of a probable counterfeit incarnation and resurrection of Antichrist. [*Psalm 59: 6; Joshua 6: 3*]

3.66. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Proud = the Lawless One

"And there may also be a dim allusion to the "Lawless One,"—"who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called GOD, and that is worshipped,"—under the name proud: and in them that go about with lies to the Beast, "who doeth great wonders, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers find a dim allusion in Psalm 40 to the Lawless One, who exalts himself above all that is called God, and to the Beast who deceives by miracles. [*Psalm 40: 4; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Revelation 13: 13*]

3.67. Neale and Littledale (compilers): 'Like the Most High' but smitten

"Least of all can that Wicked One, the Antichrist, attain to such resemblance, albeit he hath said, "I will be like the Most High," for he shall be smitten when the LORD comes again to judgment" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval*

Writers, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say Antichrist can never attain likeness to God, though he says he will be like the Most High, and will be smitten at the Lord's return. [*Psalm 83:1; Isaiah 14:14*]

4. WHAT HOLDS HIM BACK?

Paul says that something (“what withholdeth”) and someone (“he who now letteth”) is holding the lawless one back until it is taken out of the way (2 Thessalonians 2:6–7). He adds that the Thessalonians already knew what it was, and he did not write it down. The Fathers had to guess. The largest group, from Tertullian to Chrysostom and Jerome, say the Roman empire, which is why Christians prayed for the emperor and for the empire to last. Others say the Spirit, the angels, God's decision, or the hidden wicked inside the Church. Augustine says plainly that he does not know what Paul means.

In this chapter

This question draws on 34 quotations from 18 voices. 34 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 0 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

The Roman empire (Tertullian, Lactantius, Chrysostom, Jerome)

Tertullian, about AD 200, says the Roman state restrains him and that Christians pray for the emperors because the empire's continuance delays the end of all things. Lactantius, a century later, says that while the city of Rome stands nothing is to be feared. Chrysostom, asked what withholds the man of sin, notes that some say the grace of the Spirit and others the Roman empire, and mostly accepts the second. Jerome, in the age of the barbarian invasions, says the one who letteth is taken out of the way.

God's power, the Spirit or the angels (Chrysostom (as one view), Hermas, Bede, Testaments of the Patriarchs)

A second line looks past Rome to the one who stands behind it. Chrysostom mentions the grace of the Spirit as the view of some. In the Shepherd of Hermas an angel set over the beasts shuts the monster's mouth. Bede speaks of the ancient enemy shut up since Christ's passion and restrained by divine power. The Testaments of the Patriarchs say the enemy fears Israel's repentance, because on that day his kingdom ends.

The hidden wicked inside the Church (Augustine (reporting a view), Gregory the Great)

Augustine reports that others take “the mystery of iniquity” to mean the wicked and the hypocrites who are in the Church, hidden until they are numerous enough to furnish Antichrist with a great people. Gregory the Great says all the wicked are Antichrist’s members and that the mystery of iniquity is already at work in them. On this view the thing held back is not an empire outside but a growth within.

“I do not know” (Augustine, Origen, Hippolytus, Victorinus)

Augustine confesses that he cannot work out what Paul means by what withholds and by the one who now holds, and lists only the guesses he has heard or read. Origen notes that Paul speaks with reserve about the manner, time and cause of Antichrist’s coming. Hippolytus quotes the passage in full and Victorinus cites it, and neither names the restrainer.

Permitted by God, as a judgment (Origen, Victorinus)

Origen stresses that the man of sin is permitted because people refused the love of truth, and that Paul says even he is “sent” by God as a judgment. Victorinus has Antichrist rise by God’s command rather than by his own power. On this view the question is not what holds him back but why God lets him go.

The last emperor and the withdrawal of providence (Aphrahat, Solomon of Basra, Cave of Treasures, Coptic Martyrdoms)

The idea of Rome as restrainer grew into a legend of a last Christian emperor. Aphrahat says Christ handed the kingdom to the Romans, who hold it for its giver until he returns. Later Syriac writers have the last king surrender his crown on Golgotha as Antichrist is revealed, and Solomon of Basra says that when the Cross is raised all rule ends and God withdraws providence.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1–17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that

the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

The breath of his lips shall slay the wicked (Isa 11: 4-5)

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. [Isaiah 11: 4-5]

The image and the four kingdoms (Dan 2: 31-45)

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath giv-

en thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all ... [Daniel 2: 31-45]

The fourth beast explained (Dan 7:15-28)

I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and ... [Daniel 7:15-28]

The thousand years and Gog and Magog (Rev 20:1-10)

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I

saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the ... [Revelation 20:1-10]

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

4.1. Shepherd of Hermas: Angel Thegri shuts the beast's mouth

"That is why the Lord sent his angel who is over the beasts, whose name is Thegri, and shut its mouth so that it would not harm you. You escaped a great tribulation because of your faith, and because you were not double-minded when you saw such a beast." — Shepherd of Hermas, The Shepherd of Hermas. Note: An angel named Thegri, set over the beasts, shuts the monster's mouth; faith and single-mindedness bring escape.

4.2. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Israel's repentance ends the enemy's kingdom

"For he knoweth that upon the day on which Israel shall repent, the kingdom of the enemy shall be brought to an end." — Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: The enemy fears Israel's repentance, because on that day his kingdom ends.

4.3. Tertullian: Falling away: empire falls

"For that day shall not come, unless indeed there first come a falling away," he means indeed of this present empire, "and that man of sin be revealed," that is to say, Antichrist" — Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh.

Note: Tertullian reads the 'falling away' as the collapse of the present Roman empire, and the man of sin as Antichrist. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 1-8]

4.4. Tertullian: Roman state restrains him

“What obstacle is there but the Roman state, the falling away of which, by being scattered into ten kingdoms, shall introduce Antichrist upon (its own ruins)?” — Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*. Note: The restrainer is the Roman state; its breakup into ten kingdoms will bring Antichrist in on its ruins. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 6-7; *Daniel* 7: 24]

4.5. Tertullian: Roman empire delays the end

“For we know that a mighty shock impending over the whole earth—in fact, the very end of all things threatening dreadful woes—is only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman empire. We have no desire, then, to be overtaken by these dire events; and in praying that their coming may be delayed, we are lending our aid to Rome's duration.” — Tertullian, *The Apology*. Note: Christians pray for the emperors because the empire's continuance delays the end of all things. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 7]

4.6. Tertullian: Praying for the end's delay

“We pray, too, for the emperors, for their ministers and for all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the prevalence of peace, for the delay of the final consummation.” — Tertullian, *The Apology*. Note: Christian assemblies pray for rulers, peace and the delay of the final consummation.

4.7. Hippolytus of Rome: Loosed nations at Antichrist's time

“a certain bond of the power of the word is indicated, which restrains them until the day shall arrive and the Lord of all shall command. And this then is to happen when Antichrist shall come.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Commentary on Revelation* (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Four nation-angels around the Euphrates are bound by God's word until released at Antichrist's coming, in Hippolytus's reply to Caius. [Revelation 9: 14-15; *Deuteronomy* 32: 8]

4.8. Hippolytus of Rome: 2 Thess 2 quoted; restrainer unnamed

“Let no man deceive you by any means; for (that day shall not come) except there come the falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ... And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now

letteth (will let), until he be taken out of the way.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus quotes 2 Thessalonians 2 in full, including the falling away, the withholder and the mystery of iniquity already at work, without comment on the restrainer's identity. [2 Thessalonians 2: 1-12]

4.9. Origen of Alexandria: The man of sin permitted by God's judgment

“And in assigning the reason why the man of sin is permitted to continue in existence, he says: “Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 1 of 2). Note: Origen stresses that the man of sin is permitted because people refused the love of truth. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3-12]

4.10. Origen of Alexandria: Paul speaks of Antichrist with reserve

“Paul, indeed, speaks of him who is called Antichrist, describing, though with a certain reserve, both the manner, and time, and cause of his coming to the human race.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2 of 2). Note: Origen says Paul speaks with reserve about the manner, time and cause of Antichrist's coming. [2 Thessalonians 2: 6-7]

4.11. Origen of Alexandria: Even the man of sin is permitted by God

“The most evil of all, the man of sin, the son of perdition, is said by Paul to be sent by God: “God sendeth them a working of error that they should believe a lie” — Origen of Alexandria, *Commentary on John*. Note: Origen notes Paul says even the most evil man of sin is ‘sent’ by God as a judgment. [2 Thessalonians 2: 11-12]

4.12. Victorinus of Pettau: Beast arises among the Caesars

“Behold, Assur was a cypress in Mount Lebanon ... in the kingdom of kingdoms, that is, of the Romans. ... For even Isaiah speaks almost in the same words; moreover, that he was in the kingdom of the Romans, and that he was among the Caesars.” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: Victorinus finds in Ezekiel 31 that the beast from the abyss is Assur in the kingdom of the Romans, among the Caesars. [Ezekiel 31; 2 Thessalonians 2: 6-7]

4.13. Victorinus of Pettau: Secretly at work in the prince

"The Apostle Paul also bears witness, for he says to the Thessalonians: "Let him who now restraineth restrain, until he be taken out of the way; and then shall appear that Wicked One, even he whose coining is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders. And that they might know that he should come who then was the prince, he added: "He already endeavours after the secret of mischief" -that is, the mischief which he is about to do he strives to do secretly;" — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Victorinus cites 2 Thessalonians 2 to show that the coming Wicked One was already secretly at work in the prince then reigning, without naming the restrainer. [2 Thessalonians 2: 7-9]

4.14. Lactantius: Rome falls; rule returns Eastward

"the cause of this desolation and confusion will be this; because the Roman name, by which the world is now ruled, will be taken away from the earth, and the government return to Asia; and the East will again bear rule, and the West be reduced to servitude." — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: The end-time desolation is caused by the removal of the Roman name; rule will return to Asia and the West be enslaved. [Daniel 2: 40-44]

4.15. Lactantius: While Rome stands, pray for delay

"The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place; except that while the city of Rome remains it appears that nothing of this kind is to be feared. ... It is that city, that only, which still sustains all things; and the God of heaven is to be entreated by us and implored-if, indeed, His arrangements and decrees can be delayed-lest, sooner than we think for, that detestable tyrant should come" — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: Lactantius, writing in the early fourth century, says that while Rome stands nothing is to be feared; Christians should pray that the city not fall and that the detestable tyrant not come sooner. [2 Thessalonians 2: 7]

4.16. Aphrahat: Rome keeps the kingdom for its giver

"And furthermore at His coming He handed over the kingdom to the Romans, as the children of Esau are called. And these children of Esau will keep the kingdom for its giver." — Aphrahat, The Demonstrations. Note: Christ at his coming handed the kingdom to the Romans, who will hold it for its giver until he returns. [Daniel 2: 44]

4.17. Cyril of Jerusalem: Division prepares his way

“Hatred of the brethren makes room next for Antichrist; for the devil prepares beforehand the divisions among the people, that he who is to come may be acceptable to them ... For that day shall not come, except there came first the falling away, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of iniquity cloth already work, only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: Hatred among brethren prepares for Antichrist; Cyril then cites 2 Thessalonians 2 in full, with the falling away, the man of sin, the one who restrains, and his slaying by Christ. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3-8; Matthew 24: 15; Daniel 9: 27]

4.18. Cyril of Jerusalem: Gospel preached to all the world

“this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come . And as we see, nearly the whole world is now filled with the doctrine of Christ” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: The sign that the gospel is preached in all the world is, Cyril says, nearly fulfilled in his day. [Matthew 24: 14]

4.19. Optatus of Milevis: Translator's note: Empire's fall and Antichrist

“inasmuch as the fall of the Empire was commonly expected to synchronise with the coming of Antichrist and the end of the world” — Optatus of Milevis, *Against the Donatists*. Note: This is a modern translator's note to Optatus: the Church prayed for the Empire because its fall was commonly expected to coincide with Antichrist's coming and the world's end. [2 Thessalonians 2: 7]

4.20. John Chrysostom: Restrainer: the Roman empire

“what is that which withholdeth, and after that would know, why Paul expresses it so obscurely. What then is it that withholdeth, that is, hindereth him from being revealed? Some indeed say, the grace of the Spirit, but others the Roman empire, to whom I most of all accede ... Because if he meant to

say the Spirit, he would not have spoken obscurely, but plainly, that even now the grace of the Spirit, that is the gifts, withhold him. And otherwise he ought now to have come, if he was about to come when the gifts ceased; for they have long since ceased. But because he said this of the Roman empire, he naturally glanced at it, and speaks covertly and darkly” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: Asked what withholds the man of sin, Chrysostom notes some say the grace of the Spirit, others the Roman empire, and he mostly accepts the latter; Paul spoke obscurely to avoid needless danger. [2 Thessalonians 2:6-7]

4.21. John Chrysostom: Nero his type; Rome removed

“He speaks here of Nero, as if he were the type of Antichrist. For he too wished to be thought a god ... that is, when the Roman empire is taken out of the way, then he shall come. And naturally. ... as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly exit himself, but when that is dissolved, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government both of man and of God ... that of the Macedonians by the Romans: so will this also be by the Antichrist, and he by Christ, and it will no longer withhold” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: The mystery of lawlessness points to Nero as a type of Antichrist; when the Roman empire is removed he will come, as earlier empires fell, and Christ will end him. [2 Thessalonians 2:7; Daniel 2]

4.22. Jerome: 'He that letteth' removed

“He that letteth is taken out of the way, and yet we do not realize that Antichrist is near. Yes, Antichrist is near whom the Lord Jesus Christ “shall consume with the spirit of his mouth.”” — Jerome, Letters (part 2 of 3). Note: Writing in the age of barbarian invasions, Jerome says that 'he that letteth' is taken out of the way and Antichrist is near, to be consumed by the Lord Jesus. [2 Thessalonians 2:7-8]

4.23. Jerome: Rome fights for bare life

“Rome has to fight within her own borders not for glory but for bare life; and that she does not even fight but buys the right to exist by giving gold and sacrificing all her substance?” — Jerome, Letters (part 2 of 3). Note: Following the 'he that letteth' passage, Jerome laments that Rome fights in her own borders for bare life and buys her existence with gold; he does not say here who 'he that letteth' is. [2 Thessalonians 2:7]

4.24. Augustine of Hippo: 'I frankly confess I do not know'

"they show that he was unwilling to make an explicit statement, because he said that they knew. And thus we who have not their knowledge wish and are not able even with pains to understand what the apostle referred to, especially as his meaning is made still more obscure by what he adds. For what does he mean by "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way: and then shall the wicked be revealed?" I frankly confess I do not know what he means. I will nevertheless mention such conjectures as I have heard or read." — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine admits that he cannot understand what Paul means by what withholds and by 'he who now holdeth', and proceeds to list only the conjectures he has heard or read. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 6-7]

4.25. Augustine of Hippo: Roman empire restrains him

"Some think that the Apostle Paul referred to the Roman empire, and that he was unwilling to use language more explicit, lest he should incur the calumnious charge of wishing ill to the empire which it was hoped would be eternal ... However, it is not absurd to believe that these words of the apostle, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way," refer to the Roman empire, as if it were said, "Only he who now reigneth, let him reign until he be taken out of the way. "And then shall the wicked be revealed: no one doubts that this means Antichrist." — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine reports the view that the restrainer is the Roman empire and judges it not absurd, while stressing that 'the wicked' revealed afterwards is understood by all to be Antichrist. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 6-7]

4.26. Augustine of Hippo: Restrainer: the hidden wicked in the Church

"But others think that the words, "Ye know what withholdeth," and "The mystery of iniquity worketh," refer only to the wicked and the hypocrites who are in the Church, until they reach a number so great as to furnish Antichrist with a great people, and that this is the mystery of iniquity, because it seems hidden; also that the apostle is exhorting the faithful tenaciously to hold the faith they hold when he says, "Only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way," that is, until the mystery of iniquity which now is hidden departs from the Church." — Augustine of Hippo, *The*

City of God (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine reports a view that the 'mystery of iniquity' is the hidden wicked and hypocrites within the Church, who will grow into a great people for Antichrist. [2 *Thessalonians* 2:6-7]

4.27. Gregory the Great: All the wicked are his members

"every wicked person, who has already gone by, survives in his perverse imitators, and that the author of iniquity, who has not yet come, is already visible in those who do his works. Hence John says; Now are there become many Antichrists ... As if he were saying; Then Antichrist will be manifestly seen; for he now secretly works his hidden works in the hearts of the unrighteous." — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory explains John's 'many Antichrists' and Paul's 'mystery of iniquity' as meaning that all wicked persons are Antichrist's members, while he works secretly in their hearts until he is revealed. [1 *John* 2:18; 2 *Thessalonians* 2:6-7]

4.28. Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives: Roman Empire's end, then Antichrist

"The day is drawing nigh, and the things which are written shall be fulfilled, and they shall come to an end, and then there shall be nothing left except the works of Antichrist. For needs must that his wickedness be completed, when the Roman Empire shall have come to an end." — Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, *Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: In the Askêtikon of Apa Ephraim the end of the Roman Empire is the sign after which only Antichrist's works remain. [2 *Thessalonians* 2:7; *Matthew* 24:37-38]

4.29. Bede: Restrained until released at the end

"how much the ancient enemy with his satellites will persecute the Church at the end of the world, who from the time of the Lord's passion has been shut up in the hearts of the impious, so that he cannot harm as much as he would like, restrained by divine power." — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede says the ancient enemy, shut up since Christ's passion in the hearts of the impious and restrained by divine power, will persecute the Church greatly at the end of the world. [*Revelation* 9:14]

4.30. Bede: 1260 days = the whole Christian era

"This number of days, which makes three and a half years, encompasses all times of Christianity, because Christ, whose body this is, preached for that time in the flesh." — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede inter-

prets the 1260 days of the woman in the wilderness as encompassing all the times of Christianity, matching the length of Christ's own preaching. [*Revelation* 12: 6]

4.31. *Bede: The 'thousand years' as the remainder of the sixth day*

"And he bound him for a thousand years. That is, restraining and curbing his power from seducing those who were to be freed. If he were allowed to exercise his full power with force or deceit, he would deceive many of the weak in such a long time. He said a thousand years, meaning a part, that is, the remainder of the thousand years of the sixth day in which the Lord was born and suffered." — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede takes the binding of the devil as a curb on his power to seduce those to be freed, lasting the remainder of the sixth millennium in which Christ was born and suffered. [*Revelation* 20: 1-3]

4.32. *Solomon of Basra: Last emperor yields crown at Golgotha*

"As soon as the son of perdition is revealed, the king of the Greeks will go up and stand upon Golgotha, where our Lord was crucified; and he will set the royal crown upon the top of the holy Cross, upon which our Lord was crucified; and he will stretch out his two hands to heaven, and will deliver over the kingdom to God the Father." — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The last Greek (Roman) king surrenders his crown and kingdom to God on Golgotha as Antichrist is revealed. [*Psalms* 68: 31; *2 Thessalonians* 2: 7]

4.33. *Solomon of Basra: Rule ends, providence withdrawn*

"straightway shall every head and every ruler and all powers be brought to nought, and God will withdraw His providential care from the earth. The heavens will be prevented from letting fall rain, and the earth from producing germs and plants" — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: When the Cross is raised, all rule ends and God withdraws providence, with drought upon earth, preparing Antichrist's rise. [*2 Thessalonians* 2: 7]

4.34. *Kebra Nagast: Roman king perverts faith*

"This faith which we have ordered and laid down shall a king transgress who shall come in Rômê, and there shall be associated with him a certain archbishop, and they shall change and pervert the word of the Twelve Apostles" — Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek: the Kebra*

Nagast (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: A future Roman king and archbishop will pervert the apostolic faith, and the 'vanquisher of the enemy' (the Cross-nail bridle) will be removed. [2 *Thessalonians* 2:7; *Matthew* 7:15]

5. IS THE BEAST ROME?

When the Roman empire was the world, the answer to "what is Daniel's fourth beast?" was almost never in doubt: Rome. Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome are the four kingdoms; the ten horns are the ten kingdoms into which Rome will be divided; Antichrist is the little horn that rises among them. Rome is also the Babylon of Revelation 17. What the Fathers disagree about is everything after that: whether Rome must fall first, whether Antichrist is a Roman emperor, a returning Nero, an invader from outside or the ruler of a successor world, and whether some of it is already past. After the Arab conquers the Copts and Syrians redrew the map.

In this chapter

This question draws on 109 quotations from 39 voices. 59 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 50 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Daniel's fourth beast is Rome (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Aphrahat, Augustine)

Irenaeus says the present Roman empire will be divided among ten kings, the ten horns of Daniel. Hippolytus gives the order in a table: Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, then ten kingdoms with Antichrist as the little horn and Christ as the stone. Cyril grounds it in the Church's interpreters, Aphrahat calls the fourth beast the kingdom of Esau, and Augustine notes the standard list as Jerome has it.

Ten kings, then one (Irenaeus, Cyril, Lactantius, Augustine)

The sequence is the same everywhere: the empire divides, ten kings rule, and Antichrist overthrows three of them and takes the rest. Irenaeus says believers should wait for the ten-fold division first. Cyril has him as an eleventh king; Lactantius has a powerful enemy from the far north. Augustine alone is wary: he fears that expecting ten literal kings may be a mistake, and suggests the number may stand for the totality of kings.

Rome falls first, and Antichrist follows (Tertullian, Lactantius, Commodian, Hippolytus)

Tertullian gives the order of the last times: the city of fornication judged by ten kings, then Antichrist and the false prophet at war with the Church. Lactantius says the desolation comes from the removal of the Roman name and that rule will return to Asia. Commodian burns Babylon (Rome) and then lets a Latin conqueror declare himself Christ. Hippolytus has the ten horns and the beast turn on the great city and burn it.

Or Antichrist restores Rome (Hippolytus, Victorinus)

Hippolytus has Antichrist govern by the law of Augustus and restore the wounded Roman empire, the beast whose head was healed. Victorinus counts him among the seven Roman kings of Revelation 17 and has him sent from Rome with his armies. In these two the beast is not Rome's enemy but Rome's last form.

Some of it is already past (Clement of Alexandria, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine)

Not every Father puts the whole picture at the end. Clement of Alexandria reads Daniel's last week as fulfilled in Roman history, with Nero setting the abomination in Jerusalem and Vespasian ending it. Chrysostom reads the abomination of desolation as a Roman statue in the temple; Jerome takes it as the statue of Caesar or Hadrian's equestrian statue; Augustine says Luke's wording shows it was fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem. Hippolytus and others disagree, and say nothing like the final tribulation happened in AD 70.

After Rome: the Greek king and the Ishmaelites (Samuel of Kalamoun, Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Solomon of Basra, Severus)

After the Arab conquests the Coptic and Syriac apocalypses redraw the map. In the Coptic Daniel the fourth beast is the Ishmaelite kingdom, and a Roman king will crush Ishmael and rule Egypt forty years. Samuel of Kalamoun has God raise the Byzantine king, commissioned by Michael in a vision, to overthrow the Arabs; ten Greek kings later become the false Messiah's counsellors. Solomon of Basra has the Ishmaelites come in the last millennium, and the Greek king rise against them. Severus of al-Ashmunein likens a caliph to Antichrist.

Pride in the Church's own leaders as a sign (Gregory the Great)

Gregory the Great, writing to the empress, says that the Patriarch of Constantinople's attempt to be called the sole bishop shows that the times of An-

tichrist are near, since he imitates Lucifer's pride. The sign here is not a pagan emperor but a Church leader's grasp for a title. The Kebra Nagast makes a related prediction about a future Roman king and archbishop who pervert the apostolic faith.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The image and the four kingdoms (Dan 2: 31-45)

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all ... [Daniel 2: 31-45]

The four beasts and the little horn (Dan 7: 2-8)

Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between

the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. [Daniel 7:2-8]

The fourth beast explained (Dan 7:15-28)

I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and ... [Daniel 7:15-28]

The beast and his number (Rev 13:1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. [Revelation 13: 1-18]

The woman on the scarlet beast (Rev 17: 1-18)

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the

earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the ... [Revelation 17:1-18]

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Ascension of Isaiah, Beliar descends as a lawless matricide king (2.2); Sibylline Oracles, Beliar from the Caesars (2.3); Irenaeus of Lyons, Wait for the ten kings first (8.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Lateinos: probable but not certain (8.10); Clement of Alexandria, Daniel's week fulfilled under Nero (6.6); Tertullian, Falling away: empire falls (4.3); Tertullian, Roman state restrains him (4.4); Tertullian, Roman empire delays the end (4.5); Hippolytus of Rome, Loosed nations at Antichrist's time (4.7); Hippolytus of Rome, Little horn restores Judah's kingdom (16.3); Hippolytus of Rome, Conquers all ten, seeks worship (3.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Rome's beast; Jewish kingdom raised (2.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Lamb-horns: imitates the Son of God (3.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Titan, Evanthis or Latinus (8.19); Hippolytus of Rome, Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah (9.11); Commodian, Nero raised;

Elijah half, Nero half (9.12); Commodian, Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (16.5); Commodian, Nero raised from hell, Elias first (9.14); Commodian, Seven years: Elias half, Nero half (9.15); Commodian, The Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (6.23); Victorinus of Pettau, Beast arises among the Caesars (4.12); Victorinus of Pettau, Secretly at work in the prince (4.13); Victorinus of Pettau, Nero raised up, received as Christ (2.20); Lactantius, Rome falls; rule returns Eastward (4.14); Lactantius, Ten kings; northern enemy kills three (2.21); Lactantius, While Rome stands, pray for delay (4.15); Aphrahat, Rome keeps the kingdom for its giver (4.16); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Roman fourth beast; Antichrist restores Judah (16.9); Cyril of Jerusalem, A magician seizes Rome (2.27); Optatus of Milevis, Translator's note: Empire's fall and Antichrist (4.19); Apocalypse of Thomas, A golden image in the house of God (6.38); John Chrysostom, Abomination as a Roman statue (6.39); John Chrysostom, Restrainer: the Roman empire (4.20); John Chrysostom, Nero his type; Rome removed (4.21); John Chrysostom, Abomination as Roman statue (6.41); Jerome, 'He that letteth' removed (4.22); Jerome, Rome fights for bare life (4.23); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (2.30); Augustine of Hippo, Roman empire restrains him (4.25); Cave of Treasures, Greek king's crown on the Cross (2.34); Gregory the Great, Title 'sole bishop' shows Antichrist near (13.48); Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, Roman Empire's end, then Antichrist (4.28); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Greek king ends; false Messiah (6.51); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Fourth beast is Ishmael's kingdom (2.44); Bede, Eighth king; ten kings; born from Babylon (2.47); Solomon of Basra, Last emperor yields crown at Golgotha (4.32); Solomon of Basra, Last emperor of Ethiopian seed (2.54); Solomon of Basra, Rule ends, providence withdrawn (4.33); Kebra Nagast, Roman king perverts faith (4.34); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Types: Pharaoh, Antiochus, fourth empire (2.58).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

5.1. Epistle of Barnabas: Ten kingdoms and a little king

"The prophet also says this: "Ten kingdoms will reign on the earth, and a little king will rise up after them, who will humble three of the kings at

once.”” — Epistle of Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas. Note: He cites Daniel’s ten kingdoms and the little king who subdues three as an end-time prophecy. [Daniel 7:24]

5.2. Shepherd of Hermas: Vision of the coming tribulation

“The fourth vision I saw, brothers, came twenty days after the previous vision. It was a picture of the tribulation that is coming.” — Shepherd of Hermas, The Shepherd of Hermas. Note: Hermas’s fourth vision is introduced as a picture of the coming tribulation. [Revelation 13:1]

5.3. Justin Martyr: Daniel’s fourth beast and the horn

“As for the ten horns, ten kings will arise, and after them another. He will surpass the earlier ones in evil, and he will bring three kings low. He will speak words against the Most High and overthrow other saints of the Most High, and he will intend to change seasons and times.” — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Justin quotes Daniel’s fourth beast: ten kings, then another worse than the rest who humbles three and speaks against the Most High. [Daniel 7:23-25]

5.4. Irenaeus of Lyons: Little horn among ten kings

“Daniel too, looking forward to the end of the last kingdom, i.e., the ten last kings, amongst whom the kingdom of those men shall be partitioned, and upon whom the son of perdition shall come, declares that ten horns shall spring from the beast, and that another little horn shall arise in the midst of them, and that three of the former shall be rooted up before his face.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: The little horn of Daniel 7 is the son of perdition, arising among ten kings who divide the last kingdom and uprooting three of them. [Daniel 7:7-25]

5.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: Roman empire divided into ten kings

“concerning the ten kings who shall then arise, among whom the empire which now rules [the earth] shall be partitioned. He teaches us what the ten horns shall be which were seen by Daniel” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: John in Revelation clarifies Daniel: the present Roman empire will be divided among ten kings, who are the ten horns. [Revelation 17:12-14; Daniel 7:24]

5.6. Irenaeus of Lyons: Slays three, is the eighth king

“It is manifest, therefore, that of these [potentates], he who is to come shall slay three, and subject the remainder to his power, and that he shall be himself the eighth among them. And they shall lay Babylon waste, and burn her with fire, and shall give their kingdom to the beast, and put the Church to flight. After that they shall be destroyed by the coming of our Lord.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The coming one slays three of the ten kings and is the eighth; they ruin Babylon, give the beast their kingdom, put the Church to flight, then perish at Christ’s coming. [*Revelation 17:12-17*]

5.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Ten toes are ten kings

“The ten toes, therefore, are these ten kings, among whom the kingdom shall be partitioned ... ” And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven raise up a kingdom which shall never decay” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image are the ten kings, in whose days God sets up an everlasting kingdom. [*Daniel 2:41-45*]

5.8. Irenaeus of Lyons: Beast like leopard, bear, lion

“the beast which I had seen was like unto a leopard, and his feet as of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion; and the dragon conferred his own power upon him, and his throne, and great might. And one of his heads was as it were slain unto death; and his deadly wound was healed” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus cites John’s beast of Revelation 13 (leopard, bear, lion’s mouth, healed head) as the description of Antichrist’s coming. [*Revelation 13:1-8*]

5.9. Tertullian: Order of the last times

“and that the city of fornication may receive from the ten kings its deserved doom, and that the beast Antichrist with his false prophet may wage war on the Church of God; and that, after the casting of the devil into the bottomless pit for a while, the blessed prerogative of the first resurrection may be ordained from the thrones” — Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*. Note: Order of the last events: the city of fornication judged by ten kings, Antichrist and the false prophet war on the Church, the devil is bound, then the first resurrection. [*Revelation 17-20*]

5.10. Hippolytus of Rome: Not fulfilled by AD 70

“On this Hippolytus says, that in the siege of Vespasian this did not come to pass; for nothing new happened to the world in his days beyond the things that were before.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Hippolytus argues that Vespasian's siege of Jerusalem did not fulfil the 'great tribulation' prophecy, since nothing unprecedented occurred. [Matthew 24: 21]

5.11. Hippolytus of Rome: Vespasian does not fit

“From these [words] it is evident that Vespasian did not call himself God, nor did he sit in the temple, nor was he killed by the Spirit of the Lord. Accordingly it is manifest that in the end tribulation arises against the Church, such as was none like it.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Because Vespasian did not claim divinity or sit in the temple, the prophecy awaits fulfilment in an end-time tribulation. [2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Matthew 24: 21]

5.12. Hippolytus of Rome: Little horn kills witnesses

“No other kingdom is to persecute the saints, save this alone from which the horn is to spring up at the last, which is Antichrist, who is to kill Enoch and Elias.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Antichrist is the last horn of the beast-kingdom of Daniel 7 and will kill Enoch and Elias. [Daniel 7: 3-21; Daniel 7: 11; Revelation 11: 7]

5.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Fourth beast reigns 500 years

“of necessity the fourth beast, as being strong and mightier than all that were before it, will reign 500 years. When the times are fulfilled, and the ten horns spring from the beast in the last (times), then Antichrist will appear among them. When he makes war against the saints, and persecutes them, then may we expect the manifestation of the Lord from heaven.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: Hippolytus calculates a 500-year span for the Roman beast, after which Antichrist appears among the ten horns and the Lord's manifestation follows. [Daniel 7: 7-8]

5.14. Hippolytus of Rome: Do not anticipate; patience and prayer

“the little horn, which is Antichrist, shall appear suddenly in their midst, and righteousness shall be banished from the earth, and the whole world shall reach its consummation. So that we ought not to anticipate the counsel of God, but exercise patience and prayer, that we fall not on such times.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: The little horn appears suddenly among the ten horns; believers should not anticipate God's counsel but be patient and pray not to fall in those times, while still believing these things will occur. [*Daniel 7:7-8*]

5.15. Hippolytus of Rome: Daniel shows kingdoms then Antichrist

“For in distinguishing the kingdoms that are to rise after these things, he showed also the coming of Antichrist in the last times, and the consummation of the whole world.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Daniel's visions distinguish the successive kingdoms and also show Antichrist's coming at the end of the age. [*Daniel 2:31-35*]

5.16. Hippolytus of Rome: Three horns: Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia

“He says that three horns are plucked up by the root by him, viz., the three kings of Egypt, and Libya, and Ethiopia, whom he cuts off in the array of battle. And he, after gaining terrible power over all, being nevertheless a tyrant, shall stir up tribulation and persecution against men, exalting himself against them.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The three uprooted horns are named as the kings of Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia; Antichrist then becomes a persecuting tyrant. [*Daniel 7:8,21*]

5.17. Hippolytus of Rome: Four kingdoms, ten horns summarised

“the legs of iron, and the beast dreadful and terrible, expressed the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet which were part clay and part iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus's summary table: Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, then ten future kingdoms with Antichrist as the little horn, and Christ as the stone. [*Daniel 2:31-45; Daniel 7*]

5.18. Hippolytus of Rome: Ten kings burn the harlot city

“And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. ... And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The ten horns and the beast will turn on the great city that reigns over the kings and burn it. [Revelation 17:16-18]

5.19. Hippolytus of Rome: Restores the wounded Roman empire

“signify that, after the manner of the law of Augustus, by whom the empire of Rome was established, he too will rule and govern, sanctioning everything by it, and taking greater glory to himself. For this is the fourth beast, whose head was wounded and healed again, in its being broken up or even dishonoured, and partitioned into four crowns; and he then (Antichrist) shall with knavish skill heal it, as it were, and restore it.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Antichrist will govern by the law of Augustus and restore the Roman empire (the fourth beast, whose head was wounded) with cunning. [Revelation 13:3,12]

5.20. Hippolytus of Rome: Conquers three, attacks Tyre first

“And when he has overmastered three horns out of the ten in the array of war, and has rooted these out, viz., Egypt, and Libya, and Ethiopia, and has got their spoils and trappings, and has brought the remaining horns which suffer into subjection, he will begin to be lifted up in heart, and to exalt himself against God as master of the whole world. And his first expedition will be against Tyre and Berytus” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: After conquering three kings and subduing the rest, Antichrist grows proud and exalts himself against God; his first campaign is against Tyre and Berytus. [Daniel 11:41; Isaiah 11:14]

5.21. Origen of Alexandria: Pharaohs, Sennacheribs, Herods: types

“Origen, taking the ungodly for Satan, understands by his arms those chief ministers of his, the Pharaohs, the Sennacheribs, the Herods, that are types of Antichrist.” — Origen of Alexandria, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1-38) (part 2 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Origen, as cited by the compilers, reads the arms of the ungodly as

Satan's chief ministers, the Pharaohs, Sennacheribs and Herods, who are types of Antichrist. [*Psalm 37:17*]

5.22. Cyprian of Carthage: Isaiah: the man who disturbs kings

"In Isaiah: 'This is the man who arouseth the earth, who disturbeth kings, who maketh the whole earth a desert.'" — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 12. Three Books of Testimonies Against the Jews. Note: The proof-text for Antichrist as a man is Isaiah's man who shakes the earth and disturbs kings. [*Isaiah 14:16-17*]

5.23. Victorinus of Pettau: Apocalypse recapitulates; Babylon is Rome

"Nor must we look for order in the Apocalypse; but we must follow the meaning of those things which are prophesied. Therefore in the trumpets and phials is signified either the desolation of the plagues that are sent upon the earth, or the madness of Antichrist himself, or the cutting off of the peoples, or the diversity of the plagues, or the hope in the kingdom of the saints, or the ruin of states, or the great overthrow of Babylon, that is, the Roman state." — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Victorinus says Revelation is not in chronological order; its trumpets and bowls refer to plagues, Antichrist's madness and the fall of Babylon, the Roman state. [*Revelation 8-16*]

5.24. Victorinus of Pettau: Antichrist among the seven Roman kings

"His seven heads were the seven kings of the Romans, of whom also is Antichrist, as we have said above. 'And ten horns.' He says that the ten kings in the latest times are the same as these" — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The dragon's seven heads are Roman kings, one of whom is Antichrist; the ten horns are the ten kings of the latest times. [*Revelation 12: 3; Revelation 17: 9-12*]

5.25. Victorinus of Pettau: Seven kings counted to Domitian

"'The seven heads are the seven hills, on which the woman sitteth.' That is, the city of Rome. ... One remains, under whom the Apocalypse was written—Domitian, to wit. 'The other has not yet come,' speaks of Nerva" — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Seven heads are the seven hills of Rome and seven emperors counted up to Domitian, with Nerva coming briefly. [*Revelation 17: 9-11*]

5.26. *Victorinus of Pettau: Sent from Rome; three kings killed*

“He shall be sent from the city of Rome with his armies. And Daniel sets forth the ten horns and the ten diadems. And that these are eradicated from the former ones,—that is, that three of the principal leaders are killed by Antichrist: that the other seven give him honour and wisdom and power” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Antichrist is sent from Rome with his armies; he kills three of the ten kings and receives power from the other seven. [Revelation 17:12-16; Daniel 7:8]

5.27. *Aphrahat: Fourth beast is the kingdom of Esau*

“It is the kingdom of the children of Esau.” — Aphrahat, The Demonstrations. Note: Aphrahat identifies the fourth beast with the kingdom of Esau, that is Rome. [Daniel 7:7]

5.28. *Aphrahat: Little horn is Antiochus, already past*

“For when Antiochus arose in the kingdom, he humbled three kings, and he exalted himself against the saints of the Most High and against Jerusalem. And he defiled the sanctuary. And he caused the sacrifice and the offerings to cease for a week and half a week.” — Aphrahat, The Demonstrations. Note: Aphrahat reads Daniel’s little horn as Antiochus Epiphanes, already past, with the ‘time, times and half’ read as a week and a half. [Daniel 7:8; Daniel 7:25]

5.29. *Aphrahat: Little horn read as Antiochus*

“Far the ten horns were ten kings who arose at that time until Antiochus. And he said:—A little horn arose from between those ten and three fell before it. For when Antiochus arose in the kingdom, he humbled three kings, and he exalted himself against the saints of the Most High and against Jerusalem” — Aphrahat, The Demonstrations. Note: Aphrahat reads Daniel’s ten horns and little horn historically, as kings down to Antiochus, who humbled three kings and exalted himself against the saints; he does not name Antichrist here. [Daniel 7:7-8; Daniel 7:24-25]

5.30. *Athanasius of Alexandria: Constantius fits Daniel’s portrait*

“who will any longer venture to call this Costyllius a Christian, and not rather the image of Antichrist? For what mark of Antichrist is yet wanting? How can he in any way fail to be regarded as that one? or how can the latter fail to be supposed such a one as he is? Did not the Arians and the Gentiles offer those sacrifices in the great Church in the Caesareum, and utter their

blasphemies against Christ as by His command? And does not the vision of Daniel thus describe Antichrist; that he shall make war with the saints, and prevail against them, and exceed all that have been before him in evil deeds and shall humble three kings ... Now what other person besides Constantius has ever attempted to do these things? He is surely such a one as Antichrist would be. He speaks words against the Most High by supporting this impious heresy: he makes war against the saints by banishing the Bishops; although indeed he exercises this power but for a little while to his own destruction” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *History of the Arians*. Note: Athanasius argues that Constantius fits Daniel’s description of Antichrist (war on the saints, speaking against the Most High) through his support of heresy and banishing bishops, though only for a little while. [*Daniel 7: 21-25; Daniel 11: 36*]

5.31. Cyril of Jerusalem: Eleventh king, three-and-a-half years

“But this aforesaid Antichrist is to come when the times of the Roman empire shall have been fulfilled ... There shall rise up together ten kings of the Romans, reigning in different parts perhaps, but all about the same time; and after these an eleventh, the Antichrist, who by his magical craft shall seize upon the Roman power; and of the kings who reigned before him, three he shall humble ... At first indeed he will put on a show of mildness (as though he were a learned and discreet person), and of soberness and benevolence ... after perpetrating such things for three years and six months only, he shall be destroyed by the glorious second advent from heaven” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: After the Roman empire’s times are fulfilled, ten kings rise and an eleventh, Antichrist, humbles three; he feigns mildness, then persecutes Christians for three and a half years until Christ destroys him. [*Daniel 7: 8; Daniel 7: 24-25; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

5.32. Cyril of Jerusalem: Daniel’s fourth kingdom is Rome

“these things we teach, not of our own invention, but having learned them out of the divine Scriptures used in the Church , and chiefly from the prophecy of Daniel just now read ... And that this kingdom is that of the Romans, has been the tradition of the Church’s interpreters. For as the first kingdom which became renowned was that of the Assyrians, and the second, that of the Medes and Persians together, and after these, that of the Macedonians was the third, so the fourth kingdom now is that of the Romans ... A blasphemer the man is and lawless, not having received the kingdom from his

fathers, but having usurped the power by means of sorcery” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Cyril grounds his teaching in Daniel: the fourth beast is Rome by the Church's interpreters' tradition, and the small horn is a lawless blasphemer who takes power by sorcery. [*Daniel* 7:7-8; *Daniel* 7:23-25]

5.33. *Sulpicius Severus: Nero destroyed by Antichrist*

“He further said that Nero was to be destroyed by Antichrist, and that the whole world, and all nations, were to be reduced under the power of Antichrist, until that impious one should be overthrown by the coming of Christ.” — Sulpicius Severus, Dialogues. Note: In the same report Nero is destroyed by Antichrist, and all nations come under Antichrist until Christ's coming overthrows him. [*Daniel* 7:24]

5.34. *Augustine of Hippo: Daniel's fourth beast's king; 3.5 years*

“Daniel prophesies of the last judgment in such a way as to indicate that Antichrist shall first come, and to carry on his description to the eternal reign of the saints. For when in prophetic vision he had seen four beasts, signifying four kingdoms, and the fourth conquered by a certain king, who is recognized as Antichrist, and after this the eternal kingdom of the Son of man, that is to say, of Christ ... But he who reads this passage, even half asleep, cannot fail to see that the kingdom of Antichrist shall fiercely, though for a short time, assail the Church before the last judgment of God shall introduce the eternal reign of the saints. For it is patent from the context that the time, times, and half a time, means a year, and two years, and half a year, that is to say, three years and a half.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine reads Daniel 7 as announcing a king recognized as Antichrist who will assail the Church briefly before the judgment, and takes 'time, times and half a time' as three and a half years. [*Daniel* 7:7-25]

5.35. *Augustine of Hippo: Four kingdoms as in Jerome*

“Some have interpreted these four kingdoms as signifying those of the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine mentions the standard identification of Daniel's four kingdoms as Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians and Romans, referring readers to Jerome's commentary on Daniel. [*Daniel* 7:3-8]

5.36. Augustine of Hippo: Ten kings may be symbolic

“As for the ten kings, whom, as it seems, Antichrist is to find in the person of ten individuals when he comes, I own I am afraid we may be deceived in this, and that he may come unexpectedly while there are not ten kings living in the Roman world. For what if this number ten signifies the whole number of kings who are to precede his coming, as totality is frequently symbolized by a thousand, or a hundred, or seven, or other numbers, which it is not necessary to recount?” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine fears that expecting ten literal kings before Antichrist may be a mistake; he suggests ten may stand for the total number of kings preceding him, and he may come unexpectedly. [*Daniel 7:24*]

5.37. Testament of Our Lord: A godless king arises in the West

“But there shall arise also in the West a king of foreign race, a prince of great craft, godless, a homicide, a deceiver, a lover of gold, great at devices, a hater of the faithful, a persecutor; and he shall bear rule also over barbarous nations, and shall shed much blood.” — Testament of Our Lord, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Cooper and Maclean translation); scanned text. Note: Before the Adversary, a crafty, godless foreign king arises in the West, persecuting the faithful. [*Daniel 8:23*]

5.38. Pseudo-Linus: Nero called the Antichrist

“that is, the Antichrist Nero, the perfection of iniquity, ordered him to be confined and bound with chains in the filthiest prison.” — Pseudo-Linus, *Acts of Linus*. Note: The Acts of Linus calls Nero ‘the Antichrist Nero’ when he imprisons Peter.

5.39. Coptic Texts from St. Macarius’ Monastery: Sinners sent to Antichrist’s place

“And Mistrael, the Angel of Wrath, shall gather together all the sinners to the western part of the whole earth, that he may remove them to the regions which are without, unto the place which is anti-Christ’s.” — Coptic Texts from St. Macarius’ Monastery, *New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarius* (Evelyn White translation); scanned text. Note: The Angel of Wrath gathers the sinners to the west and removes them to the place assigned to Antichrist. [*Revelation 20:4*]

5.40. Miscellaneous Coptic Texts: Julian a forerunner of Antichrist

“that apostate became a horn of the Devil before Antichrist. He reviled the Holy Scriptures on which he had meditated very many times, and which he had recited with his mouth” — Miscellaneous Coptic Texts, Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the Dialect of Upper Egypt (Budge translation) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: Julian the Apostate is called a horn of the Devil before Antichrist and an enemy of the Cross who died a shameful death.

5.41. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Churches turned into mosques

“They will pull off the crosses from the churches. They will transform a great number of them into mosques for their use, because of their pride and their hatred against the Christians.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: Under the Arab rule crosses are removed and many churches become mosques. [Daniel 8:11]

5.42. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Michael commissions the Greek king

“God will remember his so greatly humiliated people and will send against them [the Arabs] the king of the Greeks, in great fury, on the coast, because the archangel Michael will appear to him in a vision and will say to him: “Arise and plunder in your turn, because the Lord has given you all the land,”” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: God raises the Byzantine king, commissioned by Michael in a vision, to overthrow the Arabs. [Daniel 7:23]

5.43. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Hundredfold retribution

“God will deliver them to the king of the Greeks who will make them undergo trials, in truth hundred times greater than those which they caused.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: The Greek king's retribution on the Arabs is a hundred-fold of what they inflicted.

5.44. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: 40 years' peace, Ethiopian union

“The king of Abyssinia will marry the daughter of the king of the Greeks and there will be such a pacification, such a peace and such a harmony on all the face of the land for forty years that nothing similar will ever have been seen on the land.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: Greek and Ethiopian kings unite by marriage,

and forty years of unprecedented peace follow, with churches opened publicly. [Revelation 20: 2]

5.45. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Ten Greek kings serve him

“He will even go, if he can, so far as misleading the elect, according to what is (f. 30 r.) written. Ten of the Greek kings will take service with him and will be with him in the same council, they will confirm his domination.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: Ten Greek (Byzantine) kings become his counsellors, confirming his rule, while he tries to mislead the elect. [Matthew 24: 24; Daniel 7: 24]

5.46. John of Nikiu: Diocletian taken for Antichrist

“And he put to death all the bishops of Egypt whom he found attached to the orthodox faith and a pure course of life, till (at last) every one believed him to be the Antichrist, who had come to destroy all the world; for he was the home of evil and the lurking-place of wrong.” — John of Nikiu, Chronicle. Note: John of Nikiu says that in Diocletian's persecution everyone thought him Antichrist come to destroy the world. [1John 2: 18]

5.47. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Roman king crushes Ishmael

“Then the king of the Romans will rise up against them, he will destroy them by the edge of the sword in the middle of the Ishmaelites in the territory of their fathers in the desert. The Ishmaelites will be governed always by the Romans; the Romans will dominate over Egypt for forty years.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: A Roman king destroys the Ishmaelites in the desert and rules Egypt for forty years before the final events. [Ezekiel 38: 2; Revelation 20: 8]

5.48. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Second beast is Rome

“The second animal that you saw, similar to human flesh, it is the king of the Romans: he will seize the land as if by iron; he will extend himself over it; he will dominate by his armies as far as the land of the Ethiopians” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The second beast is Rome and the Roman empire's reach is described as extending to Ethiopia. [Daniel 7: 5-6; Daniel 2: 40]

5.49. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Nineteen Ishmaelite kings

“All the cities of the Persians, the Romans and the Greeks will be destroyed; nineteen kings of this race among the sons of Ishmael will reign over the

land; they will reign until the time of their end.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: Nineteen Ishmaelite rulers (the horns) will destroy Persian, Roman and Greek cities and reign until their end. [*Daniel 7:24*]

5.50. Bede: Two great persecutions: Rome, then Antichrist

“would yet experience two greater persecutions than the rest; one of the Roman Empire, which she endured, as it were, in her youth, and overcame most valiantly and gloriously with the help of the Lord; the other of the Antichrist, which she is to suffer, as it were, in old age” — Bede, Commentary on Genesis. Note: Bede reads Sarah being taken by two kings as two great persecutions of the Church: the Roman Empire in her youth and Antichrist's near the end of her temporal life. [*Genesis 20:2*]

5.51. Bede: Seventh king: kingdom of Antichrist

“whose final part, that is, the kingdom of the Antichrist, had not yet come, he consequently testifies that five kings have passed, the sixth is present, and the seventh is to come.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede takes the seven heads as the fullness of worldly power, whose last part is the kingdom of Antichrist, yet to come, and notes that its evil days are shortened. [*Revelation 17:10*]

5.52. Bede: Four kingdoms precede Antichrist's kingdom

“That is, the four principal kingdoms, namely, those of the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. For just as in the previous seals, after witnessing the manifold conflicts of the Church, he saw the joys of the triumphant souls; so also now, he is about to prove with examples what victory follows the kingdom of the Antichrist, succeeding the preceding kingdoms of the world” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede identifies the four angels with the four kingdoms of Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans, after which the kingdom of Antichrist follows. [*Revelation 7:1; Daniel 7*]

5.53. Severus of al-Ashmunein: Caliph likened to Antichrist

“But God did not long respite him, but destroyed him swiftly, and granted him the government no longer, because he was like Antichrist.” — Severus of al-Ashmunein, History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (part 1 of 2). Note: Severus says the caliph Omar II, who taxed non-Muslim Christians and demanded conversion, was cut off swiftly by God because he was like Antichrist. [*1 John 2:18*]

5.54. Solomon of Basra: Ishmaelites come in last millennium

“In this seventh and last millennium will the kingdom of the Persians be destroyed. In it will the children of Ishmael go forth from the wilderness of Yathrib (al-Medinah)” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The Ishmaelites emerge from Yathrib in the seventh and last millennium, destroying Persia and the Greek kingdom, as a scourge for Christian sin. [*Genesis 16: 12; Psalm 68: 31*]

5.55. Solomon of Basra: Arab rule is God's scourge

“It is not because God loves them that He has allowed them to enter into the kingdoms of the Christians, but by reason of the iniquity and sin which is wrought by the Christians” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The Arab conquest is explained as God's chastisement for Christian immorality, not as favour toward the invaders. [*Romans 1: 26-27*]

5.56. Solomon of Basra: Last Greek king rises

“then all of a sudden there shall be raised up against them pains like those of a woman in childbirth; and the king of the Greeks shall go forth against them in great wrath, and he shall rouse himself like a man who has shaken off his wine.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: After the Ishmaelites' triumph the Byzantine ('Greek') king suddenly rises against them in wrath. [*Psalm 78: 65*]

5.57. Solomon of Basra: Greek king crushes Ishmaelites

“and they shall all be delivered into the hand of the king of the Greeks, and shall be given over to the sword and to captivity and to slaughter, and their latter subjection shall be one hundred times more severe than their (former) yoke.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The Ishmaelites are delivered to the king of the Greeks and suffer a subjection a hundred times worse than their former rule. [*Psalm 68: 31*]

5.58. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Four stages until Antichrist

“From the first to the second Advent are four stages: early manhood, from the Ascension, through the ten persecutions to the accession of Constantine the Great; the prime of life, through the Arian troubles, till Justinian; middle age, during which the yet unended power of Mohammedanism

sprang up; and that eld during which the Church still waits in dread for the coming of Antichrist” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers’ scheme for Psalm 71 divides the time from Ascension to Antichrist into four stages: persecutions, Arian troubles, the rise of Islam, and an old age awaiting Antichrist. [*Psalm 71:1*]

5.59. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Four persecutions; Antichrist worst

“The beasts also signify the four chief persecutions of the Church; first, that of those deaf adders or asps, the unbelieving Jews; secondly, that of heretics, signified by the basilisk; thirdly, the lion-rage of Pagan hostility; fourth, and worst of all, that of Antichrist.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers report an interpretation of the four beasts as four persecutions: Jews, heretics, pagans, and finally Antichrist, the worst. [*Psalm 91:13*]

6. WHICH TEMPLE DOES HE SIT IN?

Paul says the man of sin “sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Daniel adds an abomination of desolation and a sacrifice that is taken away; Jesus quotes Daniel in Matthew 24:15. The Fathers read all this three ways. Most of the earliest writers expect a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. A second line, which includes Augustine, Victorinus, Cassian and the Syrian Fathers, says the temple is the Church and the abomination something that enters her. A third says the abomination is already past, fulfilled by the Romans. A single writer sometimes gives more than one reading.

In this chapter

This question draws on 65 quotations from 32 voices. 60 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 5 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

A rebuilt Jerusalem temple (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, John of Damascus, Solomon of Basra)

Irenaeus takes the temple to be the real temple in Jerusalem, where the enemy sits as Christ and reigns three and a half years. Hippolytus has Antichrist

rebuild Jerusalem and the sanctuary. Cyril says plainly that it is the Jewish temple and not the Church, and that he will pass himself off as the descendant of David who will rebuild Solomon's temple, coming when not one stone of it remains. John of Damascus and Solomon of Basra repeat the view, as does the Pseudo-Hippolytan sermon, in which he builds the temple and hands it to the Jews.

The temple is the Church (Augustine, Chrysostom, Victorinus, Cassian, Ambrose)

The other line is at least as old as the Latin commentaries. Augustine says it is uncertain whether Antichrist sits in Solomon's ruined temple or in the Church. Chrysostom says the temple means both Jerusalem and every church. Victorinus allows that the contempt standing in the holy place may mean the introduction of heretical teaching into the churches. Cassian gives a double fulfilment, with the abomination of desolation entering the Church. Ambrose says he defiles the heart and takes the seat there.

The sacrifice that ceases: the Church's own worship (Hippolytus, Irenaeus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Neale and Littledale)

Hippolytus says the sacrifice that Daniel says will cease is the prayer of the righteous, not animal offerings. Irenaeus says that in his half-week the sacrifice and libation are taken away and the saints who offer a pure sacrifice flee. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon is explicit that the Christian oblation, the Eucharist, psalmody and Scripture reading cease and churches become like a field-hut. Neale and Littledale gather the older commentators: when the daily sacrifice ceases, the few remaining believers are left without priests.

Already past: Antiochus, Nero, Hadrian (Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Bede)

A considerable number of the Fathers place the abomination of desolation in the past. Clement of Alexandria puts it under Nero, Chrysostom and Jerome in a Roman statue (Caesar's, or Hadrian's on horseback), Augustine in the siege of Jerusalem. Eusebius argues that Jerusalem's desolation is final and its worship will not be restored, so no one should expect the temple to be rebuilt; he even dates the abomination from the Passion. Bede, collecting the readings, offers three: Antichrist, Pilate's image of Caesar, or Hadrian's statue. Hippolytus replies that Vespasian cannot be the man of sin because he did not claim divinity or sit in the temple.

A statue in the house of God (Victorinus, Apocalypse of Thomas, Gregory of Tours, Lactantius)

Another strand, close to Revelation 13, sees an image. Victorinus has a golden image of Antichrist set up in the temple, indwelt by an apostate angel that speaks oracles. The Apocalypse of Thomas has a crafty king command a golden image in God's house; Gregory of Tours has Antichrist propose circumcision and then set up his statue in the Jerusalem temple. Lactantius adds that he will try to destroy God's temple.

Pride that takes God's seat (Gregory the Great, Neale and Littledale)

The Fathers who spiritualise the temple still keep the main idea of the verse: a man in God's place. Gregory the Great says the pride of Antichrist is that of a sinful man who disdains to be counted a man and pretends to be God. The compilers Neale and Littledale add that every evil man rehearses in his heart what Antichrist will do in the final conflict.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send

them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

The seventy weeks (Dan 9:24-27)

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 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. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. [Daniel 9:24-27]

The wilful king (Dan 11:36-45)

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children

of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the ... [Daniel 11: 36-45]

The time of trouble and the days (Dan 12: 1-13)

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood ... [Daniel 12: 1-13]

The abomination of desolation (Matt 24: 15-28)

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or

there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. [Matthew 24: 15-28]

The abomination where it ought not (Mark 13: 5-23)

And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth ... [Mark 13: 5-23]

Jerusalem compassed with armies (Luke 21: 8-28)

And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and

pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them ... [*Luke 21: 8-28*]

The two witnesses and the beast from the pit (Rev 11:1-13)

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in ... [*Revelation 11: 1-13*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Irenaeus of Lyons, Unjust judge; kingdom moved to Jerusalem (2.4); Victorinus of Pettau, Golden image in the Jerusalem temple (8.24); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (2.30); Cave of Treasures, Danite in Jerusalem temple (2.35); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Every sinner's heart rehearses it (13.55).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

6.1. Ascension of Isaiah: He speaks like the Beloved and claims deity

"he will do and speak like the Beloved and he will say: 'I am God and before me there has been none.' 7. And all the people in the world will believe in him. 8. And they will sacrifice to him and they will serve him saying: 'This is God and beside him there is no other.'" — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: He imitates Christ in word and deed, claims to be God, and is worshipped and sacrificed to. [2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Revelation 13: 14-15]

6.2. Tatian: Unclean sign of desolation in the pure place

"And when ye see the unclean sign of desolation, spoken of in Daniel the prophet, standing in the pure place, he that readeth shall understand" — Tatian, Diatessaron. Note: Tatian's harmony presents the Lord's warning about the abomination of desolation as a sign for flight. [Matthew 24: 15; Daniel 9: 27]

6.3. Irenaeus of Lyons: Sits in Jerusalem temple as Christ

"the temple in Jerusalem was made by the direction of the true God. For the apostle himself, speaking in his own person, distinctly called it the temple of God. ... in which [temple] the enemy shall sit, endeavouring to show himself as Christ" — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: Irenaeus takes the 'temple of God' of 2 Thessalonians to be the real Jerusalem temple built under the true God's direction, where the enemy sits posing as Christ. [2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Matthew 24: 15-21]

6.4. Irenaeus of Lyons: Sacrifice taken away in half-week

"during which the saints shall be put to flight, they who offer a pure sacrifice unto God: "And in the midst of the week," he says, "the sacrifice and the liba-

tion shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation [shall be brought] into the temple: even unto the consummation of the time shall the desolation be complete." Now three years and six months constitute the half-week." — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: In the half-week of his tyranny the sacrifice and libation are removed, the saints who offer a pure sacrifice flee, and the abomination of desolation enters the temple. [*Daniel 9:27; Daniel 8:23-25*]

6.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: Reign, then fire, then kingdom

"But when this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day" — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: After Antichrist's three-and-a-half-year reign in the Jerusalem temple, Christ comes, casts him into the lake of fire and brings the kingdom, the seventh-day rest. [*Revelation 19:20; Matthew 8:11*]

6.6. Clement of Alexandria: Daniel's week fulfilled under Nero

"The half of the week Nero held sway, and in the holy city Jerusalem placed the abomination; and in the half of the week he was taken away, and Otho, and Galba, and Vitellius. And Vespasian rose to the supreme power, and destroyed Jerusalem, and desolated the holy place." — Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* Book 1. Note: Clement reads Daniel's last week as fulfilled in Roman history: Nero set the abomination in Jerusalem, and Vespasian then destroyed the city. [*Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15*]

6.7. Tertullian: Man of sin is Antichrist

"Well, but who is the man of sin, the son of perdition," who must first be revealed before the Lord comes; "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; who is to sit in the temple of God, and boast himself as being God?" According indeed to our view, he is Antichrist;" — Tertullian, *The Five Books Against Marcion*. Note: In reply to Marcion, Tertullian affirms that the man of sin in 2 Thessalonians is Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2:3-4*]

6.8. Hippolytus of Rome: Sacrifice = prayers of the upright

“The sacrifice he speaks of is not that of sheep, but the prayers of the upright. And the holy city he speaks of is the righteous, i. e. [those] who are oppressed and trodden under foot by the horn that sprang up in the midst [Dan. vii. 8, 20, 21, 25], which is Antichrist, as Daniel said.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The ‘sacrifice’ that ceases is the prayer of the righteous, not animal offerings; the little horn is Antichrist. [*Daniel 9: 27; Daniel 7: 8*]

6.9. Hippolytus of Rome: 2 Thess 2 means Antichrist

“Also the Apostle has written that these things are concerning Antichrist, Except if there come first a falling away, and the Man of iniquity be revealed, so that he as God shall sit in the temple, whom our Lord Jesus shall consume” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Paul’s 2 Thessalonians 2 is applied to the future Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 3-8*]

6.10. Hippolytus of Rome: Sixty-nine weeks done; final week

“there will remain only one week, the last, in which Elias will appear, and Enoch, and in the midst of it the abomination of desolation will be manifested, viz., Antichrist, announcing desolation to the world. And when he comes, the sacrifice and oblation will be removed, which now are offered to God in every place by the nations.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: In Daniel’s last week Elijah and Enoch appear, and mid-week Antichrist is the abomination of desolation; the sacrifice and oblation now offered everywhere by the nations will be removed. [*Daniel 9: 26-27*]

6.11. Hippolytus of Rome: Rebuilds Jerusalem; taken for Christ

“Thus, then, does the prophet set forth these things concerning the Antichrist, who shall be shameless, a war-maker, and despot, who, exalting himself above all kings and above every god, shall build the city of Jerusalem, and restore the sanctuary. Him the impious will worship as God, and will bend to him the knee, thinking him to be the Christ. He shall cut off the two witnesses and forerunners of Christ” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: Antichrist is a shameless despot who rebuilds Jerusalem and the sanc-

tuary; the impious worship him thinking he is the Christ, and he kills the two witnesses. [Daniel 11: 36; Revelation 11: 3]

6.12. Hippolytus of Rome: Two abominations: Antiochus and Antichrist

“Daniel has spoken, therefore, of two abominations; the one of destruction, and the other of desolation. What is that of destruction, but that which Antiochus established there at the time? And what is that of desolation, but that which shall be universal when Antichrist comes?” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: Daniel speaks of two abominations: Antiochus's local one of destruction and a universal one of desolation under Antichrist.

[Daniel 11: 41; Daniel 12: 11-12]

6.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Last week: Enoch and Elijah preach

“By one week, therefore, he meant the last week which is to be at the end of the whole world of which week the two prophets Enoch and Elias will take up the half. For they will preach 1, 260 days clothed in sackcloth, proclaiming repentance to the people and to all the nations.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Daniel's final week is at the world's end; Enoch and Elijah occupy its first half preaching 1,260 days in sackcloth.

[Daniel 9: 27; Revelation 11: 3; Malachi 4: 5]

6.14. Hippolytus of Rome: Unjust judge and widow Jerusalem

“By the unrighteous judge, who fears not God, neither regards man, he means without doubt Antichrist, as he is a son of the devil and a vessel of Satan. ... And in saying that there was a widow in the city, he refers to Jerusalem itself, which is a widow indeed, forsaken of her perfect, heavenly spouse, God.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The unjust judge of Luke 18 is Antichrist, son of the devil and vessel of Satan; the widow is Jerusalem forsaken by God. [Luke 18: 2-5]

6.15. Hippolytus of Rome: 1290 days; blessed who waits

“And Daniel says, “And they shall place the abomination of desolation a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand two hundred and ninety-five days.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus quotes Daniel's 1,290 and 1,335 (given as 1,295) days for the abomination of desolation, with a blessing on those who wait. [Matthew 24: 15-22; Daniel 12: 11-12]

6.16. Hippolytus of Rome: Imitates Christ point by point

“The Saviour gathered together the sheep that were scattered abroad, and he in like manner will bring together a people that is scattered abroad. The Lord gave a seal to those who believed on Him, and he will give one in like manner. The Saviour appeared in the form of man, and he too will come in the form of a man. The Saviour raised up and showed His holy flesh like a temple, and he will raise a temple of stone in Jerusalem.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Point by point he copies Christ: gathers the scattered people, gives a seal, appears as a man, and raises a stone temple in Jerusalem as Christ raised the temple of His flesh. [*Revelation 13:16; John 2:19-21*]

6.17. Hippolytus of Rome: Sacrifice that ceases is prayer

“The city is the Church ; and these months they are to persecute her and kill, when the false Christ [St. Matth. xxiv. 24] shall come, because she worships him not. ... The half of the week: that is, three years and a-half; and these make the forty and two months which are mentioned. The sacrifice he speaks of is not that of sheep, but the prayers of the upright.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation recorded by Dionysius Syrus*. Note: The holy city trodden for 42 months is the Church, persecuted by the false Christ for three and a half years; the sacrifice that ceases is the righteous' prayers, not animal offerings. [*Revelation 11: 2; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 7:8*]

6.18. Hippolytus of Rome: Matthew 24: Antichrist, not AD 70

“for he says that it is not concerning the Jews, and the laying waste of Jerusalem, that these things are said, but concerning the end of Antichrist. The elect [ib. 22] he speaks of are the Christians who are in this conflict.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation recorded by Dionysius Syrus*. Note: Hippolytus here reads Matthew 24's abomination of desolation as referring to the end-time Antichrist, not the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70; the elect are Christians. [*Matthew 24:15-22*]

6.19. Hippolytus of Rome: Siege of Vespasian does not fit

“Accordingly it is not concerning Jerusalem that the Lord said this; for when He willed to speak concerning her, He said, When ye shall see the army compassing the city, know that the desolation thereof is nigh [St. Luke, xxi. 20]. Hence the pollution of devastations He speaks of is Antichrist.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation recorded by Dionysius*

Syrus. Note: Since Jerusalem's destruction is described separately in Luke, Matthew's 'pollution of desolation' is Antichrist; Vespasian's siege did not match. [Matthew 24: 21; Luke 21: 20; Daniel 9: 27]

6.20. Hippolytus of Rome: Vespasian not the Man of Sin

"From these [words] it is evident that Vespasian did not call himself God, nor did he sit in the temple, nor was he killed by the Spirit of the Lord. Accordingly it is manifest that in the end tribulation arises against the Church, such as was none like it." — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: Vespasian cannot be the Man of Sin because he did not claim divinity, sit in the temple, or die by the Spirit; the tribulation is still at the end. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3-8]

6.21. Hippolytus of Rome: Worship suppressed; witnesses killed and raised

"These things then are to be in the half of the week, when Antichrist will scatter all men, so that there shall not be found two or three together to assemble, to offer sacrifice to God. This then is to be fulfilled, that the sacrifice shall cease. When then these are killed there [ib. 7] by the false Christ, afterwards they are to stand up, in presence of many, and are to be caught upon the clouds to meet our Lord" — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: In the half-week Antichrist scatters believers so no two or three can assemble to offer sacrifice; the two witnesses are killed, then rise and are caught up in the clouds. [Revelation 11: 7-12; Daniel 12: 11]

6.22. Hippolytus of Rome: Devil works in him; Jerusalem

"The body he speaks of is the devil, he who worketh [2 Thess. ii. 7, 9] in the false Christ : and the city he speaks of is Jerusalem, where these things are to come to pass. For Paul said concerning him who is Antichrist, He sitteth in the temple of God as God" — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: The Devil works in the false Christ; the great city of the witnesses' death is Jerusalem, where Antichrist sits in the temple as God. [2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Revelation 11: 8]

6.23. Commodian: The Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ'

"Then the whore Babylon, being reduced to ashes, its embers shall thence advance to Jerusalem; and the Latin conqueror shall then say, I am Christ, whom ye always pray to; and, indeed, the original ones who were deceived combine to praise him. He does many wonders, since his is the false prophet. Especially that they may believe him, his image shall speak." — Commodi-

an, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: After Babylon falls, a Latin conqueror claims to be Christ, working wonders with a false prophet whose image speaks. [*Revelation 13:14-15; Revelation 17:16*]

6.24. Origen of Alexandria: Paul's temple-sitting is Daniel's abomination

"What is stated by Paul in the words quoted from him, where he says, "so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," is in Daniel referred to in the following fashion:" — Origen of Alexandria, Against Celsus (part 2 of 2). Note: Origen identifies Paul's sitting in God's temple with Daniel's abomination of desolation. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Daniel 9: 27*]

6.25. Victorinus of Pettau: Preaching 3.5 years, his reign 3.5

"They shall tread the holy city down for forty and two months; and I will give to my two witnesses, and they shall predict a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth." That is, three years and six months: these make forty-two months. Therefore their preaching is three years and six months, and the kingdom of Antichrist as much again." — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The witnesses preach 3.5 years, and Antichrist's kingdom lasts another 3.5 years, so the whole span is seven years. [*Revelation 11: 2-3*]

6.26. Victorinus of Pettau: Abomination may be church heresy

"It is called a contempt when God is provoked, because idols are worshipped instead of God, or when the dogma of heretics is introduced in the churches. But it is a turning away because stedfast men, seduced by false signs and portents, are turned away from their salvation." — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The 'contempt' standing in the holy place can mean idol-worship or the introduction of heretical dogma into the churches. [*Matthew 24: 15*]

6.27. Lactantius: Attacks the temple of God

"He will command fire to come down from heaven, and the sun to stand and leave his course, and an image to speak; and these things shall be done at his word,-by which miracles many even of the wise shall be enticed by him. Then he will attempt to destroy the temple of God, and persecute the righteous people" — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: His wonders (fire from heaven, the sun's halting, a speaking image) entice even the wise;

he then tries to destroy God's temple and persecutes the righteous. [Revelation 13:13-15; Matthew 24:21]

6.28. *Eusebius of Caesarea: No restoration of the temple*

“By the desolation of Jerusalem, He means that it was never again to be set up, or its legal rites to be reestablished, so that no one should expect, after the coming siege and desolation, any restoration to take place” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Eusebius reads the desolation of Jerusalem as final: it will not be set up again nor its legal rites restored, so no one should expect a restoration. [Luke 21:20-21]

6.29. *Eusebius of Caesarea: Abomination of desolation began at the Passion*

“at the time when He suffered, the Veil of the Temple was torn asunder from the top to the bottom, so that in effect from that time sacrifice and libation were taken away, and the abomination of desolation stood in the holy place, inasmuch as the Being had left them desolate” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *The Proof of the Gospel* (part 2 of 2). Note: Eusebius reads Daniel's abomination of desolation as already begun at the Passion, when the Temple veil was torn and God's protection departed. [Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15]

6.30. *Eusebius of Caesarea: Abomination remains until the end*

“then, too, the abomination of desolation stood in the Temple, and it has remained there even till to-day, while they have daily reached deeper depths of desolation. And perhaps this will be so until the end of the world, according to the limit set by the prophet” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *The Proof of the Gospel* (part 2 of 2). Note: He says the abomination stood in the Temple at the final war and has remained, perhaps until the world's end. [Daniel 9:27]

6.31. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: Longer list of imitations*

“Christ gave to those who believed on Him the honourable and life-giving cross, and he in like manner will give his own sign. Christ appeared in the form of man, and he in like manner will come forth in the form of man. Christ arose from among the Hebrews, and he will spring from among the Jews. Christ displayed His flesh like a temple, and raised it up on the third day; and he too will raise up again the temple of stone in Jerusalem.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: A lengthened version of the point-by-point imitation: sign for cross, man's form, Jewish origin, and a rebuilt stone temple. [Revelation 13; John 2:19]

6.32. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Builds the temple, then blasphemes

“Then, when he is elevated to his kingdom, he will marshal war; and in his wrath he will smite three mighty kings,—those, namely, of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia. And after that he will build the temple in Jerusalem, and will restore it again speedily, and give it over to the Jews. And then he will be lifted up in heart against every man; yea, he will speak blasphemy also against God” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: After defeating three kings he builds the Jerusalem temple and hands it to the Jews, then turns blasphemous and proud. [*Daniel 11: 40-45; Daniel 9: 27*]

6.33. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Eucharist and public worship cease

“because neither “oblation nor incense “is attended to, nor a service acceptable to God; but the sanctuaries of the churches will become like a garden-watcher’s hut, and the holy body and blood of Christ will not be shown in those days. The public service of God shall be extinguished, psalmody shall cease, the reading of the Scriptures shall not be heard” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: In Antichrist’s days the Christian oblation, the Eucharist, psalmody and Scripture reading cease and churches become like a field-hut. [*Daniel 9: 27; Daniel 12: 11*]

6.34. Hilary of Poitiers: Abomination = Antichrist in the holy place

“For the Prophet spoke this of the times of Antichrist; and he calls abomination that which coming against God claims to itself the honour of God. It is the abomination of desolation, because it will desolate the earth with wars and slaughter; and it is admitted by the Jews, and set up in the holy place, that where God had been invoked by the prayers of the saints, into that same place admitted by the unbelievers it might be adored with the worship of God.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary reads Daniel’s abomination as Antichrist: one who claims God’s honour, desolates the earth, and is received by the Jews to be worshipped in the holy place. [*Matthew 24: 15; Daniel 9: 27; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.35. Athanasius of Alexandria: Constantius, forerunner of the lawless one

“Who that beheld him taking the lead of his pretended Bishops, and presiding in Ecclesiastical causes, would not justly exclaim that this was ‘the abomination of desolation’ spoken of by Daniel? For having put on the profession

of Christianity, and entering into the holy places, and standing therein, he lays waste the Churches, transgressing their Canons, and enforcing the observance of his own decrees ... A persecution indeed, such as never arose before, and such as no one perhaps will again stir up, except 'the son of lawlessness,' do these enemies of Christ exhibit, who already present a picture of him in their own persons. Wherefore it especially behoves us to be sober, lest this heresy which has reached such a height of impudence, and has diffused itself abroad like the 'poison of an adder,' as it is written in the Proverbs, and which teaches doctrines contrary to the Saviour; lest, I say, this be that 'falling away,' after which He shall be revealed, of whom Constantius is surely the forerunner" — Athanasius of Alexandria, *History of the Arians*. Note: Constantius leading bishops and entering holy places is called the abomination of desolation; Athanasius fears this heresy is the falling away after which the son of lawlessness is revealed, of whom Constantius is forerunner.

[*Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8*]

6.36. Cyril of Jerusalem: Jewish temple, not the Church

"What temple then? He means, the Temple of the Jews which has been destroyed. For God forbid that it should be the one in which we are! ... For if he comes to the Jews as Christ, and desires to be worshipped by the Jews, he will make great account of the Temple, that he may more completely beguile them; making it supposed that he is the man of the race of David, who shall build up the Temple which was erected by Solomon ... And Antichrist will come at the time when there shall not be left one stone upon another in the Temple of the Jews, according to the doom pronounced by our Saviour; for when, either decay of time, or demolition ensuing on pretence of new buildings, or from any other causes, shall have overthrown all the stones, I mean not merely of the outer circuit, but of the inner shrine also, where the Cherubim were, then shall he come With all signs and lying wonders, exalting himself against all idols" — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: The temple is the destroyed Jewish Temple, not the Church; posing as David's heir who will rebuild it, he comes when no stone of it remains, and abhors idols. [*2 Thessalonians 2:4; Matthew 24:2*]

6.37. Ambrose of Milan: Abomination: Antichrist in the temple

"Now mystically, the abomination of desolation is the coming of Antichrist, for with ill-omened sacrilege he pollutes the innermost recesses of the heart,

sitting as it is literally in the temple, that he may claim to himself the throne of divine power.” — Ambrose of Milan, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2* (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose reads the abomination of desolation as Antichrist, who defiles the heart and sits in the temple to claim divine power. [*Luke 21: 20; Matthew 24: 15; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.38. Apocalypse of Thomas: A golden image in the house of God

“Again another king shall arise, a crafty man (?), and shall command a golden image of Caesar (?) to be made (al. to be worshipped in the house of God), wherefore (?) martyrdoms shall abound.” — *Apocalypse of Thomas, The Apocalypse of Thomas, the Apocalypse of the Virgin and the Revelation of Stephen* (James translation); scanned text. Note: A crafty king commands a golden image to be worshipped in God’s house, and martyrdoms multiply. [*Revelation 13: 14–15; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.39. John Chrysostom: Abomination as a Roman statue

“This was his reason for saying: “When you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place ... The Jews called every image and statue made by man an abomination. So by his veiled reference to that statue, Daniel showed both when and under whom the captivity would take place. As I showed before, Josephus also assured us that these words were spoken about the Romans.” — John Chrysostom, *Against the Jews*. Note: In arguing against the Jews, Chrysostom takes Christ’s ‘abomination of desolation’ as a Roman statue marking the captivity, citing Josephus; here he does not mention a future Antichrist. [*Matthew 24: 15; Daniel 9: 27*]

6.40. John Chrysostom: A man, not Satan

“Here he discourses concerning the Antichrist, and reveals great mysteries ... But who is he? Is it then Satan? By no means; but some man, that admits his fully working in him. For he is a man. ... For he will not introduce idolatry, but will be a kind of opponent to God; he will abolish all the gods, and will order men to worship him instead of God, and he will be seated in the temple of God, not that in Jerusalem only, but also in every Church ... For he will perform great works, and will show wonderful signs” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*. Note: Chrysostom says the man of sin is a man, not Satan; he will oppose God, abolish the gods, demand worship, sit

in God's temple (in Jerusalem and in every Church) and work signs. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4; Matthew 24: 24]

6.41. *John Chrysostom: Abomination as Roman statue*

"But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand." He referred them to Daniel ... And by "abomination" He meaneth the statue of him who then took the city, which he who desolated the city and the temple placed within the temple, wherefore Christ calleth it, "of desolation." — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3). Note: On Matthew 24:15 Chrysostom reads the abomination of desolation as the statue set up in the temple by the conqueror of Jerusalem, a first-century event. [Matthew 24: 15; Daniel 9: 27]

6.42. *Rufinus of Aquileia: The enemy counterfeits the second advent*

"Yet it behoves us to know that the enemy is wont to counterfeit this salutary advent of Christ with cunningfraud in order to deceive the faithful, and in the place of the Son of Man, Who is looked for as coming in the majesty of His Father, to prepare the Son of Perdition with prodigies and lying signs, that instead of Christ he may introduce Antichrist into the world ... The Apostle also himself says, "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, who opposeth and exalteth himself above everything that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself as though himself were God." — Rufinus of Aquileia, A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed. Note: Rufinus says the enemy counterfeits Christ's second advent with prodigies and lying signs to bring in Antichrist, and cites Christ, Daniel and Paul's man of sin who sits in the temple. [John 5: 43; Matthew 24: 15; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-4]

6.43. *Jerome: Abomination: Hadrian's statue*

"Or it may be understood of the statue of Cæsar, which Pilate set up in the temple; or of the equestrian statue of Adrian, which stood to the present time in the very Holy of Holies. For, according to the Old Scripture, an idol is called 'abomination;' of desolation is added, because the idol was set up in the desolated and deserted temple." — Jerome, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22-28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Jerome reads the abomination of desolation as an idol:

Caesar's statue under Pilate or Hadrian's equestrian statue in the temple precinct, not Antichrist. [*Matthew 24: 15*]

6.44. Augustine of Hippo: Abomination fulfilled at Jerusalem

"These words of our Lord, Luke has here related to shew, that the abomination of desolation which was prophesied by Daniel, and of which Matthew and Mark had spoken, was fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem." — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine says Luke's wording shows the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel was fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem. [*Luke 21: 20; Daniel 9: 27*]

6.45. Augustine of Hippo: Apostate, the day of the Lord

"No one can doubt that he wrote this of Antichrist and of the day of judgment, which he here calls the day of the Lord, nor that he declared that this day should not come unless he first came who is called the apostate -apostate, to wit, from the Lord God. And if this may justly be said of all the ungodly, how much more of him?" — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says it is beyond doubt that Paul writes of Antichrist and the day of judgment, and that the 'apostate' is one who falls away from God.

[*2 Thessalonians 2: 3–4*]

6.46. Augustine of Hippo: Which temple? Uncertain

"But it is uncertain in what temple he shall sit, whether in that ruin of the temple which was built by Solomon, or in the Church; for the apostle would not call the temple of any idol or demon the temple of God. And on this account some think that in this passage Antichrist means not the prince himself alone, but his whole body, that is, the mass of men who adhere to him, along with him their prince; and they also think that we should render the Greek more exactly were we to read, not "in the temple of God," but "for" or "as the temple of God," as if he himself were the temple of God, the Church." — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says it is uncertain whether Antichrist sits in Solomon's ruined temple or in the Church, and reports a view that Antichrist means the prince together with his whole body of adherents. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.47. John Cassian: Abomination in the Church

"where Elias came in the person of John, and is again to be the precursor of the Lord's Advent: and in the matter of the "Abomination of desolation"

which "stood in the holy place," by means of that idol of Jupiter which, as we read, was placed in the temple in Jerusalem, and which is again to stand in the Church through the coming of Antichrist" — John Cassian, *Conferences of John Cassian - Part I*. Note: Cassian gives a double fulfilment: Elias came in John and will again precede the Advent; the abomination of desolation was Jupiter's idol in Jerusalem and will again stand in the Church through Antichrist. [*Matthew 24:15; Malachi 4:5; Daniel 9:27*]

6.48. *Testament of Our Lord: The abomination of desolation gathered*

"Then shall she gather together the abomination of desolation. The East shall be opened by him; also the ways shall be opened by him. Sword and flame [are] in his hands: he burneth with anger and fiery indignation." — Testament of Our Lord, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Cooper and Maclean translation); scanned text. Note: Judaea gathers the abomination of desolation; he opens the East and brings sword and fire. [*Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15*]

6.49. *Gregory of Tours: Circumcision, then his statue in the Jerusalem temple*

"But as to the end of the world I hold beliefs which I learned from our forefathers, that Antichrist will come first. And Antichrist will first propose circumcision, asserting that he is Christ; next he will place his statue in the temple at Jerusalem to be worshiped" — Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks* (Brehaut translation). Note: In his creed Gregory of Tours says Antichrist will come first, claiming to be Christ and proposing circumcision, then set up his statue in the Jerusalem temple; the day itself is hidden from all. [*Matthew 24:15; Matthew 24:36*]

6.50. *Gregory the Great: Pretends to be God above men*

"For, for what else is the high arm taken, but the proud loftiness of Antichrist, who is so exalted over the reprobate minds of men with the pride of worldly glory, that though a sinful man, and yet scorning to be counted a man, he pretends falsely that he is God above men? ... But because Antichrist sets himself up over all holy men, and over the power of the Godhead Itself" — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory identifies the 'high arm' with Antichrist's pride: a sinful man who disdains to be counted a man and falsely pretends to be God, exalting himself above all that is worshipped. [*2 Thessalonians 2:4; Job 38:15*]

6.51. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Greek king ends; false Messiah

“The king of the Greeks will dominate over the land one year and six months: he will make Jerusalem his residence. After that, God will put an end to his reign over the land and then the hideous one will appear, who is the false Messiah, doing many signs and wonders with vain ostentation.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: The Greek king rules eighteen months from Jerusalem; when God ends his reign the false Messiah appears with vain signs. [*Daniel 2: 44*]

6.52. Bede: Abomination: Antichrist or a statue

“it may either be said simply of Antichrist, or of the statue of Cæsar, which Pilate put into the temple, or of the equestrian statue of Adrian, which for a long time stood in the holy of holies itself” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede offers three readings of the abomination of desolation: Antichrist himself, Pilate's image of Caesar, or Hadrian's equestrian statue. [*Mark 13: 14; Daniel 9: 27*]

6.53. Bede: Abomination: Antichrist, Caesar's image or Hadrian's statue

“However, it can be simply understood either concerning the Antichrist, or the image of Caesar which Pilate placed in the temple, or the equestrian statue of Hadrian, which stood for a long time in the very holy of holies place.” — Bede, *Commentary on Mark*. Note: Bede says the abomination of desolation may be read of Antichrist, of Caesar's image brought into the temple, or of Hadrian's equestrian statue in the holy of holies. [*Mark 13: 14; Matthew 24: 15*]

6.54. Bede: Court outside the temple; body of the wicked already at work

“Not only are they expelled from the Church, but they also, together with their Gentile allies, attack the same Church for three and a half years. It is not that they will trample it only during that time, that is, the time of the Antichrist, but because the entire body of the wicked, as if belonging to its own head, is already now working in the ministry of iniquity.” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede explains the outer court as nominal Christians cast out who trample the Church for three and a half years, though the whole body of the wicked already works under its head. [*Revelation 11: 2-3; Daniel 12: 11*]

6.55. *Bede: The two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah*

“Some interpret the two prophets as Enoch and Elijah, who, preaching for three and a half years, will strengthen the hearts of the faithful against the soon-following perfidy of the Antichrist.” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede reports the interpretation that the two prophets are Enoch and Elijah, who will preach for three and a half years to strengthen the faithful against Antichrist's perfidy. [*Revelation 11: 3; Daniel 9: 27; Daniel 12: 11*]

6.56. *Bede: Daniel: abomination in the temple, 1290 days*

“Daniel says: He will confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and in the temple will be the abomination of desolation (Daniel IX). ... This number covers approximately three years and six months.” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede quotes Daniel on the covenant for one week, the sacrifice ceasing, the abomination in the temple, and 1290 days, which he reckons at about three years and six months. [*Daniel 9: 27; Daniel 12: 11*]

6.57. *John of Damascus: Temple is the Jewish temple*

“in the temple of God he said; not our temple, but the old Jewish temple . For he will come not to us but to the Jews: not for Christ or the things of Christ: wherefore he is called Antichrist .” — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: The 'temple of God' in 2 Thessalonians is the old Jewish temple, not the Church; Antichrist comes to the Jews, not for Christ. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.58. *Solomon of Basra: Sits in temple as Christ*

“He will go into Jerusalem and will sit upon a throne in the temple saying, 'I am the Christ;' and he will be borne aloft by legions of devils like a king and a lawgiver, naming himself God, and saying, 'I am the fulfilment of the types and the parables.'” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: He enthrones himself in the Jerusalem temple, claims to be Christ and God, and to fulfil the Old Testament types. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.59. *Neale and Littledale (compilers): Boasting ungodly: Antichrist in the temple*

“the frightful persecution of Antichrist, which will precede the end of all things. Hath made boast of his own heart's desire: so that "he as God sitteth in the temple of GOD, showing himself that he is God.” — Neale and

Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers read Psalm 10's boasting of the ungodly as the frightful persecution of Antichrist before the end, who as God sits in God's temple. [*Psalm 10: 3; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

6.60. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Daily sacrifice taken away

"That is, they look forward to that time of Antichrist when the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and so the great oblation of the Church's thanksgiving will come to an end: when from those few scattered servants of God who remain without a priest and without a temple, what can there be but earnest prayer, that, for the elect's sake, those days may be shortened?" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say the Fathers look to Antichrist's time, when the daily sacrifice ceases and the few remaining believers, without priest or temple, can only pray for the days to be shortened. [*Psalm 42: 8; Daniel 12: 11; Revelation 11: 11*]

7. HOW LONG WILL HE REIGN, AND WHEN DOES IT START?

"A time, times and half a time" (Daniel 7:25), forty-two months, 1,260 days: nearly every Father who writes on Antichrist takes these as roughly three and a half years. On when it will happen, they split. Many said the end was near, from Barnabas to Cyprian to Gregory the Great; most of those who said so were exhorting people to be ready, and some did publish chronologies. But from Hippolytus's own advice not to anticipate God's counsel, to Jerome and Augustine laughing at the calculators, the weight of the tradition is against date-setting. Several of the early chronologies were falsified by the passing of the date, and later writers say so.

In this chapter

This question draws on 204 quotations from 54 voices. 39 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 165 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Three and a half years, with variations (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Augustine, Bede)

Irenaeus reads the time, times and half a time as three years and six months, during which he reigns over the earth and wears out the saints. Hippolytus gives the same, equal to Daniel's 1,290 days. Cyril, Augustine and Bede repeat it, and Bede says the days are shortened for the elect's sake. Smaller variations survive: the apocryphal Revelation of John has three years, and Solomon of Basra says two and a half by one tradition and three and a half by others.

A final week of seven years, in two halves (Hippolytus, Victorinus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Commodian)

A group of writers set the three and a half years inside a last "week" of seven. Hippolytus puts Daniel's final week at the end of the world, with Enoch and Elijah preaching in its first half and Antichrist reigning in the second. Victorinus has the witnesses preach three and a half years and Antichrist's kingdom last another three and a half, a total of seven. Pseudo-Hippolytus agrees. Commodian divides the seven years between Elijah and Nero.

Six thousand years of history (Barnabas, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Lactantius, Commodian, Victorinus)

From the Epistle of Barnabas onward, creation's six days are read as six thousand years of history to be followed by a seventh thousand of rest. Irenaeus says the present age ends at the sixth millennium. Hippolytus dates Christ's birth to the year 5500 and counts 500 years more, which would place the end about the year AD 500. Lactantius says the six-thousandth year is not yet complete. A Syriac letter of about AD 500 still defends the view that the world ends at 6,000 years.

Calculations rebuked (Hippolytus, Cyril, Jerome, Augustine, Bede, Gennadius)

The rebuke appears early and often. Hippolytus tells believers not to anticipate God's counsel but to be patient and pray. Cyril forbids curiosity about the time while telling believers not to slumber. Jerome records that the chronographer Judas wrongly predicted Antichrist's advent about AD 202 and was proved wrong. Augustine rebukes a correspondent who allows that the year cannot be known but supposes the decade might be, and the "six-thousand-year computations" as well. Bede rejects those who calculate the year, day and hour, and Gennadius notes that a Syriac chronicle silenced idle guessing about Antichrist's advent.

“The time is near”: pastoral warning in every age (Tertullian, Cyprian, Basil, Jerome, Gregory the Great)

Many generations of Fathers said Antichrist was near. Tertullian says he is now close at hand and hungry for Christians’ blood. Cyprian says the hateful time of Antichrist is beginning, and writes to prepare his people for martyrdom. Basil allows that the troubles may be the approach of the apostasy. Jerome says the one who letteth is taken out of the way. Gregory the Great says many of the predicted signs are already fulfilled. Neale and Littledale note, with some candour, that each age from Augustine’s onward has thought it was near the end.

Disasters are not the end (Joshua the Stylite, Samuel of Kalamoun, Augustine)

During the plague, war and Persian invasion of AD 502–503, Joshua the Stylite argued from 2 Thessalonians that the end cannot come before the false Christ, and concluded that the calamities were God’s chastisement for sin and not a proof that the last time had come. Samuel of Kalamoun says no one knows the dates and that repentance and keeping the canons could spare Christians the Ishmaelite oppression. Augustine says John’s “last hour” is a long one.

The thousand years and the 1,260 days read as the Church age (Victorinus, Methodius, Hippolytus, Bede)

A reading that starts early and grows treats Revelation’s numbers as stages of the Church’s life. Victorinus takes the thousand years of Satan’s binding as the present age from Christ’s first coming and rejects an earthly millennium as Cerinthian. Hippolytus, as Bar Salibi reports him, reads the thousand years as one perfect day. Methodius spiritualises the 1,260 days as perfect knowledge of the Trinity; Bede reads them as the whole Christian era.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The fourth beast explained (Dan 7:15–28)

I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the

kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and ... [Daniel 7:15-28]

The seventy weeks (Dan 9:24-27)

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 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. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. [Daniel 9:24-27]

The time of trouble and the days (Dan 12:1-13)

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood ... [*Daniel 12: 1-13*]

The two witnesses and the beast from the pit (Rev 11: 1-13)

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in ... [*Revelation 11: 1-13*]

The woman, the dragon and the wilderness (Rev 12:1-17)

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser ... [Revelation 12:1-17]

The beast and his number (Rev 13:1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. ... [Revelation 13: 1-18]

Take heed that no man deceive you (Matt 24: 4-14)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. [Matthew 24: 4-14]

The thousand years and Gog and Magog (Rev 20: 1-10)

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such

the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the ... [*Revelation 20:1-10*]

Scoffers in the last days (2 Pet 3:3-10)

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. [*2 Peter 3:3-10*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Epistle of Barnabas, The Son ends the lawless one's time (14.1); Epistle of Barnabas, The final stumbling block is near (15.2); Ascension of Isaiah, 1,332 days, then the Lord comes (14.2); Justin Martyr, John foretold the thousand years (14.5); Tatian, Unclean sign of desolation in the pure place (6.2); Irenaeus of Lyons, Little horn among ten kings (5.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, Sacrifice taken away in half-week (6.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, Beast like leopard, bear, lion (5.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, 666 sums up the apostasy (8.1); Irenaeus of Lyons, Reign, then fire, then kingdom (6.5); Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, In last times they cleave to Beliar (11.9); Irenaeus of Lyons, Irenaeus: the name is not declared now (8.14); Clement of Alexandria, Daniel's week fulfilled under Nero (6.6); Tertullian, 'Antichrist now close at hand' (15.8);

Tertullian, Hasten the kingdom, not delay it (15.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Satan loosed, Gog and Magog (14.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Thousand years = one perfect day (14.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Not fulfilled by AD 70 (5.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Preach 1260 days (9.7); Hippolytus of Rome, Sixty-nine weeks done; final week (6.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Two abominations: Antiochus and Antichrist (6.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Proclaimed king; 1290 and 1335 days (2.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Time, times, half-time: 3.5 years (11.13); Hippolytus of Rome, End about 500 years after Christ (15.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Fourth beast reigns 500 years (5.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Do not anticipate; patience and prayer (5.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Last week: Enoch and Elijah preach (6.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Beast kills the two witnesses (9.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Church flees 1260 days (11.15); Hippolytus of Rome, 1290 days; blessed who waits (6.15); Hippolytus of Rome, Then Christ's coming and judgment (14.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Programme of the treatise (8.21); Hippolytus of Rome, Thousand years as one perfect day (14.19); Hippolytus of Rome, Sacrifice that ceases is prayer (6.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Enoch and Elijah against Antichrist (9.10); Commodian, Nero raised; Elijah half, Nero half (9.12); Commodian, Six thousand years; Antichrist conquered (14.22); Commodian, Nero raised from hell, Elias first (9.14); Commodian, Seven years: Elias half, Nero half (9.15); Commodian, Antichrist's nobles serve the saints (14.25); Origen of Alexandria, Store up manna before the famine (15.13); Origen of Alexandria, Paul speaks of Antichrist with reserve (4.10); Cyprian of Carthage, The time of Antichrist draws near (15.15); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist is near: prepare for martyrdom (15.19); Cyprian of Carthage, World failing, Antichrist drawing near (11.20); Cyprian of Carthage, Heresies grow as the world declines (11.25); Cyprian of Carthage, Hateful time of Antichrist beginning (15.20); Dionysius of Alexandria, Dionysius contests an earthly kingdom (14.27); Victorinus of Pettau, Apocalypse recapitulates; Babylon is Rome (5.23); Victorinus of Pettau, Preaching 3.5 years, his reign 3.5 (6.25); Victorinus of Pettau, 144,000 believe through Elijah (9.18); Victorinus of Pettau, Seven kings counted to Domitian (5.25); Victorinus of Pettau, Satan bound from the first advent (14.30); Victorinus of Pettau, Little season = 3.5 years (14.31); Victorinus of Pettau, Rejects an earthly millennium (11.27); Victorinus of Pettau, Seventh millennium: Christ reigns (14.32); Methodius of Olympus, Midnight is the kingdom of Antichrist (15.22); Methodius of Olympus, The

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gustine of Hippo, Antichrist's persecution as the eleventh (12.45); Augustine of Hippo, Christ slays him; no date-setting (14.54); Augustine of Hippo, Daniel's fourth beast's king; 3.5 years (5.34); Augustine of Hippo, Ten kings may be symbolic (5.36); John Cassian, Abomination in the Church (6.47); Gennadius of Massilia, Chronicle silences guesses about Antichrist's advent (15.50); Joshua the Stylite, End not before the false Christ (15.51); Joshua the Stylite, Disasters are chastisement, not the end (11.79); Cave of Treasures, Elijah from Paradise (9.37); Gregory of Tours, Circumcision, then his statue in the Jerusalem temple (6.49); Gregory the Great, Signs fulfilled; the end near (11.81); Gregory the Great, Converted Jews persecuted in his time (9.40); Gregory the Great, Jewish believers persecuted by unbelieving Jews (16.34); Gregory the Great, Flatterer first, then persecutor (2.39); Gregory the Great, Antichrist near: let him find nothing of his in titles (15.56); Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, Roman Empire's end, then Antichrist (4.28); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Dates unknown; repentance spares (15.57); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, 40 years' peace, Ethiopian union (5.44); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Greek king ends; false Messiah (6.51); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Roman king crushes Ishmael (5.47); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Gog and Magog arise (2.43); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Nineteen Ishmaelite kings (5.49); Bede, Heretics announce 'the time is near' (12.51); Bede, The eleventh hour is the last age (12.53); Bede, Heretics and bad Catholics as antichrists (11.89); Bede, Enoch and Elijah convert many Jews (9.44); Bede, Two great persecutions: Rome, then Antichrist (5.50); Bede, Sabbath rest after Antichrist's destruction (14.69); Bede, Enoch returns with Elijah (9.45); Bede, Date-setters and false Christs rejected (15.58); Bede, Restrained until released at the end (4.29); Bede, Court outside the temple; body of the wicked already at work (6.54); Bede, The two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah (6.55); Bede, Daniel: abomination in the temple, 1290 days (6.56); Bede, 1260 days = the whole Christian era (4.30); Bede, Two phases: hidden, then open (3.59); Bede, Seventh king: kingdom of Antichrist (5.51); Bede, The 'thousand years' as the remainder of the sixth day (4.31); Bede, Jews humbled; some convert through Elijah (9.47); Bede, Four kingdoms precede Antichrist's kingdom (5.52); Bede, 45 days after Antichrist's death (Jerome) (14.71); Severus of al-Ashmunein, Judas computes Antichrist's date (15.61); Theophylact, Christ comes right after (14.73); Dionysius bar Salibi, Editor: public prayer suppressed (15.64); Solomon of Basra, Ishmaelites come in last

millennium (5.54); Solomon of Basra, Arabia and Hebron laid waste (14.75); Solomon of Basra, The 'last peace' (14.76); Solomon of Basra, Alexander's nations released (14.77); Solomon of Basra, Gog and Magog burst out (2.52); Solomon of Basra, Born where Christ's woes fell (2.53); Solomon of Basra, Rule ends, providence withdrawn (4.33); Durandus, Gentiles and Jews one before him (9.56); Kebra Nagast, Ethiopia orthodox till the end (15.67); Kebra Nagast, Kingdom of Christ until False Messiah (16.51); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Elect kept in Antichrist's time (15.68); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Every age thinks it near the end (11.103); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Church's seven ages to Antichrist (11.104); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Four stages until Antichrist (5.58); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Judgment must come before he ravages (14.85); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Enoch and Elijah die in his days (9.61); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Church reduced to few in his days (11.105); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Great destroying of God's law (11.106).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

7.1. Epistle of Barnabas: Six thousand years of history

"the Lord will bring everything to completion in six thousand years, for a day with him means a thousand years." — Epistle of Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas. Note: Creation's six days signify six thousand years of history before the end. [*Psalm 90: 4; 2 Peter 3: 8*]

7.2. Justin Martyr: Daniel's blasphemer already at the door

"The times are being fulfilled, and the one who will speak blasphemous and daring things against the Most High is already at the doors. Daniel announces that he will hold sway for a time, and times, and half a time." — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Justin says the Danielic blasphemer is already at the door and will rule for a time, times and half a time.

[*Daniel 7: 25; Psalm 110: 1*]

7.3. Justin Martyr: Man of lawlessness reigns 'a time, times, half'

"For you explain "a time" as meaning a hundred years. But if that is so, the man of lawlessness must reign at the very least three hundred and fifty years, so that we can count the words of the holy Daniel, "and times," as meaning

only two times.” — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Justin criticises a Jewish reading of 'a time' as a hundred years, noting it would make the man of lawlessness reign at least 350 years. [*Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

7.4. Irenaeus of Lyons: Reigns three years six months

“and he shall speak words against the most high God, and wear out the saints of the most high God, and shall purpose to change times and laws; and [everything] shall be given into his hand until a time of times and a half time,” that is, for three years and six months, during which time, when he comes, he shall reign over the earth.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: A time, times and half a time means three years and six months, during which he reigns over the earth and wears out the saints. [*Daniel 7:25*]

7.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: Six days, six thousand years

“For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded. ... For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed: it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand year.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: Creation's six days correspond to six thousand years, so the present age ends at the sixth millennium. [*Genesis 2:1-3; Psalm 90:4*]

7.6. Hippolytus of Rome: 42 months: Church persecuted

“The city is the Church ; and these months they are to persecute her and kill, when the false Christ [St. Matth. xxiv. 24] shall come, because she worships him not. Now of this said Daniel, He shall approve the covenant for many, one week; in the half of the week shall cease the sacrifice [Dan, ix. 27]. The half of the week: that is, three years and a-half; and these make the forty and two months which are mentioned.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Citing Hippolytus, Bar Salibi says the 42 months are Daniel's half-week, in which the false Christ persecutes the Church that refuses to worship him. [*Revelation 11:2; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 7:8*]

7.7. Hippolytus of Rome: Abomination of desolation = Antichrist

“Hence the pollution of devastations He speaks of is Antichrist. And Daniel said, [In] the half of the week standeth the abomination in the sanctuary” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The abomination of desolation in Matthew 24 is

Antichrist himself and not the siege of Jerusalem under Vespasian, according to Hippolytus as cited. [Matthew 24:15; Daniel 9:27; Luke 21:20]

7.8. Hippolytus of Rome: Christ born 5500; 6000 total

“For the first appearance of our Lord in the flesh took place in Bethlehem, under Augustus, in the year 5500; and He suffered in the thirty-third year. And 6, 000 years must needs be accomplished, in order that the Sabbath may come, the rest, the holy day “on which God rested from all His works.” For the Sabbath is the type and emblem of the future kingdom of the saints” — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: Hippolytus dates Christ's birth to the year 5500 of the world and says 6,000 years must be completed before the Sabbath rest of the saints' kingdom. [Genesis 2: 2; Psalm 90: 4; Revelation 17:10]

7.9. Commodian: Immortal after six thousand years

“We shall be immortal when six thousand years are accomplished.” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: Commodianus holds that immortality comes when six thousand years are complete.

7.10. Dionysius of Alexandria: Some said Cerinthus wrote the Revelation

“it is Cerinthus, the founder of the heresy that was called Cerinthian from him, and he desired to attribute his own composition to a name that would carry weight.” — Dionysius of Alexandria, Letters and Treatises (Feltoe translation). Note: Dionysius reports that some rejected the Revelation as Cerinthus's forgery to teach an earthly kingdom. [Revelation 1: 1]

7.11. Dionysius of Alexandria: Inspired, but not the apostle John's

“That he was called John, therefore, and that the writing is John's I will not dispute. For I agree that it is the work of some holy and inspired person but I should not readily assent to his being the Apostle, the son of Zebedee” — Dionysius of Alexandria, Letters and Treatises (Feltoe translation). Note: Dionysius accepts the Revelation as inspired but doubts it is by the apostle John.

[Revelation 22: 7]

7.12. Methodius of Olympus: Seventh thousand year: true tabernacles

“which at length, in the seventh thousand of years, resuming again immortal, we shall celebrate the great feast of true tabernacles in the new and indissoluble creation” — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 9.-Tusiane. Note:

Methodius places the resurrection feast of tabernacles in the seventh thousand of years.

7.13. Eusebius of Caesarea: Judas dated Antichrist under Severus

“another writer, Judas, discoursing about the seventy weeks in Daniel, brings down the chronology to the tenth year of the reign of Severus. He thought that the coming of Antichrist, which was much talked about, was then near.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, Church History. Note: Eusebius records Judas dating Daniel's seventy weeks to Severus's tenth year and expecting Antichrist soon, during persecution. [Daniel 9: 24-27]

7.14. Lactantius: Six thousandth year not yet complete

“know that the six thousandth year is not yet completed, and that when this number is completed the consummation must take place, and the condition of human affairs be remodelled for the better” — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: Lactantius holds that the six-thousandth year of the world is not yet complete, and the consummation will come when it is. [Genesis 2: 2; Psalm 90: 4]

7.15. Aphrahat: The horn's war fulfilled under Antiochus

“At that time the horn made war with the saints, and their power prevailed. And the wicked Antiochus spake wards against the Most High” — Aphrahat, The Demonstrations. Note: Aphrahat says Daniel's horn making war on the saints was fulfilled in the days of the Maccabees, when Antiochus spoke words against the Most High. [Daniel 7: 21]

7.16. Cyril of Jerusalem: 1290 and 1335 days

“And again in another place Daniel says the same thing, And he swear by Him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, and times, and half a time . And some peradventure have referred what follows also to this; namely, a thousand two hundred and ninety days ; and this, Blessed is he that endureth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Daniel's 'time, times and half a time' and the 1290 and 1335 days are mentioned as perhaps referring to the same period, for which believers must hide and flee. [Daniel 12: 7; Daniel 12: 11-12]

7.17. Apocalypse of Thomas: Great signs when Antichrist draws near

“There shall be great signs and wonders in those days when Antichrist draweth near.” — Apocalypse of Thomas, The Apocalypse of Thomas, the Apocalypse of the Virgin and the Revelation of Stephen (James translation); scanned text. Note: The Apocalypse of Thomas places great cosmic signs when Antichrist draws near. [Matthew 24: 29]

7.18. John Chrysostom: 1290 days applied to Antiochus

“From the time of the changing of the continuity” (that is, from the time the sacrifice was abolished) “there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days,” that is, three and a half years and a little more.” — John Chrysostom, Against the Jews. Note: Chrysostom applies Daniel’s 1290 days to Antiochus’s abolition of the sacrifice, three and a half years and a little more; he does not mention Antichrist here. [Daniel 12: 11-12]

7.19. Jerome: Conception, not birth, of Antichrist

“These all are the beginnings of sorrows, is better understood of pains of labour, as it were the conception of the coming of Antichrist, and not of the birth.” — Jerome, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Jerome reads the wars and famines as labour pains marking the conception, not yet the birth, of Antichrist’s coming. [Matthew 24: 8]

7.20. Sulpicius Severus: Daniel foretold Antichrist’s coming

“clearly set forth the future coming of Antichrist” — Sulpicius Severus, The Sacred History. Note: Sulpicius says Daniel’s visions revealed the order of coming ages, the years until Christ’s descent, and clearly the future coming of Antichrist, and refers readers to the book of Daniel. [Daniel 9: 24-27]

7.21. Augustine of Hippo: Abraham’s darkness: affliction under Antichrist

“For just as the affliction of the city of God, such as never was before, which is expected to take place under Antichrist, was signified by Abraham’s horror of great darkness about the going down of the sun, that is, when the end of the world draws nigh” — Augustine of Hippo, The City of God (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine reads Abraham’s great horror of darkness at sunset as signifying the unparalleled affliction of the city of God expected under Antichrist near the end of the world. [Genesis 15: 12-17]

7.22. Augustine of Hippo: Satan loosed three years six months

“But when the short time comes he shall be loosed. For he shall rage with the whole force of himself and his angels for three years and six months” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine says that when the devil is loosed he will rage with all his force for three years and six months, and the saints will have power to withstand him. [Revelation 20: 3,7]

7.23. Augustine of Hippo: Persecution of 3 years 6 months

“This last persecution by Antichrist shall last for three years and six months, as we have already said, and as is affirmed both in the book of Revelation and by Daniel the prophet.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine states that the last persecution by Antichrist will last three years and six months, citing Revelation and Daniel, and discusses how this fits the thousand years. [Revelation 20: 3; Daniel 7: 25]

7.24. Testament of Our Lord: Son of Perdition, the Adversary, foretold

“Wherefore I make known unto you exactly [what are] the things which are about to be, and when he shall arise, that Son of Perdition, the Enemy, the Adversary, and what he is like.” — Testament of Our Lord, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Cooper and Maclean translation); scanned text. Note: The risen Lord promises to show the apostles when the Son of Perdition, the Enemy and Adversary will arise and what he is like. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

7.25. Syriac Miscellanies: End at 6000 years

“As to what thy fraternity wrote, that the Persian writer says, that when 6000 years are fulfilled the end of the world will take place, I wish thee to know that many other Christians since the coming of Christ have held this opinion, as their language shows.” — Syriac Miscellanies, *Syriac Miscellanies*. Note: A Syriac letter defends the ‘Persian writer’ view that the world ends at 6000 years by noting that Bardesan, Hippolytus and Mar Jacob held it too. [2 Peter 3: 8]

7.26. Cave of Treasures: Gog and Magog break out

“At the end of the world and at the final consummation, when men are eating and drinking and marrying wives; and women are given to husbands; when they are planting vineyards and building buildings, and there is neither wicked man nor adversary, on account of the assured tranquillity and certain peace; suddenly the gates of the north shall be opened” — Cave

of Treasures, The Book of the Cave of Treasures (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The peoples including Gog and Magog break out suddenly at the end, in a time of security. [Revelation 20: 8; Matthew 24: 38]

7.27. Gregory the Great: Prosperous for a short time (Daniel 8)

“because Antichrist will go on in his craft, but his craft will be prosperous for a short space of this present life, as was said of him under the person of Antiochus by Daniel” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says Antichrist’s craft will prosper for a short space, citing Daniel 8 on Antiochus as a figure of him. [Daniel 8:12]

7.28. Gregory the Great: Words and swords together

“What a season of persecution will that appear, then, when some rage with words, and others with swords, to pervert the piety of the faithful?” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory describes the coming persecution as one in which some seduce with words while others, backed by worldly powers, enforce them with swords. [Job 41:14]

7.29. Gregory the Great: Persecutors will think they serve Christ

“in the time of the last persecution he studies to excite the minds of the reprobate against the life of the Elect by the flame of cruelty. Then does the deep sea boil as a pot, when he inflames with strong heat the hearts of the lovers of this world, and when those who in this time of peace kept their malice close within itself, then boil over with the heat of most savage persecutions, and with the headlong liberty of open cruelty breathe forth that hatred of ancient envy, which they had long suppressed. But because, when persuaded by deadly error they so serve Antichrist in these doings, as to imagine that they are the more truly doing service to Christ” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says that in the last persecution the reprobate will be inflamed against the elect, some imagining they serve Christ. [Job 41:31]

7.30. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Signs before Gog and Magog

“After the forty years, here are the signs which concern the wicked king: The sources of water and the rivers will be transformed into blood ... because after that, the race contained beyond the sea on the coast of the Arabs will appear, they are Hagog and Magog.” — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, The *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: After forty years signs of water

turned to blood, speaking infants and bleeding fields precede Gog and Magog's arrival. [*Revelation 16: 4; Revelation 20: 8*]

7.31. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Eleventh king: 42 months

“The eleventh of their kings will practise iniquity over all the land; he will ruin the old works. He will persecute those which are on the land, so that nobody is found who lives there or remains there. All men will groan for forty-two months.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The eleventh Ishmaelite king persecutes everyone for forty-two months; a historical tyrant is cast in end-time colours. [*Revelation 11: 2; Revelation 13: 5*]

7.32. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: 18th king: 1260 days

“The eighteenth of their kings, at the beginning of his reign, will work great evils, for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The eighteenth Ishmaelite king afflicts the world for 1260 days. [*Revelation 11: 3*]

7.33. Bede: Torments joined to miracles

“these words, In those days shall be affliction, properly agree with the times of Antichrist, when not only tortures more frequent, and more painful than before are to be heaped on the faithful, but also, what is more terrible, the working of miracles shall accompany those who inflict torments.” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede applies the unequalled affliction properly to the time of Antichrist, when torments will be joined to miracle-working by the persecutors. [*Mark 13: 19; Daniel 12: 7; Revelation 12: 14*]

7.34. Bede: Three and a half years

“But in proportion as this tribulation shall be greater than those which preceded, by so much shall it be shorter. For it is believed, that during three years and a half, as far as may be conjectured from the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelations of John, the Church is to be attacked.” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede says it is believed, from Daniel and Revelation, that the Church will be assailed for three and a half years, and that the severity is matched by brevity. [*Daniel 12: 7; Revelation 11: 2; Revelation 12: 6*]

7.35. Bede: Torments accompanied by miracles

“These words properly fit the times of the Antichrist, when not only will there be torments more frequent than they used to be, inflicted upon the faithful, but (what is worse) the operation of signs will also accompany those who inflict the torments” — Bede, *Commentary on Mark*. Note: Bede says the unmatched tribulation fits Antichrist’s time, when torments will be joined by working of signs, so that the persecutor both rages and provokes belief in Antichrist by miracles. [*Mark 13: 19; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9*]

7.36. Bede: Days shortened to about 3.5 years

“For it is believed that for three and a half years, as can be conjectured from the prophecy of Daniel and the Revelation of St. John, it will wage war against the Church throughout the world.” — Bede, *Commentary on Mark*. Note: Bede says the days are shortened for the elect’s sake, and that the tribulation is believed to last three and a half years, as can be conjectured from Daniel and Revelation. [*Mark 13: 20–22*]

7.37. Bede: Sixth seal: final persecution

“With the opening of the sixth seal, the final persecution is announced, and just as the world was shaken with darkness and fear when the Lord was crucified on the sixth day, it will be so again.” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede says the opening of the sixth seal announces the final persecution, shaking the world as at the Lord’s crucifixion on the sixth day. [*Revelation 6: 11–12*]

7.38. Theophylact: ‘Then’ means Antichrist’s time

“So also here, then may be taken to mean not when Jerusalem shall be made desolate, but about the time of the coming of Antichrist.” — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact says the Lord’s ‘then’ is indefinite and leaps from Jerusalem’s fall to the later time of Antichrist’s coming. [*Mark 13: 21–22; Matthew 24: 23*]

7.39. Solomon of Basra: 2.5 or 3.5 years

“The time of the error of the Antichrist will last two years and a half, but others say three years and six months.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: His deception lasts two and a

half years by one tradition, three and a half by others. [Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:14]

8. WHAT IS THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST, AND WHAT IS HIS NAME?

The most striking thing about the early Fathers on 666 is their restraint. Irenaeus, who studied under men who had known John's own disciples, knows the reading 666, defends it against the variant 616, and offers solutions he calls probable. But he refuses to assert a name, says that if the name had needed to be known John would have given it, and warns that the person who fixes on a wrong name will be an easy prey for the real one. Hippolytus and Victorinus do the same: they list names that add up and decline to claim any. The Fathers read 666 as a sum, a test of worship and a warning, not as a puzzle to be solved by a date.

In this chapter

This question draws on 32 quotations from 9 voices. 32 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 0 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Do not guess; wait (Irenaeus, Hippolytus)

Irenaeus says it is safer to wait for the prophecy to be fulfilled than to guess, since many names fit the number. He adds that anyone who fixes on a wrong name risks accepting the real Antichrist, because he will not match the expectation. He refuses to name him, and says the number is given so believers may avoid him when he appears, while the name is withheld as unworthy of the Spirit's proclamation. Hippolytus says the name is only conjectural now and will be clear when Antichrist appears; believers must be prepared rather than deceived.

The guesses they did make (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Victorinus, Bede)

Irenaeus finds Lateinos "very probable" because the Latins now rule, and Teitan credible. Hippolytus offers Titan, Evanthas and Latinus, and will not assert any. Victorinus offers Teitan (the sun) and Diclux as an antiphrase, with Antemos and a Gothic-sounding name in a Greek manuscript; Bede repeats Titan and mentions Primasius's alternatives. None of them stakes anything on a choice.

A number that sums up the apostasy (Irenaeus, Neale and Littledale)

Irenaeus reads 666 as the summing-up of the whole apostasy of six thousand years and says the beast recapitulates all iniquity. He finds a foreshadowing in Nebuchadnezzar's image, sixty cubits by six. The compilers Neale and Littledale, later, call 666 the culmination of temptation, since six is the number of temptation.

666 or 616? the manuscripts (Irenaeus)

Irenaeus knows the variant 616, which modern editions have found in early manuscripts, and blames copyists' error. He defends 666 as the reading found in the best ancient copies and confirmed by those who had seen John face to face. Eusebius preserves the argument.

The mark: a test of worship (Hippolytus, Lactantius, Pseudo-Hippolytus)

In the Fathers the mark is a test of loyalty, not a technology. Hippolytus: Antichrist will require incense-altars everywhere so that no saint can buy or sell without sacrificing. Lactantius: those who refuse flee to the mountains or are tortured, even burned wrapped in the books of the prophets. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon has the mark prevent making the sign of the cross and tentatively reads 666 as the word "I deny", given in the formula of apostasy.

Later applications (Samuel of Kalamoun, Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Bede)

Medieval Copts applied the number to the rulers they knew: Samuel of Kalamoun says the last Arab ruler has a name that totals 666, and the Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel gives it to its seventeenth and nineteenth Ishmaelite kings. Bede, by contrast, says the number is a man's number, so that Antichrist is not the devil or a demon but a man in whom Satan will dwell bodily.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The beast and his number (Rev 13: 1-18)

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. 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 author-

ity. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword ... [Revelation 13:1-18]

The woman on the scarlet beast (Rev 17:1-18)

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the ... [Revelation 17:1-18]

The image and the four kingdoms (Dan 2: 31–45)

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all ... [Daniel 2: 31–45]

The sealed tribes (Rev 7: 4–8)

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. [Revelation 7: 4–8]

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

8.1. Irenaeus of Lyons: 666 sums up the apostasy

“and the number is six hundred and sixty-six,” that is, six times a hundred, six times ten, and six units. [He gives this] as a summing up of the whole of that apostasy which has taken place during six thousand years.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: 666 is the summing-up of the entire apostasy of six thousand years. [*Revelation 13:16-18*]

8.2. Irenaeus of Lyons: Recapitulation of all wickedness

“And there is therefore in this beast, when he comes, a recapitulation made of all sorts of iniquity and of every deceit, in order that all apostate power, flowing into and being shut up in him, may be sent into the furnace of fire. Fittingly, therefore, shall his name possess the number six hundred and sixty-six, since he sums up in his own person all the commixture of wickedness which took place previous to the deluge” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The beast recapitulates all iniquity so that apostate power can be consigned to fire together; his number 666 reflects the wickedness gathered since before the deluge. [*Revelation 13:18; Genesis 7:6; Daniel 3:1*]

8.3. Irenaeus of Lyons: Nebuchadnezzar's image foreshadows him

“For that image, taken as a whole, was a prefiguring of this man's coming, decreeing that he should undoubtedly himself alone be worshipped by all men. Thus, then, the six hundred years of Noah ... and the number of the cubits of the image for which these just men were sent into the fiery furnace, do indicate the number of the name of that man in whom is concentrated the whole apostasy of six thousand years” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Nebuchadnezzar's image (60 by 6 cubits) and Noah's 600 years foreshadow the number of Antichrist, who demands to be the only one worshipped. [*Daniel 3:1-23; Genesis 7:6*]

8.4. Irenaeus of Lyons: 666 attested by eyewitnesses

“this number being found in all the most approved and ancient copies [of the Apocalypse], and those men who saw John face to face bearing their testimony [to it]” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus de-

fends 666 as the reading found in the best ancient copies and attested by those who had seen John face to face. [Revelation 13:18]

8.5. Irenaeus of Lyons: Rejects 616 as copyist error

“I do not know how it is that some have erred following the ordinary mode of speech, and have vitiated the middle number in the name, deducting the amount of fifty from it, so that instead of six decads they will have it that there is but one. [I am inclined to think that this occurred through the fault of the copyists]” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus knows the variant 616 and blames copyists' error for it. [Revelation 13:18]

8.6. Irenaeus of Lyons: Warning against vain name-guessing

“But as for those who, for the sake of vainglory, lay it down for certain that names containing the spurious number are to be accepted, and affirm that this name, hit upon by themselves, is that of him who is to come; such persons shall not come forth without loss, because they have led into error both themselves and those who confided in them.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Those who confidently assert a name for Antichrist from the wrong number mislead themselves and others. [Revelation 22:18-19]

8.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Wrong guess makes one easy prey

“Moreover, another danger, by no means trifling, shall overtake those who falsely presume that they know the name of Antichrist. For if these men assume one [number], when this [Antichrist] shall come having another, they will be easily led away by him, as supposing him not to be the expected one, who must be guarded against.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Whoever fixes on a wrong name risks accepting the real Antichrist, because he will not match the expectation. [Revelation 13:18]

8.8. Irenaeus of Lyons: Wait for the ten kings first

“let them await, in the first place, the division of the kingdom into ten; then, in the next place, when these kings are reigning, and beginning to set their affairs in order, and advance their kingdom, [let them learn] to acknowledge that he who shall come claiming the kingdom for himself, and shall terrify those men of whom we have been speaking, having a name containing the aforesaid number, is truly the abomination of desolation.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Believers should wait for the ten-fold division of the kingdom; the one then claiming the kingdom with a

name of that number is the abomination of desolation. [Revelation 13:18; Daniel 7:24]

8.9. Irenaeus of Lyons: Wait rather than guess

“It is therefore more certain, and less hazardous, to await the fulfilment of the prophecy, than to be making surmises, and casting about for any names that may present themselves, inasmuch as many names can be found possessing the number mentioned; and the same question will, after all, remain unsolved.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Waiting for the prophecy’s fulfilment is safer than guessing, since many names fit the number. [Revelation 13:18]

8.10. Irenaeus of Lyons: Lateinos: probable but not certain

“Then also Lateinos (Lateinos) has the number six hundred and sixty-six; and it is a very probable [solution], this being the name of the last kingdom [of the four seen by Daniel]. For the Latins are they who at present bear rule: I will not, however, make any boast over this [coincidence]. Teitan too” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus calls Lateinos a very probable solution since the Latins now rule, but declines to boast of it; he also considers Teitan. [Revelation 13:18]

8.11. Irenaeus of Lyons: Teitan fits the number

“Teitan too, (Teitan, the first syllable being written with the two Greek vowels e and i), among all the names which are found among us, is rather worthy of credit. For it has in itself the predicted number, and is composed of six letters, each syllable containing three letters” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Teitan is another name equal to 666, six letters in two three-letter syllables, which Irenaeus finds credible. [Revelation 13:18]

8.12. Irenaeus of Lyons: Declines to name him

“We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen no very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian’s reign.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus refuses to state the name positively; had it needed to be known now, John would have revealed it, since the vision was seen near the end of Domitian’s reign. [Revelation 13:18]

8.13. Irenaeus of Lyons: Number given, name withheld

“But he indicates the number of the name now, that when this man comes we may avoid him, being aware who he is: the name, however, is suppressed, because it is not worthy of being proclaimed by the Holy Spirit.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The number is given so believers may avoid him when he appears, while his name is withheld as unworthy of the Spirit’s proclamation. [Revelation 13:18; Revelation 17:8]

8.14. Irenaeus of Lyons: Irenaeus: the name is not declared now

“Irenaeus, in the fifth book of his work *Against Heresies*, where he discusses the number of the name of Antichrist which is given in the so-called Apocalypse of John, speaks as follows concerning him: “If it were necessary for his name to be proclaimed openly at the present time, it would have been declared by him who saw the revelation.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Church History* (quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea). Note: Eusebius reports Irenaeus: Antichrist’s name is not openly declared, since the Revelation was seen near the end of Domitian’s reign. [Revelation 13:18]

8.15. Irenaeus of Lyons: Irenaeus defends the number 666

“As these things are so, and this number is found in all the approved and ancient copies, and those who saw John face to face confirm it, and reason teaches us that the number of the name of the beast, according to the mode of calculation among the Greeks, appears in its letters.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Church History* (quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea). Note: Eusebius quotes Irenaeus defending the number of the beast as found in the ancient copies and confirmed by eyewitnesses of John. [Revelation 13:18]

8.16. Irenaeus of Lyons: Irenaeus refuses to name him

“We are not bold enough to speak confidently of the name of Antichrist. For if it were necessary that his name should be declared clearly at the present time, it would have been announced by him who saw the revelation.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Church History* (quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea). Note: Irenaeus, quoted by Eusebius, declines to speak confidently of Antichrist’s name. [Revelation 13:18]

8.17. Hippolytus of Rome: Mark = compulsory sacrifice

“For, being full of guile, and exalting himself against the servants of God, with the wish to afflict them and persecute them out of the world, because

they give not glory to him, he will order incense-pans to be set up by all everywhere, that no man among the saints may be able to buy or sell without first sacrificing; for this is what is meant by the mark received upon the right hand.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Antichrist will require incense-altars everywhere so that no saint can buy or sell without sacrificing; this is the mark on the right hand. [*Revelation 13: 16-17*]

8.18. Hippolytus of Rome: Name only conjectural

“With respect to his name, it is not in our power to explain it exactly, as the blessed John understood it and was instructed about it, but only to give a conjectural account of it; for when he appears, the blessed one will show us what we seek to know.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus admits the name cannot be explained exactly now; it will become clear when Antichrist appears. [*Revelation 13: 18*]

8.19. Hippolytus of Rome: Titan, Evanthas or Latinus

“Many names indeed we find, the letters of which are the equivalent of this number: such as, for instance, the word Titan, an ancient and notable name; or Evanthas, for it too makes up the same number; and many others which might be found. ... it is manifest to all that those who at present still hold the power are Latins. If, then, we take the name as the name of a single man, it becomes Latinus.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Titan and Evanthas also total 666, but since the Latins hold power the name of a single man would be Latinus; Hippolytus will not assert it as certain. [*Revelation 13: 18*]

8.20. Hippolytus of Rome: Be prepared, not deceived

“Wherefore we ought neither to give it out as if this were certainly his name, nor again ignore the fact that he may not be otherwise designated. But having the mystery of God in our heart, we ought in fear to keep faithfully what has been told us by the blessed prophets, in order that when those things come to pass, we may be prepared for them, and not deceived.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Believers should not assert a certain name, but guard the prophets' teaching in fear so as to be prepared and not deceived. [*Revelation 13: 18*]

8.21. Hippolytus of Rome: Programme of the treatise

“find out from them what, and of what manner, the coming of Antichrist is; on what occasion and at what time that impious one shall be revealed; and

whence and from what tribe (he shall come); and what his name is, which is indicated by the number in the Scripture; and how he shall work error among the people, gathering them from the ends of the earth; and (how) he shall stir up tribulation and persecution against the saints; and how he shall glorify himself as God; and what his end shall be” — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: Hippolytus states his programme: Antichrist's coming, time, tribe, name and number, deception, persecution, self-deification and end are to be drawn from Scripture.

8.22. Victorinus of Pettau: Teitan and Diclux (by antiphrase)

“For teitanhas this number, which the Gentiles call Sol and Phoebus ... which name if you wish to turn into Latin, it is understood by the antiphrase Diclux ... by which name, expressed by anti-phrases, we understand Antichrist, who, although he be cut off from the supernal light, and deprived thereof, yet transforms himself into an angel of light, daring to call himself light.” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Victorinus finds Teitan (the sun) for 666 and reads the Latin Diclux as an antiphrase for one cut off from light yet posing as an angel of light. [Revelation 13:18]

8.23. Victorinus of Pettau: Antemos and Genserikos

“Moreover, we find in a certain Greek codex antemoj, which letters being reckoned up, you will find to give the number as above ... Moreover, there is another name in Gothic of him, which will be evident of itself, that is, gen-shrikoj” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: He also offers Antemos from a Greek manuscript and a Gothic-sounding name Genserikos as other 666-names. [Revelation 13:18]

8.24. Victorinus of Pettau: Golden image in the Jerusalem temple

“Magicians do these things, by the aid of the apostate angels, even to this day. He shall cause also that a golden image of Antichrist shall be placed in the temple at Jerusalem, and that the apostate angel should enter, and thence utter voices and oracles. Moreover, he himself shall contrive that his servants and children should receive as a mark on their foreheads, or on their right hands, the number of his name” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: A golden image of Antichrist will be placed in the Jerusalem temple, indwelt by an apostate angel that speaks

oracles, and his servants receive the mark of his name's number. [*Revelation 13: 13-17; Daniel 11: 45*]

8.25. Lactantius: Mark; burning; 42 months

“As many as shall believe him and unite themselves to him, shall be marked by him as sheep; but they who shall refuse his mark will either flee to the mountains, or, being seized, will be slain with studied tortures. He will also enwrap righteous men with the books of the prophets, and thus burn them; and power will be given him to desolate the whole earth for forty-two months.” — Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes* Book 7. Note: Followers receive his mark; refusers flee to the mountains or are tortured, even burned wrapped in prophetic books; he rules 42 months. [*Revelation 13: 16-17; Revelation 13: 5*]

8.26. Pseudo-Hippolytus: 666 read as 'I deny'

“he will put his mark on their right hand and on their forehead, that no one may put the sign of the honourable cross upon his forehead with his right hand; but his hand is bound. ... And I have an opinion as to this number, though I do not know the matter for certain; for many names have been found in this number when it is expressed in writing. Still we say that perhaps the scription of this same seal will give us the word I deny.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: His mark prevents making the cross-sign; the author tentatively reads 666 as the word 'I deny', given in the formula of apostasy, while admitting uncertainty. [*Revelation 13: 16-18*]

8.27. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Last Arab king numbered 666

“The last of the kings of the hegira will bear the name of LASMARINI [or LASMARISU]; his name in numbers gives six hundred and sixty six; let him understand who is able to understand [lit. he who has a heart]. He will issue from two nations.” — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: The last Muslim ('hegira') ruler has a name that totals 666 and comes from two nations. [*Revelation 13: 18*]

8.28. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: 19th king, mixed race, 666

“He will be the child of a double race, because his father is an Israelite, his mother is Roman . There will be war in Egypt and Syria for twenty one months. Their swords will fall on themselves in this war. This is the king whose name makes the number 666; he will be called by these three names:

Mametios, Khalle and Sarapidos.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The nineteenth king, of mixed Israelite and Roman parentage, bears the number 666 and three names (Mametios, Khalle, Sarapidos). [Revelation 13:18]

8.29. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: 17th king numbered 666

“As regards the seventeenth of their kings, a war will break out between him and his nation; it is him whose name makes the number 666.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The seventeenth Ishmaelite king is said to bear the number 666. [Revelation 13:18]

8.30. Bede: A man in whom Satan dwells bodily

“For it is the number of a man, so that we do not think, according to some opinions, that it is either the devil or a demon, but one of the men in whom Satan will dwell bodily. For he is the man of sin, the son of perdition.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede says the number of the beast is a man's number, so that Antichrist is not the devil or a demon but a man in whom Satan will dwell bodily, the man of sin. [Revelation 13:17-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:3]

8.31. Bede: 666 as Titan; Solomon's 666 talents

“This number is said to be found among the Greeks in the name Titan, that is, giant, as follows: T equals 300, E equals 5, I equals 10, T equals 300, A equals 1, N equals 50. It is thought that the Antichrist will assume this name as if he surpasses all in power, boasting that he is the one of whom it is written: He rejoiced as a giant to run his course, from one end of the heaven is his going forth, etc. (Psalm XVIII). Primasius also mentions another name that completes the same number ... Moreover, the weight of gold that came to Solomon each year was six hundred sixty-six talents.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede gives Titan as a name totalling 666, mentions Primasius's alternative names, and notes that Solomon's yearly 666 talents of gold is a tribute the tyrant will presume to demand. [Revelation 13:18]

8.32. Neale and Littledale (compilers): 666 culminates temptation

“and the whole culminates in the 666, the mark of the Beast, the most fearful of the many tempters that shall ever rise up against the Church.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers treat six as the number of temptation, culminating

in 666, the mark of the Beast, the most fearful of the Church's tempters.

[*Psalm 19: 7; Revelation 13: 18*]

9. WHO ARE THE TWO WITNESSES, AND WHO COMES BEFORE HIM?

Malachi promises that Elijah will come before "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal 4:5), and Revelation 11 has two witnesses who prophesy 1,260 days, are killed by the beast and rise after three and a half days. Almost every Father who treats Antichrist at length puts Elijah on the other side of the ledger: Antichrist is the counterfeit Christ, Elijah the true forerunner. The usual partner is Enoch, since both were taken up without dying. Others name Jeremiah, John the apostle, or no one. Gradually the conversion of the Jews through Elijah's preaching becomes part of the pattern.

In this chapter

This question draws on 70 quotations from 31 voices. 61 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 9 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Enoch and Elijah (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Cosmas, Bede, Gregory the Great)

Tertullian is the earliest to say that Enoch and Elijah, translated without dying, are reserved for death at Antichrist's hands, and that their blood will extinguish him. Hippolytus builds it into his whole scheme: the two witnesses oppose Antichrist as Moses and Aaron opposed Pharaoh. Cosmas, Bede and Gregory the Great repeat it, and Neale and Littledale call it the Church's constant tradition.

Other partners: Jeremiah, John, three prophets, four (Victorinus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Theophylact, History of Joseph)

Not everyone agrees on the second witness. Victorinus reports that the ancients took Jeremiah to be Elijah's companion. The Pseudo-Hippolytan sermon names three, Enoch, Elijah and John the Divine, and Theophylact reports a view that John still lives to be killed with Elijah. The History of Joseph the Carpenter gives four who are slain: Enoch, Elias, Schila and Tabitha.

Elijah turns the Jews to Christ (Chrysostom, Augustine, Bede, John of Damascus, Gregory the Great)

From Chrysostom and Augustine onward it becomes the usual expectation that Elijah himself, not only John the Baptist in his spirit, will return before the judgment, and that the Jews will believe through his preaching. Augustine calls this a familiar belief of the faithful and sets the order: Elias comes, the Jews believe, Antichrist persecutes, Christ judges. Bede and John of Damascus repeat it, and Gregory the Great adds that the converted Jews will themselves be persecuted.

What they do: preach, convict, strengthen (Hippolytus, Cosmas, Solomon of Basra, Timothy I of Baghdad, Chrysostom)

The witnesses preach repentance for 1,260 days in sackcloth (Hippolytus). Their work is to expose the deceiver: Cosmas says Elijah will convict Antichrist of deception and pride and lead men back; Solomon of Basra has Elijah come from Paradise to expose him; Timothy I of Baghdad told the Caliph al-Mahdi that Elijah will rebuke Antichrist and announce Christ's second coming. Chrysostom says Elijah comes to strengthen the faithful.

Killed, and raised after three and a half days (Hippolytus, Coptic Daniel, Descent into Hell, Neale and Littledale)

The witnesses are killed by the beast from the abyss, which Hippolytus identifies with Antichrist, and then rise and are caught up to meet the Lord. The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel has them lie dead in Jerusalem for three and a half days, and the Latin Descent into Hell says they rise after that time. Neale and Littledale foresee a final triumph of the world when they are slain, and say the end comes at once after their death.

Why Elijah and Enoch are still alive (Augustine, Cosmas)

The expectation rests on a belief that they never died. Augustine says Elias is expected before the Judge because there is good reason to believe he is now alive, taken up in a fiery chariot. Cosmas calls Elijah, still living, reserved as leader against Antichrist.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Elijah the prophet (Mal 4: 5-6)

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. [*Malachi 4: 5-6*]

The two witnesses and the beast from the pit (Rev 11: 1-13)

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in ... [*Revelation 11: 1-13*]

The two olive trees (Zech 4: 11-14)

Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. [*Zechariah 4: 11-14*]

The sealed tribes (Rev 7: 4–8)

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. [Revelation 7: 4–8]

The time of trouble and the days (Dan 12: 1–13)

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood ... [Daniel 12: 1–13]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Hippolytus of Rome, Sixty-nine weeks done; final week (6.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Rebuilds Jerusalem; taken for Christ (6.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Last

week: Enoch and Elijah preach (6.13); Lactantius, Syrian king, evil spirit's offspring (2.22); John Cassian, Abomination in the Church (6.47); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Enoch exposes the Son of Iniquity (2.40); Bede, The two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah (6.55); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Every sinner's heart rehearses it (13.55); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Daily sacrifice taken away (6.60).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

9.1. Justin Martyr: Elijah returns at Christ's glorious coming

"We know this will happen when our Lord Jesus Christ comes from heaven in glory. Before his first appearing, the Spirit of God who was in Elijah went ahead as a herald, in John" — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Elijah's coming is future, at Christ's glorious return; John came in Elijah's spirit before the first coming. [*Matthew 17:11*]

9.2. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: The Lord's salvation wars against Beliar

"And there shall arise unto you from the tribe of [Judah and of] Levi the salvation of the Lord; And he shall make war against Beliar. And execute an everlasting vengeance on our enemies" — Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: Salvation arises from Judah and Levi, who wars against Beliar and executes vengeance. [*Genesis 49:18*]

9.3. Tertullian: Enoch and Elijah reserved to die

"Enoch no doubt was translated, and so was Elijah; nor did they experience death: it was postponed, (and only postponed,) most certainly: they are reserved for the suffering of death, that by their blood they may extinguish Antichrist." — Tertullian, A Treatise on the Soul. Note: Enoch and Elijah, translated without dying, are reserved for death at Antichrist's hands, and their blood will extinguish him. [*Revelation 11: 3-12; Hebrews 9: 27*]

9.4. Tertullian: Elijah, Antichrist, Babylon not yet

"No one has as yet fallen in with Elias; no one has as yet escaped from Antichrist; no one has as yet had to bewail the downfall of Babylon." — Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh. Note: Tertullian lists unfulfilled end

events, including meeting Elijah, escaping Antichrist and the fall of Babylon, to show the resurrection has not yet occurred. [Revelation 18]

9.5. Hippolytus of Rome: Enoch and Elias oppose him

“These two prophets will stand up against Antichrist, even as Moses and Aaron stood up against Pharaoh and the Egyptians. These things then are to be in the half of the week, when Antichrist will scatter all men, so that there shall not be found two or three together to assemble, to offer sacrifice to God.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Enoch and Elias oppose Antichrist as Moses and Aaron opposed Pharaoh, while he scatters believers so that they cannot assemble to worship. [Revelation 11:3-6; Malachi 4:5]

9.6. Hippolytus of Rome: Witnesses killed and raised

“When then these are killed there [ib. 7] by the false Christ, afterwards they are to stand up, in presence of many, and are to be caught upon the clouds to meet our Lord” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The false Christ kills the two witnesses, who then rise before many and are caught up to meet the Lord. [Revelation 11:7-12; 1 Thessalonians 4:17]

9.7. Hippolytus of Rome: Preach 1260 days

“In the half of the week, said John, Enoch and Elias are to receive power [ib. 6], and are to preach a thousand two hundred and threescore days girt with sackcloth [ib. 3], and to teach repentance to the people and the Gentiles.” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The two witnesses preach repentance to Israel and the nations for 1260 days. [Revelation 11:3]

9.8. Hippolytus of Rome: Elijah precedes the Lord's return

“It is a matter of course that His forerunners must appear first, as He says by Malachi and the angel, “I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the day of the Lord, the great and notable day, comes ... These, then, shall come and proclaim the manifestation of Christ that is to be from heaven; and they shall also perform signs and wonders, in order that men may be put to shame and turned to repentance for their surpassing wickedness and impiety.” — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: Elijah and his companion will precede Christ's heavenly appearing, preaching and working signs to bring men to repentance. [Malachi 4:5-6; Revelation 11]

9.9. Hippolytus of Rome: Beast kills the two witnesses

“the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them,” because they will not give glory to Antichrist. For this is meant by the little horn that grows up. He, being now elated in heart, begins to exalt himself, and to glorify himself as God, persecuting the saints and blaspheming Christ” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The beast from the abyss kills the two witnesses for refusing to glorify Antichrist, the little horn, who then exalts himself as God and persecutes the saints. [*Revelation 11: 3-7; Daniel 7: 8,20*]

9.10. Hippolytus of Rome: Enoch and Elijah against Antichrist

“There come two prophets, Enoch and Elias, and these are the two olive trees he speaks of [ib. 4], even as Zacharias spoke of them [*Zech. iv. 3, 11, 14*]. ... These two prophets will stand up against Antichrist, even as Moses and Aaron stood up against Pharaoh and the Egyptians.” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: The two witnesses are Enoch and Elijah, who oppose Antichrist as Moses and Aaron opposed Pharaoh. [*Revelation 11: 3-12; Zechariah 4: 3; Mark 9:12*]

9.11. Hippolytus of Rome: Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah

“No other kingdom is to persecute the saints, save this alone from which the horn is to spring up at the last, which is Antichrist, who is to kill Enoch and Elias. And after these things that is to come to pass which Esaias said; Behold the Lord out of His sanctuary send-eth forth His sword, great and strong, against the dragon, the crooked serpent” — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: The only kingdom to persecute the saints is the one from which the horn arises; Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah and is then struck by the Lord's sword. [*Daniel 7:3,8,21; Revelation 11: 7; Isaiah 27:1*]

9.12. Commodian: Nero raised; Elijah half, Nero half

“Then, doubtless, the world shall be finished when he shall appear. He himself shall divide the globe into three ruling powers, when, moreover, Nero shall be raised up from hell, Elias shall first come to seal the beloved ones; at which things the region of Africa and the northern nation, the whole earth on all sides, for seven years shall tremble. But Elias shall occupy the half of the time, Nero shall occupy half.” — Commodian, *On Christian Discipline*. Note: Commodian expects Nero raised from hell as the Antichrist figure,

with Elijah first sealing the elect; a seven-year period split evenly between Elijah and Nero. [Revelation 11; Revelation 13: 3,14-15]

9.13. Commodian: Hidden tribes return with Christ

“The Almighty Christ descends to His elect, who have been darkened from our view for so long a time—they have become so many thousands—that is the true heavenly people.” — Commodian, On Christian Discipline. Note: Commodian expects Christ to come to a hidden remnant of Israel’s lost tribes who will return with Him against the wicked king. [Romans 11: 26]

9.14. Commodian: Nero raised from hell, Elias first

“Then, doubtless, the world shall be finished when he shall appear. He himself shall divide the globe into three ruling powers, when, moreover, Nero shall be raised up from hell, Elias shall first come to seal the beloved ones” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: Commodianus ties the end to Antichrist’s appearance, with Nero raised from hell and Elias first sealing the beloved. [Revelation 11: 3; Revelation 13: 3]

9.15. Commodian: Seven years: Elias half, Nero half

“for seven years shall tremble. But Elias shall occupy the half of the time, Nero shall occupy half.” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: The seven years are divided: Elias takes half, Nero the other half. [Revelation 11: 3; Revelation 12: 6]

9.16. Victorinus of Pettau: Elijah precursor; recalls Jews

“He speaks of Elias the prophet, who is the precursor of the times of Antichrist, for the restoration and establishment of the churches from the great and intolerable persecution. ... to recall the Jews to the faith of the people that succeed them.” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The angel from the east with the seal is Elijah, forerunner of Antichrist’s times, who recalls the Jews to faith. [Revelation 7: 2; Malachi 4: 5-6]

9.17. Victorinus of Pettau: Elijah with Jeremiah, not Enoch

“Many think that there is Elisha, or Moses, with Elijah; but both of these died; while the death of Elijah is not heard of, with whom all our ancients have believed that it was Jeremiah. For even the very word spoken to him testifies to him, saying, “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee” —

Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Victorinus reports that the ancients held Jeremiah to be Elijah's companion among the two witnesses, since only deathless figures would qualify and Jeremiah was ordained a prophet to the nations. [*Revelation 11: 3-6; Jeremiah 1: 5*]

9.18. Victorinus of Pettau: 144,000 believe through Elijah

“the gift of prophets-was given to that Catholic Church, whence in the last times a hundred and forty-four thousands of men should believe on the preaching of Elias; ... let them go to that place which they have ready, and let them be supported there for three years and six months from the presence of the devil.” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: The woman's wings are the gift of prophets: 144,000 will believe through Elijah's preaching, and believers in Judea flee for 3.5 years.

[*Revelation 12: 6,14; Matthew 24: 16*]

9.19. Victorinus of Pettau: After Elijah, the devil cast down

“This is the beginning of Antichrist yet previously Elias must prophesy, and there must be times of peace. And afterwards, when the three years and six months are completed in the preaching of Elias, he also must be cast down from heaven, where up till that time he had had the power of ascending; and all the apostate angels, as well as Antichrist, must be roused up from hell.” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Satan is cast to earth after Elijah's 3.5 years, and Antichrist and the apostate angels are raised from hell; Paul's falling away is quoted for this.

[*Revelation 12: 7-9; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3*]

9.20. Descent into Hell (Latin, first version): Enoch and Elias reserved to oppose him

“Here also even until now we have not tasted death, but have been reserved to the coming of Antichrist, by divine signs and wonders to do battle with him, and, being killed by him in Jerusalem, after three days and half a day to be taken up alive again in the clouds.” — Descent into Hell (Latin, first version), Christ's Descent into Hell: Latin. First Version. Note: Enoch and Elias, kept from death, are reserved to fight Antichrist, be killed in Jerusalem and rise after three and a half days. [*Revelation 11: 3-12*]

9.21. History of Joseph the Carpenter: Antichrist slays four witnesses

“For Antichrist will slay four bodies, and will pour out their blood like water, because of the reproach to which they shall expose him, and the igno-

miny with which they, in their lifetime, shall brand him when they reveal his impiety.” — History of Joseph the Carpenter, The History of Joseph the Carpenter. Note: Antichrist will slay four who reveal his impiety, shedding their blood like water. [Revelation 11: 7]

9.22. *History of Joseph the Carpenter: Enoch, Elias, Schila and Tabitha*

“They are Enoch, Elias, Schila, and Tabitha.” — History of Joseph the Carpenter, The History of Joseph the Carpenter. Note: The four slain by Antichrist are named as Enoch, Elias, Schila and Tabitha.

9.23. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: Enoch, Elijah and John the Divine*

“and His second, in which He is to come in glory, will exhibit Enoch, and Elias, and John the Divine. ... For He will not leave us even then without prophets, but will send them to us for our instruction and assurance” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Unlike Hippolytus's treatise, this work names three end-time prophets: Enoch, Elijah and John the Divine. [Revelation 11: 3; Daniel 9: 27]

9.24. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: Week of seven years; prophets first*

“For by one week he indicates the showing forth of the seven years which shall be in the last times. And the half of the week the two prophets, along with John, will take for the purpose of proclaiming to all the world the advent of Antichrist, that is to say, for a “thousand two hundred and sixty days clothed in sackcloth” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Daniel's week is seven years at the end; the prophets preach in the first half, 1,260 days, announcing the advent of Antichrist. [Daniel 9: 27; Revelation 11: 3]

9.25. *Pseudo-Hippolytus: The three prophets are killed*

“And when they have proclaimed all these things they will fall on the sword, cut off by the accuser the beast that came up out of the abyss would make war with them, namely with Enoch, Elias, and John, and would overcome them, and kill them, because of their refusal to give glory to the accuser. that is the little horn that sprang up.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: The prophets are killed by the accuser (Antichrist), the beast from the abyss, for refusing to give him glory.

[Revelation 11: 5-7; Daniel 7: 8]

9.26. Pseudo-Hippolytus: The formula of denial

“I deny the Maker of heaven and earth, I deny the baptism, I deny my (former) service, and attach myself to thee, and I believe in thee. For this is what the prophets Enoch and Elias will preach: Believe not the enemy who is to come and be seen; for he is an adversary and corrupter and son of perdition” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: The seal requires a formal denial of Creator, baptism and prior service; Enoch and Elijah preach against believing the coming enemy. [*Revelation 13:15*]

9.27. Revelation of John (apocryphal): Three years; Enoch and Elias killed

“Three years shall those times be; and I will make the three years like three months ... And then I shall send forth Enoch and Elias to convict him; and they shall show him to be a liar and a deceiver; and he shall kill them at the altar” — *Revelation of John (apocryphal)*, *Revelation of John*. Note: His time lasts three years, shortened; Enoch and Elias convict him as a liar and he kills them at the altar. [*Revelation 11:3-7*]

9.28. Cyril of Jerusalem: Deliverance of the elect

“to the end that having toiled for a little while they may inherit the eternal kingdom of heaven ... And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book (manifestly, the book of life); and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament” — Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*. Note: After the tribulation, those faithful in the time of Antichrist inherit the eternal kingdom; Cyril cites Daniel on the deliverance of those found written in the book and the resurrection. [*Daniel 12:1-3*]

9.29. John Chrysostom: Elias precedes second advent

“in which He shews that Elias will come before His second advent. For the Scriptures declare two advents of Christ, namely, one which has taken place, and another which is to come; but the Lord asserts that Elias is the forerunner of the second advent.” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom says Christ’s answer shows Elias will come before the second advent, being its forerunner, as John was of the first. [*Mark 9:12; Malachi 4:5*]

9.30. *John Chrysostom: Elias himself corrects Jewish unbelief*

“He speaks of Elias himself in his own proper person, who indeed shall restore all things, in that he shall correct the unbelief of the Jews, who shall then be to be found” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom says Elias himself, not only John, will come before the second coming and correct the unbelief of the Jews of that time. [*Matthew 17:11; Malachi 4:5*]

9.31. *John Chrysostom: Elijah comes against him*

“For what will he not then work? He will change and confound all things, both by his commandments, and by the fear of him. He will be terrible in every way, from his power, from his cruelty, from his unlawful commandments ... For Elijah too will then come to give confidence to the faithful, and this Christ says; “Elijah cometh, and shall restore all things.” (Matt. xvii. 11.) Therefore it is said, “In the spirit and power of Elijah.” (Luke i. 17.) For he neither wrought signs nor wonders, as Elijah did. For “John,” it is said, “did no miracle, but all things which John spake of this Man were true.” How then was it “in the spirit and power of Elijah”? That is, he will take upon him the same ministry. As the one was the forerunner of His first Coming, so will the other be of His second and glorious Coming, and for this he is reserved” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Thessalonians*. Note: Chrysostom expects Antichrist to change and confound all things, terribly; he says Elijah will come to strengthen the faithful as forerunner of Christ's second coming. [*Matthew 17:11; Luke 1:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:12*]

9.32. *John Chrysostom: Elias still to come*

“Elias indeed cometh then, before my second advent; and now too is Elias come;” so calling John. In this sense Elias is come: but if thou wouldest seek the Tishbite, he is coming.” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* (part 2 of 3). Note: Chrysostom says John fulfilled Elias in one sense, but the Tishbite himself is still coming before the Lord's second advent. [*Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:11*]

9.33. *Augustine of Hippo: Elijah restores those Antichrist overthrew*

“Or; He shall restore all things, that is those whom the persecution of Antichrist shall have overthrown” — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas)

nas); scanned text. Note: Augustine reads Elijah's restoring of all things as restoring those overthrown by Antichrist's persecution. [*Matthew 17:11; Malachi 4:5*]

9.34. Augustine of Hippo: Elias converts the Jews

"It is a familiar theme in the conversation and heart of the faithful, that in the last days before the judgment the Jews shall believe in the true Christ, that is, our Christ, by means of this great and admirable prophet Elias who shall expound the law to them." — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says it is a familiar belief of the faithful that, before the judgment, the Jews will believe in Christ through the prophet Elias, who will expound the law to them. [*Malachi 4:5-6*]

9.35. Augustine of Hippo: Elias is alive now

"For not without reason do we hope that before the coming of our Judge and Saviour Elias shall come, because we have good reason to believe that he is now alive; for, as Scripture most distinctly informs us, he was taken up from this life in a chariot of fire." — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says Elias is expected before the Judge because there is good reason to believe he is now alive, having been taken up in a chariot of fire. [*Malachi 4:5; 2 Kings 2:11*]

9.36. Augustine of Hippo: Order of last events: Elias, Jews, Antichrist

"And at or in connection with that judgment the following events shall come to pass, as we have learned: Elias the Tishbite shall come; the Jews shall believe; Antichrist shall persecute; Christ shall judge; the dead shall rise; the good and the wicked shall be separated; the world shall be burned and renewed. All these things, we believe, shall come to pass; but how, or in what order, human understanding cannot perfectly teach us" — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine lists the events around the judgment: Elias comes, the Jews believe, Antichrist persecutes, Christ judges, the dead rise and the world is renewed, though only experience will teach their exact order. [*Malachi 4:5; Revelation 20:11*]

9.37. Cave of Treasures: Elijah from Paradise

"The time of the error of the Anti-christ will last two years and a half, but others say three years and six months. And when everyone is standing in despair, then will Elijah (Elias) come from Paradise, and convict the deceiver" — Cave of Treasures, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (Budge translation);

scanned text. Note: Duration of Antichrist's error and Elijah's coming from Paradise to convict him. [*Malachi 4: 6*]

9.38. *Cosmas Indicopleustes: Enoch and Elias will withstand him*

"This is he who along with Elias will in the last days withstand the Antichrist, and refute his error, according to the ecclesiastical tradition." — Cosmas Indicopleustes, *The Christian Topography*. Note: Cosmas says Enoch, translated without death, will with Elias in the last days withstand Antichrist and refute his error, according to ecclesiastical tradition. [*Hebrews 11: 5; Genesis 5: 24*]

9.39. *Cosmas Indicopleustes: Elijah leads against Antichrist*

"who is reserved to be leader against Antichrist, standing up against him and convicting him of deception and overweening pride" — Cosmas Indicopleustes, *The Christian Topography*. Note: Cosmas calls Elijah, still living, reserved as leader against Antichrist, convicting him of deception and pride and leading men back to God at the consummation of the age. [*Malachi 4: 5; 2 Kings 2: 11*]

9.40. *Gregory the Great: Converted Jews persecuted in his time*

"Yet at the end of the world, when the Jews return to faith, the prophet is, as it were, led back to the house, so that preaching may again dwell among his people—preaching which now shines forth among diverse nations as if in a plain. For it is written: "Until the fullness of the Gentiles should enter in, and so all Israel should be saved. And through another prophet it is said: "If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved. Therefore let the prophet go out from the midst of the people to the plain, and let him return from the plain to the house, so that the preaching which was done in Judea may go forth to the Gentiles, and when the Gentiles have been filled with faith, let Judea receive back the gifts of spiritual teaching which she lost. Moreover, the prophet is commanded to be shut in the midst of his house, because in the time of Antichrist the converted people of the Jews will be constrained by harsh persecutions from those Gentiles who remain in unbelief." — Gregory the Great, *Homilies on Ezekiel*. Note: Gregory says that at the world's end, when the Jews return to faith, they will in the time of Antichrist be constrained by harsh persecutions from Gentiles who remain unbelieving. [*Romans 11: 25-26*]

9.41. Gregory the Great: Elijah and Enoch rebuke him

“For he saw that at the end of the world Satan entering into the man, whom Holy Scripture calls Antichrist, is lifted up with such exaltation, lords it with such power, is exalted with such wonderful signs and marvels in the exhibiting of holiness, that his deeds cannot be charged home to him by man, in that with the power of terribleness he likewise unites the signs of holiness which is exhibited, and he says, Who shall reprove his way to his face? ‘Who,’ that is to say, ‘of mankind may dare to rebuke him? whose face does he dread to endure [or, ‘the sight of whom he dreads’]? Yet not only Elijah and Enoch who are brought forward for the rebuking of him, but even all the Elect ‘reprove his way to his face’” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory says Satan will enter the man called Antichrist, wielding terror and signs of holiness, and that Elijah and Enoch are brought forward to rebuke him, as are all the elect by God’s grace. [*Job 21: 31; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9*]

9.42. Gregory the Great: Elias strengthens faithful; Israel converts

“And although at these very times, at which Antichrist draws near, the conduct of the faithful seems to be to a certain extent less virtuous, although in the contest with that ruined man, mighty fear constrains the hearts even of the strong; yet not only do all the faithful, strengthened by the preaching of Elias, remain in the firmness of Holy Church, but, as we said before, many also of the unbelievers are converted to the knowledge of the faith. So that the remnants of the nation of Israel, which had before been utterly rejected, crowd together to the bosom of the Church their Mother with the most pious devotion.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 5 of 5). Note: Gregory says that as Antichrist draws near the faithful are strengthened by Elias’s preaching, many unbelievers are converted, and the remnant of Israel flocks to the Church. [*Malachi 4: 5; Romans 11: 25–26*]

9.43. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Antichrist kills Enoch and Elias

“Then Antichrist will appear who will deceive many of them. When he is strengthened, he will seduce even the elect. He will kill the two prophets Enoch and Elias, so that for three and a half days they will be dead in the public places of the great town of Jerusalem.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, *The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel*. Note: Antichrist deceives many,

then even the elect, and kills Enoch and Elias, who lie dead in Jerusalem three and a half days. [*Revelation 11: 7-9; Matthew 24: 24*]

9.44. Bede: Enoch and Elijah convert many Jews

“This signifies the end times of the present Church when, due to the present universal blindness of that nation, which persecutes Christians to the utmost of its power, a fiercer persecution by the Antichrist will arise in some places. And indeed, many, through the preaching of Enoch and Elijah, will turn from perfidy, but others, under the influence of Antichrist, will fight against the faith with all their might.” — Bede, *Bede's Genuine Homilies*. Note: Bede in a homily reads Joseph's return to Nazareth as the end times when many Jews turn through Enoch and Elijah and others follow Antichrist.

[*Matthew 2: 22-23*]

9.45. Bede: Enoch returns with Elijah

“whom however the faith of the universal Church holds to return before the day of judgment, that is, at the imminent advent of the Antichrist, with Elijah for the conversion of this age, so that by the authority and doctrine of such great men, the hearts of men might be instructed and strengthened to endure and overcome the persecution of that son of perdition” — Bede, *Commentary on Genesis*. Note: Bede states that the universal Church believes Enoch will return with Elijah at Antichrist's imminent advent, to strengthen the faithful to endure that persecution and then to complete their martyrdom. [*Genesis 5: 24; Revelation 11: 3*]

9.46. Bede: Elijah prepares men to resist Antichrist

“Therefore, he will restore all things, first namely the hearts of men of that age, instructing them to believe in Christ, and to resist the perfidy of the Antichrist; then himself by putting down his own soul” — Bede, *Commentary on Mark*. Note: Bede says Elijah at his coming will restore the hearts of men, teaching them to believe in Christ and resist Antichrist's perfidy, and then die as a martyr. [*Mark 9: 12; Malachi 4: 5*]

9.47. Bede: Jews humbled; some convert through Elijah

“here the hour of temptation and the humiliation of the Jews under the time of Antichrist can be signified, so that as in the following in the sixth order often, so also here in the sixth angel the final persecution is designated. In which indeed the evil Jews, deceiving and being deceived, but others, by the teachings of the great prophet Elijah, understanding the law spiritually

and incorporated into the members of the Church, are believed to be strongly victorious over the enemy.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede reads the 'hour of temptation' as the final persecution under Antichrist, when evil Jews deceive and are deceived while others, taught by Elijah, join the Church and conquer. [*Revelation 3:10; Malachi 4:5*]

9.48. Bede: Enoch and Elijah killed by Antichrist

“Nor is there anything preventing these two cows, which bearing the ark of the Lord were given as a burnt offering to the Israelites, from being interpreted as Enoch and Elijah, who will then reveal the grace of faith to the Jews and are believed to receive death from Antichrist without delay.” — Bede, Commentary on Samuel. Note: Bede suggests the two cows offered in 1 Samuel 6 may be Enoch and Elijah, who will show the Jews the faith and are believed to be killed by Antichrist at once. [*1 Samuel 6:14; Revelation 11:3-7*]

9.49. John of Damascus: Enoch and Elijah turn synagogue

“But Enoch and Elias the Thesbite shall be sent and shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, that is, the synagogue to our Lord Jesus Christ and the preaching of the apostles: and they will be destroyed by him.” — John of Damascus, An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith. Note: Enoch and Elijah are sent to turn the synagogue to Christ, and Antichrist will kill them. [*Malachi 4:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:8*]

9.50. Timothy I of Baghdad: Elijah rebukes Antichrist

“It is this prophet Elijah who, as we have learned, will come into the world after the ascension of Jesus to heaven. He will come to rebuke the Antichrist, and to teach and preach to everybody concerning the second apparition of Jesus from heaven.” — Timothy I of Baghdad, Apology for Christianity, to the Caliph Al-Mahdi. Note: Patriarch Timothy tells the Caliph al-Mahdi that Elijah will come to rebuke Antichrist and announce Christ's second coming. [*Malachi 4:5; Matthew 17:11*]

9.51. Rabanus: Enoch and Elijah versus Antichrist's spirit

“Or, we may apply it to the last times of the Jewish Church, when many Jews having turned to the preaching of Enoch and Elijah, the rest filled with the spirit of Antichrist shall fight against the faith.” — Rabanus, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 1 (chapters 1-10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Rabanus applies the account to the last times of

the Jewish Church: many Jews turn to Enoch and Elijah, while the rest, filled with Antichrist's spirit, fight the faith. [Matthew 2: 22-23; Malachi 4: 5]

9.52. Remigius: Enoch and Elias preach to Israel

“Or, when this fig shall again bud, that is, when the synagogue shall receive the word of holy preaching, as the preaching of Enoch and Elias, then we ought to understand that the day of the consummation is at hand.” — Remigius, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Remigius says that when the synagogue receives the preaching of Enoch and Elias, the end is at hand. [Matthew 24: 32; Malachi 4: 5]

9.53. Theophylact: John with Elias, killed by him

“And therefore they confess that he still lives, but will be killed by Antichrist, and will preach Christ's name with Elias.” — Theophylact, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact reports a view that John still lives, to be killed by Antichrist after preaching Christ's name with Elias. [John 21: 22; Revelation 11: 3–7]

9.54. Solomon of Basra: Elijah convicts the deceiver

“And when every one is standing in despair, then will Elijah (Elias) come from Paradise, and convict the deceiver, and turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to the fathers; and he will encourage and strengthen the hearts of the believers.” — Solomon of Basra, The Book of the Bee (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Elijah comes from Paradise to expose Antichrist and strengthen believers. [Malachi 4: 5–6]

9.55. Thomas Aquinas: Jews believe at Enoch and Elijah

“Or the return of Jesus to the land of Israel on the death of Herod shews, that, at the preaching of Enoch and Elijah, the Jews, when the fire of modern jealousy shall be extinguished, shall receive the true faith.” — Thomas Aquinas, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 1 (chapters 1–10); scanned text. Note: An untagged comment reading Jesus's return to Israel as the Jews receiving the faith at Enoch and Elijah's preaching. [Matthew 2: 19–21; Malachi 4: 5]

9.56. Durandus: Gentiles and Jews one before him

“Secondly, to note that, before the persecution of Antichrist, the people of believing Gentiles, referred to by the Psalm, O God, Thou art my God, and the repentant people of the Jews, referred to by the Psalm, God be merciful, shall be one in faith; and after they are united, the tribulation of Antichrist will come.” — Durandus, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Durandus explains that two psalms are sung together to signal that believing Gentiles and repentant Jews will be one in faith before Antichrist’s tribulation. [*Psalm 63:1; Psalm 67:1*]

9.57. Kebra Nagast: Enoch and Elias come to testify

“And Enoch and Elias shall come, being alive, so that they may testify, and Moses and Aaron from the dead shall live with everyone.” — Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek: the Kebra Nagast* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: At the resurrection Enoch and Elijah come alive, with Moses and Aaron risen, to testify against the Jews. [*Revelation 11: 3; Malachi 4: 5*]

9.58. Neale and Littledale (compilers): World rejoices over two witnesses

“And it shall be so yet once more, a triumph for the time most perfect of all, when, the Two Witnesses having been now slain, “they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts to one another.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers foresee a final triumph of the world when the two witnesses are slain and earth-dwellers make merry. [*Psalm 35:19; Revelation 11: 10*]

9.59. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Slaughter of two witnesses, then end

“They shall have enough till the time comes when the last spark of goodness will be crushed out of the earth by the slaughter of the two witnesses, and then immediately shall the end be.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say the faithful will have enough until the slaughter of the two witnesses, after which the end comes at once. [*Psalm 37:19; Revelation 11: 7*]

9.60. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Two witnesses slain and raised*

“For when His acknowledged worshippers on earth will be reduced to the two witnesses, and they shall have been slain, then it follows with respect to Him Whom the Church calls The God of my life: “After three days and a half, the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers describe a stage when God’s acknowledged worshippers are reduced to the two witnesses, who are slain and then raised after three and a half days. [*Psalm 42: 8; Revelation 11: 3–11*]

9.61. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Enoch and Elijah die in his days*

“the constant tradition of the Church is that Enoch and Elijah, still believed to live, will reappear and die in the days of Antichrist.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers state the Church’s constant tradition that Enoch and Elijah, believed still alive, will reappear and die in Antichrist’s days. [*Psalm 89: 48; Revelation 11: 7*]

10. WHAT WILL HE DO, AND HOW WILL PEOPLE BE TAKEN IN?

“With all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9). The Fathers ask what those wonders are, whether they are real, why people believe them, and what the faithful should do. They say he will flatter before he persecutes, that the persecution is the worst yet, and that it will test the Church more by seduction than by torture. They also tell the story of the people who were taken in before him: false Christs, false Elijahs, and an emperor mistaken for him. The same writers say that miracles prove nothing, since the wicked will work them.

In this chapter

This question draws on 233 quotations from 50 voices. 9 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 224 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Real wonders or illusions? (Augustine, John of Damascus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Solomon of Basra, Neale and Littledale)

Augustine puts the question and leaves it open: are the wonders “lying” because they deceive the senses, or because true prodigies will deceive men into thinking the devil’s power is divine? John of Damascus says they are fictitious, and Cyril that they are illusions, such as seeming resurrections. Solomon of Basra says he cannot really raise the dead. Neale and Littledale, like Pharaoh’s magicians, say they are partly illusion and partly explicable.

A pious beginning (Pseudo-Hippolytus, Cyril, Gregory the Great, John of Damascus, Bede)

The Fathers do not expect him to arrive as a villain. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon has him begin gentle, pious and apparently righteous, especially favouring the Jews. Cyril says he will feign mildness first. Gregory the Great calls him the chief of hypocrites and a flatterer first; John of Damascus has him raised in secret and at first feigning holiness. Bede describes two phases, hidden then open, in the first of which he is accepted as Christ’s imitator.

Gifts, honours and hunger (Gregory the Great, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Theophylact)

He wins people with benefits more than with threats. Gregory says the son of perdition will bestow gifts, honours and marvels on the wicked, so that drifting souls follow. Pseudo-Hippolytus describes a famine in which Antichrist offers bread, wine and honours and the hungry go to worship him and take his mark. Theophylact applies Christ’s words about losing one’s life to saving it: believers must not submit to save their lives.

Persecution by word and by sword (Hippolytus, Lactantius, Augustine, Gregory the Great)

Hippolytus has him scatter believers so that not two or three can assemble, and suppress worship. Lactantius describes refusers who flee to the mountains or are burned wrapped in the books of the prophets. Augustine distinguishes three persecutions, by pagan rulers, by heretics and false brethren, and a third by Antichrist. Gregory says some will seduce by words while others, backed by worldly power, compel; and that the persecutors will think they serve Christ.

Who falls (Augustine, Gregory the Great, Hilary, Bede, Remigius, Solomon of Basra)

The Fathers expect real losses. Augustine reads the falling stars as many apparently graced believers giving way under persecution. Gregory reads the

dragon's tail drawing a third of the stars as some who seemed to shine falling away, but also says the elect will be tempted and tremble yet not fall. Hilary says Christ will find the Church wearied by Antichrist's spirit. Bede has the Church hide; Remigius says many will leave the faith. Solomon of Basra expects mass apostasy under Ishmaelite oppression, some without compulsion.

The martyrs of that time (Cyril, Tertullian, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Cyprian, Origen)

The tribulation is also glorious. Cyril says martyrs under Antichrist will fight Satan in person against false signs and pretended resurrections. Tertullian sees the white-robed multitude of Revelation 7 as martyrs triumphant over Antichrist. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon says those who overcome the tyrant himself will be more illustrious than the earlier martyrs who overcame only his servants. Cyprian tells his flock not to be terrified, since Christ follows to avenge. Origen says that in his season infidels and persecutors will work wonders and the saints none.

He has been mistaken for before (Eusebius, Sulpicius Severus, John of Nikiu, Gregory of Tours, Palladius)

The sources are frank about the false alarms. Eusebius lists Dositheus, Simon Magus and Montanus as claimants whom followers took for the Christ. Sulpicius tells of a Spanish youth who claimed to be Elias and then Christ. John of Nikiu says that in Diocletian's persecution everyone thought the emperor was Antichrist; Gregory of Tours reports a man who gave himself out as Christ in Gaul and deceived thousands. In Palladius a demon plays Christ to a monk with phantom angels.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not,

that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

Take heed that no man deceive you (Matt 24: 4-14)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. [Matthew 24: 4-14]

The abomination of desolation (Matt 24: 15-28)

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the

world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. [Matthew 24: 15-28]

The abomination where it ought not (Mark 13: 5-23)

And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth ... [Mark 13: 5-23])

The beast and his number (Rev 13: 1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. ... [Revelation 13: 1-18]

Satan transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor 11: 13-15)

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. [2 Corinthians 11: 13-15]

Wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7: 15-23)

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will

I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. [*Matthew 7:15-23*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Didache, False prophets multiply, love turns to hate (11.1); Didache, The world-deceiver as a 'son of God' (3.1); Didache, Endure the fiery trial (15.1); Shepherd of Hermas, Blessed who endure the great tribulation (15.4); Shepherd of Hermas, Vision of the coming tribulation (5.2); Shepherd of Hermas, The sea-monster with fiery locusts (1.1); Shepherd of Hermas, Prepare by repentance for the tribulation (15.5); Ascension of Isaiah, Sun rises at night at his word (3.2); Ascension of Isaiah, He speaks like the Beloved and claims deity (6.1); Ascension of Isaiah, His image set up in every city (3.3); Sibylline Oracles, Beliar will come working signs (3.4); Sibylline Oracles, He leads many astray but perfects nothing (16.1); Justin Martyr, The man of apostasy persecutes Christians (11.4); Justin Martyr, False christs are the heretics now (11.5); Irenaeus of Lyons, Marcus the magician as precursor (12.1); Irenaeus of Lyons, 'Wicked one' is Antichrist (1.2); Irenaeus of Lyons, Reigns three years six months (7.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, Slain by the Lord's coming (14.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, Wonders by magic and demons (1.3); Irenaeus of Lyons, Church caught up; last contest (15.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, Nebuchadnezzar's image foreshadows him (8.3); Tertullian, Order of the last times (5.9); Tertullian, Martyrs triumph over Antichrist (14.11); Tertullian, False prophets are forerunners (12.5); Tertullian, Creator sends the delusion (14.12); Tertullian, Heresy as present antichrist (11.12); Hippolytus of Rome, 42 months: Church persecuted (7.6); Hippolytus of Rome, Conquers all ten, seeks worship (3.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Three horns: Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia (5.16); Hippolytus of Rome, Beast kills the two witnesses (9.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Lamb-horns: imitates the Son of God (3.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Mark = compulsory sacrifice (8.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Antiochus as a type (12.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Conquers three, attacks Tyre first (5.20); Hippolytus of Rome, Partridge luring others' young (3.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Jews rally against the saints (16.4); Hippolytus of Rome, 2 Thess 2 quoted; restrainer unnamed (4.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Lamb outside, wolf within (3.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Sacrifice that ceases is prayer (6.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Worship suppressed; witnesses killed and raised (6.21); Origen of Alexandria, Not every sign proves God (3.14); Commodian, Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (16.5); Commodian, Martyrs reign in a fleshly millennium (14.21);

Commodian, The Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ' (6.23); Commodian, Martyrs under Antichrist share the thousand years (14.24); Origen of Alexandria, Store up manna before the famine (15.13); Origen of Alexandria, Warned against those claiming to be Christ (12.9); Origen of Alexandria, The man of sin permitted by God's judgment (4.9); Origen of Alexandria, Antichrist's wonders like Egypt's magicians (3.15); Origen of Alexandria, Evil peaks by simulating the good (2.16); Origen of Alexandria, A bold king who destroys the saints (1.4); Origen of Alexandria, The man of sin imitates true wonders (3.16); Cyprian of Carthage, The serpent as Antichrist's pioneer (1.5); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist cannot threaten his way in (15.14); Cyprian of Carthage, The time of Antichrist draws near (15.15); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist is coming, but Christ above him (15.16); Cyprian of Carthage, Beast, image and mark in the Apocalypse (15.17); Cyprian of Carthage, A fiercer fight is threatening (15.18); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist under the name of Christ (3.17); Cyprian of Carthage, Spared from Antichrist's corruptions (15.21); Victorinus of Pettau, Raised up by God's command (1.7); Victorinus of Pettau, False prophet; counterfeit resurrections (3.20); Victorinus of Pettau, Golden image in the Jerusalem temple (8.24); Victorinus of Pettau, Calls to circumcision; rises from hell (16.8); Victorinus of Pettau, Little season = 3.5 years (14.31); Eusebius of Caesarea, Simon Magus brought to Rome (12.12); Lactantius, Decline before the end (11.29); Lactantius, Claims to be God's Son (3.23); Lactantius, Attacks the temple of God (6.27); Lactantius, Mark; burning; 42 months (8.25); Eusebius of Caesarea, Do not follow the false appearing (3.25); Eusebius of Caesarea, Persecution by the son of perdition (15.25); Eusebius of Caesarea, Warning against the lying Antichrist (12.14); Eusebius of Caesarea, Other deceivers came before the final one (12.15); Eusebius of Caesarea, Simon Magus, Dositheus, Montanus as false christs (12.16); History of Joseph the Carpenter, Antichrist slays four witnesses (9.21); Pseudo-Hippolytus, False Christs, Simon Magus onward (12.17); Pseudo-Hippolytus, The three prophets are killed (9.25); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Begins gentle, pious, loves the Jews (16.10); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Counterfeits Christ's miracles (3.27); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Virtue as route to throne (16.11); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Builds the temple, then blasphemes (6.32); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Wonders over the elements (1.9); Pseudo-Hippolytus, 'What god is there but I?' (1.10); Pseudo-Hippolytus, 666 read as 'I deny' (8.26); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Famine drives people to his mark (15.26);

Pseudo-Hippolytus, The formula of denial (9.26); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Counterfeit ascension (3.28); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Overcomers greater than earlier martyrs (15.27); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Take heed: end not yet (15.30); Hilary of Poitiers, Church worn by his spirit (11.34); Hilary of Poitiers, Draw the distracted into his service (3.32); Hilary of Poitiers, Desert and chambers: under his rule (3.33); Athanasius of Alexandria, Devil hides behind a desirable name (3.35); Athanasius of Alexandria, Devil counterfeits Christ in heresy (3.36); Athanasius of Alexandria, Last heresy, harbinger of Antichrist (11.37); Athanasius of Alexandria, Ignorance of the day protects (3.37); Athanasius of Alexandria, What more could Antichrist do? (14.38); Athanasius of Alexandria, Whoever brings Arianism is Antichrist (15.32); Apostolic Constitutions, The deceiver of the world, prince of lies (14.39); Ambrosiaster, Final persecution from Antichrist (15.33); Cyril of Jerusalem, Eleventh king, three-and-a-half years (5.31); Cyril of Jerusalem, Satan's instrument; illusory miracles (1.11); Cyril of Jerusalem, The horn wars on the saints (14.41); Cyril of Jerusalem, Martyrs of that time (15.35); Cyril of Jerusalem, No curiosity about the time (15.36); Ambrose of Milan, Argues from Scripture he is Christ (3.40); Apocalypse of Thomas, Great signs when Antichrist draws near (7.17); Apocalypse of Thomas, A golden image in the house of God (6.38); Shenoute of Atripe, Antichrist among false teachers (12.38); John Chrysostom, Antichrist and his ministers (12.39); John Chrysostom, Christ's mere appearing ends him (14.46); John Chrysostom, Antichrist removes every excuse (3.45); John Chrysostom, Compare the signs: Christ and Antichrist (3.46); John Chrysostom, Elijah comes against him (9.31); John Chrysostom, Rejecters of Christ will receive him (16.21); John Chrysostom, Matt 24 deceivers include him (3.49); John Chrysostom, Antichrist is local; Christ like lightning (3.50); John Chrysostom, Antichrist's tribulation is short (14.47); John Chrysostom, Revelry in the days of Antichrist (14.48); Rufinus of Aquileia, The enemy counterfeits the second advent (6.42); Rufinus of Aquileia, Foretold lest he be mistaken (14.50); Jerome, Heretics hide Antichrist behind Christ (3.51); Palladius of Galatia, Valens worships a false Christ (3.53); Palladius of Galatia, Demon plays Christ (3.54); Sulpicius Severus, False Elias; Antichrist at hand (13.22); Sulpicius Severus, Martin and the devil as 'Christ' (3.55); Sulpicius Severus, Last persecution: Antichrist's (14.51); Augustine of Hippo, Jews expect an Antichrist (16.24); Augustine of Hippo, Satan unchained works through him (14.52); Augustine of Hippo, Stars fall:

believers give way (11.65); Augustine of Hippo, Prosperous, thought to be God (1.13); Augustine of Hippo, Man of sin completes all false prophets (2.32); Augustine of Hippo, Three persecutions; the third by Antichrist (12.44); Augustine of Hippo, Only the unwritten consent to him (14.53); Augustine of Hippo, The Jews will receive 'another' in his own name (16.27); Augustine of Hippo, Abraham's darkness: affliction under Antichrist (7.21); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist's persecution as the eleventh (12.45); Augustine of Hippo, Satan loosed three years six months (7.22); Augustine of Hippo, Fire from heaven: the saints' firmness (14.55); Augustine of Hippo, Unparalleled tribulation under Antichrist (15.47); Augustine of Hippo, Certain only: Antichrist comes first (14.57); Augustine of Hippo, Wonders seduce those who deserve it (15.48); Augustine of Hippo, Seduced, then judged (14.58); Augustine of Hippo, Seeks his own glory; the Jews receive him (16.28); Cyril of Alexandria, Another in his own name: the son of transgression (16.29); Cyril of Alexandria, Jews attach themselves to Antichrist (16.30); Testament of Our Lord, Son of Perdition boasts and works signs (15.49); Testament of Our Lord, The abomination of desolation gathered (6.48); Testament of Our Lord, His power is to blaspheme (1.14); Leo the Great, Rebel monks as 'soldiers of Antichrist' (12.48); Cave of Treasures, Gog and Magog break out (7.26); Cosmas Indicopleustes, Elijah leads against Antichrist (9.39); Gregory of Tours, A Gaulish false Christ killed (12.50); Gregory the Great, Elect tempted by his signs (15.52); Gregory the Great, Wonders draw the carnal (15.53); Gregory the Great, Preachers of Antichrist give great signs (15.54); Gregory the Great, The elect will be tempted but not fall (15.55); Gregory the Great, Jewish believers persecuted by unbelieving Jews (16.34); Gregory the Great, Antichrist passes himself off as 'day' (14.61); Gregory the Great, Some who seem to shine fall away (11.82); Gregory the Great, The devil enters a man called Antichrist (2.36); Gregory the Great, Elijah and Enoch rebuke him (9.41); Gregory the Great, Gifts, honours and marvels draw followers (1.15); Gregory the Great, Chief of all hypocrites (16.35); Gregory the Great, Antichrist: the devil's vessel (13.45); Gregory the Great, Permitted to rule unbelieving Jews (16.36); Gregory the Great, Pretends to be God above men (6.50); Gregory the Great, Lifted up, then undone by the true Judge (14.63); Gregory the Great, Prosperous for a short time (Daniel 8) (7.27); Gregory the Great, Synagogue prepares for Antichrist (16.37); Gregory the Great, Flatterer first, then persecutor (2.39); Gregory the

Great, Honour of the world and power of miracles (1.16); Gregory the Great, Words and swords together (7.28); Gregory the Great, First beast = Antichrist; second = his preachers (1.17); Gregory the Great, Persecutors will think they serve Christ (7.29); Gregory the Great, Antichrist feigns death and resurrection (3.56); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Sinners numbered with Antichrist (14.65); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Antichrist bound; Devil claims God (3.57); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Enoch exposes the Son of Iniquity (2.40); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Signs before Gog and Magog (7.30); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Ten Greek kings serve him (5.45); John of Nikiu, Diocletian taken for Antichrist (5.46); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Gathers Jews to Jerusalem (16.41); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Antichrist kills Enoch and Elias (9.43); Bede, Torments joined to miracles (7.33); Bede, Two great persecutions: Rome, then Antichrist (5.50); Bede, Torments accompanied by miracles (7.35); Bede, Days shortened to about 3.5 years (7.36); Bede, Restrained until released at the end (4.29); Bede, Mimics Christ's death and resurrection (3.58); Bede, Two phases: hidden, then open (3.59); Bede, False mediator between God and followers (3.60); Bede, Armageddon: the devil in a man with usurped divinity (1.18); Bede, Signs at the end: whose side is unclear (15.60); Bede, Sixth seal: final persecution (7.37); Bede, Final persecution: stars fall, Church hides (11.92); Bede, Heretics precede open war of Antichrist (11.93); Bede, Jews await Antichrist as their savior (2.49); John of Damascus, Jews receive the impostor (16.47); John of Damascus, Hidden upbringing, feigned sanctity (2.51); Paulician Church of Armenia, Satan's twelve disguises (3.61); Alcuin, Rejected Truth, receive a lie (16.49); Remigius, Many depart; he sends false prophets (11.95); Theophylact, Deceives for a time; followers lost (1.19); Theophylact, Dwelling-place of every sin (11.96); Theophylact, Do not submit to save your life (15.62); Theophylact, 'Then' means Antichrist's time (7.38); Anselm, Persecutor with miracles, martyr none (11.97); Solomon of Basra, Mass apostasy under Ishmael (11.98); Solomon of Basra, Gog and Magog burst out (2.52); Solomon of Basra, Of Dan; deluding phantasms (2.55); Solomon of Basra, Mimics Christ's healings (3.62); Solomon of Basra, Jews and Indians accept him (16.50); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Boasting ungodly: Antichrist in the temple (6.59); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Five marks: guile, opposition (3.63); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Appearance of goodness; flattery (3.64); Neale and

Littledale (compilers), Elect kept in Antichrist's time (15.68); Neale and Littledale (compilers), World rejoices over two witnesses (9.58); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Proud = the Lawless One (3.66); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Only the unwritten worship him (1.20); Neale and Littledale (compilers), He uses learning and literal Scripture (11.102); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Slain by the breath of His lips (14.83); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Four persecutions; Antichrist worst (5.59).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

10.1. Irenaeus of Lyons: God sends working of error

"Speaking of antichrist, too, he says clearly in the Second to the Thessalonians: "And for this cause God shall send them the working of error, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but consented to iniquity."" — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: God permits the working of error to come on those who refused the truth, as Paul says of Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2:11-12*]

10.2. Origen of Alexandria: Persecutors work wonders; saints none

"when, so far from signs and miracles being testimonies to the true faith, infidels and persecutors will perform great and mighty wonders, and they that are persecuted for CHRIST's sake will be able to perform none" — Origen of Alexandria, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 2 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: In the same account, Origen says that in Antichrist's season infidels and persecutors will work wonders while the persecuted faithful will work none. [*Psalms 37:19; Matthew 24:24*]

10.3. Augustine of Hippo: Phantoms or real wonders?

"But a doubt is often raised whether the Apostle said Signs and lying wonders, because he is to deceive mortal senses, by phantoms, so as to appear to do what he does not, or because those wonders themselves, even though true, are to turn men aside to lies" — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine records the open question whether Antichrist's wonders are

phantoms deceiving the senses or real marvels that lead men into falsehood.

[2 *Thessalonians* 2: 9; *Mark* 13: 22]

10.4. Augustine of Hippo: Wicked men's miracles prove nothing

“Here the Lord forewarns us that even wicked men shall do some miracles which the saints cannot do, yet are they not therefore to be thought to have a higher place in the sight of God.” — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine says the Lord warns that wicked men will work miracles beyond the saints' ability, which gives them no higher standing before God. [*Matthew* 24: 24; *Exodus* 7: 11]

10.5. Augustine of Hippo: Are the lying wonders false or true?

“It is commonly questioned whether these works are called “signs and lying wonders” because he is to deceive men's senses by false appearances, or because the things he does, though they be true prodigies, shall be a lie to those who shall believe that such things could be done only by God, being ignorant of the devil's power” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine asks whether the wonders are 'lying' because they deceive the senses or because true prodigies will deceive those who think only God could do them. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 9]

10.6. Gregory the Great: Counsellors who say Antichrist is the dawn

“The prudent then of this world, who adhere to the perverse counsels of the malice of Antichrist, are, as it were, the eyelids of the morning, because they declare that the faith in Christ which they meet with is, as it were, the night of error, and profess that veneration for Antichrist is the true morning.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the worldly-wise who follow Antichrist will call faith in Christ the night of error and veneration of Antichrist the true morning, promising light by brilliant miracles. [*Job* 41: 9]

10.7. John of Damascus: Fictitious, not real, wonders

“But he will come with signs and lying wonders , fictitious and not real, and he will deceive and lead away from the living God those whose mind rests on an unsound and unstable foundation, so that even the elect shall, if it be possible, be made to stumble .” — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: His miracles are fictitious rather than real, and he misleads those with unstable minds. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 9; *Matthew* 24: 24]

10.8. Solomon of Basra: Cannot raise the dead

“He will shew deluding phantasms (of this kind), but he will not be able to raise the dead.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Antichrist cannot actually raise the dead. [*Matthew 24: 24*]

10.9. Neale and Littledale (compilers): His wonders: illusion or explicable

“And in this sense men may be said to do wonderful things, as the magicians of Pharaoh did, and as it is prophesied that Antichrist will do in the last days. But these are partly mere illusions and jugglery, having no real existence, and partly would be explicable by complete knowledge on our part” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 4 (Psalms 119–150) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say that Antichrist’s prophesied wonders, like those of Pharaoh’s magicians, are partly illusion and partly explicable by fuller knowledge, unlike God’s abiding works. [*Psalm 136: 4; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9*]

11. WHAT IS THE “FALLING AWAY”?

Paul says the day of the Lord will not come “except there come a falling away first” (2 Thessalonians 2:3). The Greek word is *apostasia*, a rebellion or defection, and the Fathers mostly read it exactly that way: heresy, schism and the cooling of love inside the Church. Tertullian is the one early exception who reads it as the collapse of the empire. For Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil, Athanasius and Gregory of Nyssa the falling away is not a future event to wait for. It is the Arian, Eunomian and other crises they were living through, and they call them the prelude or the forerunner of the man himself.

In this chapter

This question draws on 134 quotations from 57 voices. 106 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 28 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

It is happening now (Cyril of Jerusalem, Hippolytus, Basil, Palladius)

Cyril says the falling away is already present in heresy and itching ears, and that the enemy has begun to send out his forerunners. Hippolytus warns believers not to admit the apostasy that divides and chills love. Basil, in a time of trial, wonders aloud whether the falling away has come and the lawless

one is about to be revealed. In Palladius, a deacon asks the same question amid the persecution of Chrysostom's supporters.

A prelude to the man himself (Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Alexander of Alexandria, Bede)

The Arian controversy produced the sharpest language. Alexander of Alexandria calls Arius's teaching an apostasy and a precursor of Antichrist. Athanasius calls Arianism the last heresy and the harbinger of Antichrist, dressed up in the language of Scripture; he says that giving churches to heretics goes beyond persecution and is a prelude to his coming. Gregory of Nyssa says Eunomius's doctrine was set on foot by the devil as a rehearsal. Bede reads the fifth trumpet as a greater infestation of heretics before Antichrist's time and the sixth as his open war.

John's test: Christ come in the flesh (Polycarp, Irenaeus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Leo the Great, Theodoret)

The oldest use of the word is the one in John's letters: whoever denies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Polycarp applies it that way, and Irenaeus applies it to the Gnostic dividing of Christ. Dionysius calls those who deny Christ's deity or real flesh antichrists in John's sense. The Tome of Leo, accepted at Chalcedon, cites John to say that dissolving Jesus, by separating His human nature, is Antichrist; Theodoret's Orthodox speaker makes the same appeal.

Those who leave the Church's unity (Cyprian, Optatus, Augustine, Ambrose)

In the Latin West the test is unity. Cyprian says those who depart from charity and the Church's unity are antichrists, and that the last time is here. Optatus applies John's "many antichrists" to the Donatists. Augustine says that all who go out and are cut off from the Church's unity are antichrists. Ambrose plainly marks the Arians.

A cold and divided Church before the end (Pseudo-Hippolytus, Lactantius, Bede, Augustine, Neale and Littledale)

Several writers expect a weakened Church. The Pseudo-Hippolytan sermon describes false prophets, wolfish shepherds and worldly clergy among professing Christians before the end. Lactantius says wickedness will grow so much worse that the present times will seem golden. Bede says the elect will be so few at Christ's appearing that others' indifference will hasten the end. Augustine reads "shall he find faith on the earth?" as concerning perfect faith,

which is rare, not the absence of all faith. Neale and Littledale say heresy and schism have at times reduced the Church to few, as in the Arian success, and will again.

The word used as a weapon (Leo the Great, Pseudo-Zachariah, Jerome, Athanasius)

The sources are candid about how freely the charge was thrown about. Leo of Rome calls Timothy Aelurus of Alexandria Antichrist, according to the bishops in the Chalcedonian dispute; Leo also calls rioting monks soldiers of Antichrist. Jerome's orthodox speaker calls groups named after someone other than Christ the synagogue of Antichrist. Athanasius calls the Arian persecutors forerunners of Antichrist. Every party in the fourth- and fifth-century controversies used it of the others.

Apostasy under Muslim rule (Samuel of Kalamoun, Solomon of Basra)

In the Coptic and Syriac texts of the seventh to thirteenth centuries, the falling away is pressure to convert. Samuel of Kalamoun says many Christians will deny Christ during the Ishmaelite affliction and that endurance with thanks will save. Solomon of Basra expects mass apostasy under Ishmaelite oppression, some without compulsion, and explains the Arab conquest as God's chastisement for Christian immorality and not favour toward the conquerors.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the

Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

Even now are there many antichrists (1 John 2:18-23)

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. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. [1 John 2:18-23]

Try the spirits (1 John 4:1-6)

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. [1 John 4:1-6]

He is antichrist that denieth (2 John 1:7-11)

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. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we

receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. [2 John 1: 7-11]

Some shall depart from the faith (1 Tim 4: 1-3)

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. [1 Timothy 4: 1-3]

Perilous times shall come (2 Tim 3: 1-9)

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. [2 Timothy 3: 1-9]

They shall turn away their ears (2 Tim 4: 3-4)

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. [2 Timothy 4: 3-4]

Mockers in the last time (Jude 1: 17-19)

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. [Jude 1:17-19]

Shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18: 8)

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? [Luke 18: 8]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Sibylline Oracles, Beliar will come working signs (3.4); Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Dan's prince is Satan (2.6); Tertullian, Falling away: empire falls (4.3); Hippolytus of Rome, Vespasian does not fit (5.11); Hippolytus of Rome, 2 Thess 2 quoted; restrainer unnamed (4.8); Victorinus of Pettau, 'Synagogue of Satan' gathered by Antichrist (16.7); Victorinus of Pettau, After Elijah, the devil cast down (9.19); Victorinus of Pettau, Abomination may be church heresy (6.26); Methodius of Olympus, The dragon is the devil (13.11); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Eucharist and public worship cease (6.33); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius, forerunner of the lawless one (6.35); Athanasius of Alexandria, Heresy prepares Antichrist's deceit (13.16); Cyril of Jerusalem, Division prepares his way (4.17); Cyril of Jerusalem, Teach the signs (13.17); John Chrysostom, A man, not Satan (6.40); Rufinus of Aquileia, The enemy counterfeits the second advent (6.42); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist means 'contrary to Christ' (13.35); Augustine of Hippo, Dividing the Church denies Christ come in the flesh (13.37); Augustine of Hippo, Restrainer: the hidden wicked in the Church (4.26); Gregory the Great, Elias strengthens faithful; Israel converts (9.42); Miscellaneous Coptic Texts, Antichrist = denier of the incarnation (16.40); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Churches turned into mosques (5.41); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Ishmaelite father, Frankish mother (2.41); Bede, Spiritual reading: heresy and crime (13.50); Paulician Church of Armenia, Satan's twelve disguises (3.61); Solomon of Basra, Arab rule is God's scourge (5.55); Kebra Nagast, Roman king perverts faith (4.34); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Four stages until Antichrist (5.58).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

11.1. Didache: False prophets multiply, love turns to hate

“For in the last days false prophets and corrupters will multiply, the sheep will turn into wolves, and love will turn into hate.” — Didache, The Didache. Note: In the last days false prophets multiply, the flock turns to wolves and love turns to hatred. [Matthew 24: 10-12]

11.2. Epistle of Barnabas: Stand firm so the Black One gets no entry

“So let us watch ourselves in these last days. All the time of our faith will do us no good unless we stand firm now, in this lawless time and against the stumbling blocks to come, as befits sons of God, so that the Black One gets no way in.” — Epistle of Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas. Note: Believers must watch in the last days and resist coming stumbling blocks so that the Black One, the devil, finds no entry.

11.3. Polycarp of Smyrna: Antichrist as denier of the incarnation

“For everyone who does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is an antichrist. Whoever does not confess the testimony of the cross is of the devil. Whoever twists the sayings of the Lord to suit his own desires and says there is no resurrection and no judgment is the firstborn of Satan.” — Polycarp of Smyrna, Polycarp to the Philippians. Note: Polycarp applies the word antichrist to anyone denying Christ’s coming in the flesh, and calls those who deny resurrection and judgment the firstborn of Satan. [1 John 4: 2; 1 John 2: 18]

11.4. Justin Martyr: The man of apostasy persecutes Christians

“The other is the coming in which he will arrive from heaven with glory. That will be when the man of apostasy, who also speaks outrageous things against the Most High, will dare to do lawless things on the earth against us Christians.” — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Christ’s glorious coming is placed at the time when the man of apostasy dares lawless acts against Christians. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3; Daniel 7: 25]

11.5. Justin Martyr: False christs are the heretics now

“Many false christs and false apostles will rise up, and they will lead many of the faithful astray.” — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: Justin cites Jesus’s warning of false christs and apostles, then applies it to the heretical teachers of his own day. [Matthew 24: 5; Matthew 7: 15; Matthew 24: 24]

11.6. Irenaeus of Lyons: Many antichrists have appeared

“Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist doth come, now have many antichrists appeared; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus cites John: many antichrists have already appeared, and they went out from the Church. [*1 John 2:18-22*]

11.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Dividing Christ is antichrist

“Many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit which separates Jesus Christ is not of God, but is of antichrist.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Irenaeus applies John’s test to Gnostic divisions of Christ: a spirit that divides Jesus Christ is of antichrist. [*1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7*]

11.8. Irenaeus of Lyons: Gathers all apostasy; cast into fire

“For when he (Antichrist) is come, and of his own accord concentrates in his own person the apostasy, and accomplishes whatever he shall do according to his own will and choice, sitting also in the temple of God, so that his dupes may adore him as the Christ; wherefore also shall he deservedly “be cast into the lake of fire” — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: Antichrist freely gathers the whole apostasy into himself, sits in the temple so that dupes worship him as Christ, and is rightly cast into the lake of fire. [*2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 20:10*]

11.9. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: In last times they cleave to Beliar

“Know ye therefore, my children, that in the last times Your sons will forsake singleness, And will cleave unto insatiable desire; And leaving guilelessness, will draw near to malice; And forsaking the commandments of the Lord, They will cleave unto Beliar.” — *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, The *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: In the last times the sons forsake simplicity and the commandments and cleave to Beliar.

11.10. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Dan departs in the last days

“I know that in the last days ye shall depart from the Lord, And ye shall provoke Levi unto anger, And fight against Judah; But ye shall not prevail against them” — *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, The *Testaments of*

the Twelve Patriarchs (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: Dan foresees that in the last days his descendants will depart from the Lord and fight Levi and Judah without prevailing.

11.11. Tertullian: Charge of 'human Antichrist' rebutted

"But you affirm it is "a human Antichrist: "for by this name heretics are called in John. And how is it that, whoever he is, he has in (the name of) our Christ directed these duties toward our Lord; whereas withal antichrists have (ever) gone forth (professedly teaching) towards God, (but) in opposition to our Christ?" — Tertullian, *On Fasting*. Note: Tertullian, a Montanist, retorts that the Paraclete cannot be an antichrist, since antichrists oppose Christ, while the Spirit directs worship to Christ. [*1 John 2:18*]

11.12. Tertullian: Heresy as present antichrist

"Who also are the Antichrists, both now and evermore, but the men who rebel against Christ? Heresies, at the present time, will no less rend the church by their perversion of doctrine, than will Antichrist persecute her at that day by the cruelty of his attacks, except that persecution make seven martyrs, (but) heresy only apostates." — Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics*. Note: Heretics are antichrists now; their damage to the Church equals Antichrist's later persecution, except that heresy makes apostates where persecution makes martyrs. [*Matthew 7:15; 1 John 2:18*]

11.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Time, times, half-time: 3.5 years

"He indicated the three years and a half of Antichrist. For by "a time" He means a year, and by "times" two years, and by an "half time" half a year. These are the thousand two hundred and ninety days of which Daniel prophesied" — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: A time, times and half a time means 3.5 years, the 1,290 days of Daniel, for Antichrist's reign. [*Daniel 12:7,11; Matthew 24:12-13*]

11.14. Hippolytus of Rome: Do not admit the falling away

"And that divisions will arise when the falling away takes place, is without doubt. And when divisions arise, love is chilled. ... Wherefore let us by no means admit the falling away, lest iniquity abound, and the abomination of desolation—that is, the adversary—overtake us." — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: The falling away brings divisions that chill love; Hippolytus

urges believers not to admit the apostasy lest the adversary overtake them.

[Matthew 24:12-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:3]

11.15. Hippolytus of Rome: Church flees 1260 days

“That refers to the one thousand two hundred and threescore days (the half of the week) during which the tyrant is to reign and persecute the Church, which flees from city to city, and seeks concealment in the wilderness among the mountains, possessed of no other defence than the two wings of the great eagle, that is to say, the faith of Jesus Christ” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: The 1,260 days of the woman in the wilderness are the half-week of the tyrant's reign, during which the Church flees and relies only on faith. [Revelation 12:6,14]

11.16. Secundinus of Carpis: Heretics 'progeny of Antichrist'

“It is impossible for the Holy Ghost to descend through the imposition of hands alone upon strange children, and the progeny of Antichrist, it being clear that heretics have no baptism.” — Secundinus of Carpis, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Ante-Nicene Church* (Warren) (quoted by Ante-Nicene liturgy and ritual (Warren)); scanned text. Note: At Cyprian's council (AD 256) Secundinus of Carpis calls heretics 'the progeny of Antichrist', denying their baptism. [1 John 2:18-19]

11.17. Cyprian of Carthage: Cyprian: heretics are antichrists

“heretics being called enemies of Christ and antichrists according to the testimony of the gospel and the apostles, should, when they come to the Church, be baptized” — Cyprian of Carthage, *On Baptism* (quoted by Augustine of Hippo). Note: Augustine quotes Cyprian of Carthage's judgment that heretics are 'enemies of Christ and antichrists', so those who come to the Church must be baptised afresh. [1 John 2:18]

11.18. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist at hand, discipline must stand

“since, when Antichrist is at hand the faith of the militant people is disarmed by the taking away of the power of Christ and His fear?” — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*. Note: Cyprian objects that lax readmission of the lapsed, with Antichrist at hand, disarms the faith of the militant people.

11.19. Cyprian of Carthage: Schismatic violence imitates Antichrist's coming

“they endeavour to imitate the coming of Antichrist, who is now approaching.” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Rebels who threaten the bishops are said to imitate the coming of Antichrist, who is now approaching.

11.20. Cyprian of Carthage: World failing, Antichrist drawing near

“These things have been foretold as about to happen in the end of the world; and it was predicted by the voice of the Lord, and by the testimony of the apostles, that now that the world is failing, and the Antichrist is drawing near, everything good shall fail, but evil and adverse things shall prosper.” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Wavering faith and lost concord in his day are foretold signs that the world is failing and Antichrist drawing near.

[2 Timothy 3: 1-5; Matthew 24: 12]

11.21. Cyprian of Carthage: Those who left the Church are antichrists

“Ye have heard that antichrist shall come: even now there are many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian uses 1 John to say those who leave the Church's unity are antichrists and the last time is here. [1 John 2: 18-19]

11.22. Cyprian of Carthage: Heretics are called adversaries and antichrists

“But if everywhere heretics are called nothing else than adversaries and antichrists, if they are pronounced to be people to be avoided” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian argues that since Scripture calls heretics adversaries and antichrists they must not be imitated.

11.23. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrists are those who leave the Church's unity

“Whence it appears, that all are adversaries of the Lord and antichrists, who are known to have departed from charity and from the unity of the Catholic Church.” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian defines antichrists as all who depart from charity and the Church's unity. [1 John 2: 18-19]

11.24. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist baptizes in Christ's name

“the faithless gives faith; the wicked bestows pardon of sins; and Antichrist baptizes in the name of Christ” — Cyprian of Carthage, The Seventh Council of Carthage Under Cyprian. Note: Cyprian's council opens with the absurdity of heretics baptizing: Antichrist baptizing in Christ's name.

11.25. Cyprian of Carthage: Heresies grow as the world declines

“because even thus it must be in the decline of the world, since the Holy Spirit foretells and forewarns us by the apostle, saying, “In the last days,” says he, “perilous times shall come” — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 1. On the Unity of the Church. Note: Heresy and schism grow in the decline of the world as the Spirit foretold by Paul. [2 Timothy 3:1-9]

11.26. Dionysius of Alexandria: Deniers of Christ's flesh are anti-Christ

“they believe some of them that he is not God nor Son of God, but others, that he never became man nor came in the flesh, but say that he was a phantasm and shadow ... all these John has rightly in his epistle called anti-Christ.” — Dionysius of Alexandria, Newly discovered letters to the Popes Stephen and Xystus. Note: Dionysius calls those who deny Christ's deity or real flesh antichrists in John's sense. [1 John 2:18]

11.27. Victorinus of Pettau: Rejects an earthly millennium

“Therefore they are not to be heard who assure themselves that there is to be an earthly reign of a thousand years; who think, that is to say, with the heretic Cerinthus. For the kingdom of Christ is now eternal in the saints, although the glory of the saints shall be manifested after the resurrection.” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: This closing note rejects an earthly thousand-year reign as Cerinthian; Christ's kingdom is now eternal in the saints. [Revelation 20:4-6]

11.28. Methodius of Olympus: Fallen stars are heresies

“And the stars, which the dragon touched with the end of his tail, and drew them down to earth, are the bodies of heresies” — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 8.-Thekla. Note: The stars the dragon sweeps down are, for Methodius, the assemblies of heretics. [Revelation 12:4]

11.29. Lactantius: Decline before the end

“Therefore, as the end of this world approaches, the condition of human affairs must undergo a change, and through the prevalence of wickedness become worse; so that now these times of ours, in which iniquity and impiety have increased even to the highest degree, may be judged happy and almost golden in comparison of that incurable evil.” — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: Wickedness will grow so much worse near the end that

the present times will seem golden by comparison. [2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:12]

11.30. Alexander of Alexandria: Arian apostasy: precursor of Antichrist

“there have gone forth lawless men, and adversaries of Christ, teaching men to apostatize; which thing, with good right, one might suspect and call the precursor of Antichrist” — Alexander of Alexandria, *Epistles on the Arian Heresy*. Note: Alexander of Alexandria calls the Arian teaching an apostasy and a precursor of Antichrist. [2 Thessalonians 2:3]

11.31. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Apostles on many antichrists

“John the theologian, and the beloved of Christ, in harmony with him, cries, “The children of the devil are manifest; and even now are there many antichrists; but go not after them. Believe not every spirit, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: The author gathers apostolic warnings: Peter, John and Jude on last-days scoffers, false teachers, and many antichrists. [1 John 2:18; 1 John 4:1; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 18]

11.32. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Corruption of church before the end

“The temples of God will be like houses, and there will be overturnings of the churches everywhere. The Scriptures will be despised, and everywhere they will sing the songs of the adversary. ... And, on the whole, from among those who profess to be Christians will rise up then false prophets, false apostles, impostors ... The shepherds will be like wolves; the priests will embrace falsehood; the monks will lust after the things of the world” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: Before the end, even among professing Christians there will be false prophets, wolfish shepherds, worldly clergy and monks, despised Scriptures and ruined churches. [Matthew 24:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:1-5]

11.33. Revelation of John (apocryphal): Holy things removed from the earth

“Then will I send forth mine angels over the face of all the earth, and they shall lift off the earth everything honourable, and everything precious, and the venerable and holy images, and the glorious and precious crosses, and the sacred vessels of the churches, and the divine and sacred books” — Revelation of John (apocryphal), *Revelation of John*. Note: Before Antichrist's reign, angels remove holy things, including crosses, church vessels and sacred books, from the earth. [1 Thessalonians 4:17]

11.34. Hilary of Poitiers: Church worn by his spirit

“But Christ coming in the end shall find His Church wearied, and tossed by the spirit of Anti-Christ, and by the troubles of the world. And because by their long experience of Anti-Christ they will be troubled at every novelty of trial, they shall have fear even at the approach of the Lord, suspecting deceitful appearances.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary says Christ will find the Church wearied and tossed by Anti-christ's spirit and so fearful of deceit that it fears even His approach. [*Matthew 14: 25-26*]

11.35. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arian apostasy a forerunner

“certain lawless men, enemies of Christ, teaching an apostasy, which one may justly suspect and designate as a forerunner of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Deposition of Arius*. Note: In the deposition letter, Alexander's circular (in Athanasius's collection) calls the Arian teaching an apostasy and a forerunner of Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 3*]

11.36. Athanasius of Alexandria: Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies

“have justified the other in comparison of themselves, as approaching nearer to Antichrist. Wherefore they have been excommunicated and anathematized by the Church. We grieve for their destruction, and especially because, having once been instructed in the doctrines of the Church, they have now sprung away. Yet we are not greatly surprised, for Hymenaeus and Philetus did the same, and before them Judas, who followed the Saviour, but afterwards became a traitor and an apostate. And concerning these same persons, we have not been left without instruction; for our Lord has forewarned us; “Take heed lest any man deceive you ... While Paul, who was taught these things by our Saviour, wrote that “in the latter times some shall depart from the sound faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, which reject the truth” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Deposition of Arius*. Note: The Arians are said to approach nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies; the author cites Christ's warning about many coming in His name and Paul on departing from the faith. [*Matthew 24: 4-5; 1 Timothy 4: 1*]

11.37. Athanasius of Alexandria: Last heresy, harbinger of Antichrist

“one heresy, and that the last, which has now risen as harbinger of Antichrist, the Arian, as it is called” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Four Dis-*

courses Against the Arians. Note: Athanasius calls Arianism the last heresy and the harbinger of Antichrist, arraying itself in Scripture language to deceive. [*1 John 2:19*]

11.38. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arianism called antichristian

“condemned the Antichristian heresy, and all avoid it, as they would a serpent” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: Athanasius says the people in every Church, keeping the faith they had learnt, condemned the Arian heresy as antichristian and avoided it as a serpent.

11.39. Athanasius of Alexandria: A prelude to Antichrist's coming

“It is not simply persecution, but more than persecution, it is a prelude and preparation for the coming of Antichrist.” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: Giving churches to heretics goes beyond persecution: Athanasius calls it a prelude and preparation for the coming of Antichrist.

11.40. Athanasius of Alexandria: The devil prepares Egypt for Antichrist

“in order that when his herald Antichrist shall come, he may find that the Churches in Egypt also are his own” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: Athanasius says the devil stirs up Arians so that when his herald Antichrist comes he will find the Egyptian churches and the Meletians already his own.

11.41. Athanasius of Alexandria: Meletians prepare Antichrist's way

“For behold, ‘they have not spared Thy servants, but are preparing the way for Antichrist.’ For the Meletians will never resist him, nor will they care for the truth, nor will they esteem it an evil thing to deny Christ” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: The Meletians are said to prepare the way for Antichrist, whom they will not resist, and to deny Christ readily.

[*Psalm 79; Matthew 24*]

11.42. Athanasius of Alexandria: Persecutors called Antichrists

“For although the forerunners of Antichrist have by the power of this world done everything to put out the lantern of truth, yet the Deity by your confession shews its light all the clearer, so that none can fail to see their deceit. Heretofore perhaps they were able to dissimulate: now they are called Antichrists” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Letters of Athanasius. Note: Writing

to Lucifer of Cagliari, Athanasius calls the Arian persecutors forerunners of Antichrist who can now openly be called Antichrists.

11.43. Athanasius of Alexandria: Antony: Arianism forerunner of Antichrist

“he denounced the Arians, saying that their heresy was the last of all and a forerunner of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Life of Antony*. Note: Athanasius says Antony came down from the mountain to Alexandria and denounced Arianism as the last heresy and a forerunner of Antichrist.

11.44. Basil of Caesarea: Is this the falling away?

“Has the last hour come, and is “the falling away” thus coming upon us, that now the lawless one “may be revealed the son of perdition who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God and is worshipped”? ... Brothers, martyrs’ crowns await you.” — Basil of Caesarea, *Letters* (part 1 of 2). Note: Basil wonders in a time of trial whether the falling away has come and the lawless one is about to be revealed, and urges the afflicted to endure and await Christ. [*2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 10:13*]

11.45. Basil of Caesarea: Perhaps the approach of Antichrist

“unless indeed the apostasy is now nigh at hand, and the events that have lately happened are the beginnings of the approach of Antichrist” — Basil of Caesarea, *Letters* (part 2 of 2). Note: Basil tells exiled Bishop Barses the troubles may be only temporary, like Israel’s captivity, unless the apostasy is nigh and these events begin Antichrist’s approach; then pray to be preserved unvanquished.

11.46. Apostolic Constitutions: Heretics are false christs and prophets

“For these are false Christs, and false prophets, and false apostles, deceivers and corrupters, portions of foxes, the destroyers of the herbs of the vineyards” — *Apostolic Constitutions, Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Book 6*. Note: The Constitutions label heretics who war against Christ under the name of Christ and Moses as false christs and prophets. [*Matthew 7:15; Matthew 24:24*]

11.47. Apostolic Constitutions: Heretics multiply as the end nears

“when the end of the world draws nigh, will be more in number and more troublesome, of whom said the Lord, “Will the Son of man, when He comes, find faith on the earth? ” and, “Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” — *Apostolic Constitutions, Constitutions of the Holy*

Apostles Book 6. Note: As the world's end nears, heretics grow more numerous, in line with the Lord's words about waning faith and love. [*Luke 18: 8; Matthew 24: 12; Matthew 24: 24*]

11.48. Cyril of Jerusalem: The falling away is now

"Thus wrote Paul, and now is the falling away. For men have fallen away from the right faith ; and some preach the identity of the Son with the Father , and others dare to say that Christ was brought into being out of nothing . And formerly the heretics were manifest; but now the Church is filled with heretics in disguise ... This therefore is the falling away, and the enemy is soon to be looked for: and meanwhile he has in part begun to send forth his own forerunners , that he may then come prepared upon the prey. Look therefore to thyself, O man, and make safe thy soul. The Church now charges thee before the Living God; she declares to thee the things concerning Antichrist before they arrive" — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Cyril says the falling away is already present in heresy and itching ears; the enemy has begun to send forerunners, and the Church warns of Antichrist beforehand. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 3; 2 Timothy 4: 3*]

11.49. Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishops against bishops foretold

"If thou hear that bishops advance against bishops, and clergy against clergy, and laity against laity even unto blood, be not troubled ; for it has been written before" — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Strife among bishops, clergy and laity, even unto blood, is a foretold sign and should not trouble the believer. [*Matthew 24: 10-12*]

11.50. Optatus of Milevis: Schismatics are antichrists

"who it is that lies under the judgement of John, the Apostle, when he declared that many Anti-Christ's should go forth without, 'because they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would have remained with us.' Therefore, he who was unwilling to remain with his brethren in unity has followed the heretics, and gone forth without, as an Anti-Christ." — Optatus of Milevis, Against the Donatists. Note: Optatus applies John's 'many antichrists' who went out because they were not of us to the Donatists, who left the unity of the Church. [*1 John 2: 18-19*]

11.51. Tyconius: Tyconius: plagues as power to persecute

"Thus far under the name of plagues is described the final persecution, which Tyconius wants to be understood all oppositely. A plague, he says, is incur-

able, and a great wrath to receive the power of sinning especially against the saints” — Tyconius, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by The Venerable Bede). Note: Bede reports Tyconius’s opposite reading of the bowls: the ‘plague’ is the incurable wrath of being given power to sin against the saints, while the Church’s humiliation is her glory. [*Revelation 16: 1–21*]

11.52. Gregory of Nyssa: Eunomianism a prelude of Antichrist

“Do ye not yet consider that this preaching of godlessness has been set on foot by the devil as a rehearsal, preparation, and prelude of the coming of Antichrist?” — Gregory of Nyssa, Against Eunomius (part 2 of 2). Note: Gregory of Nyssa says Eunomius’s doctrine was set on foot by the devil as a rehearsal and prelude of Antichrist’s coming, since he exalts his words above Christ’s. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

11.53. Ambrose of Milan: Heretics (the Arians) are Antichrists

“John, likewise, saith that heretics are Antichrists, plainly marking out the Arians. For this [Arian] heresy began to be after all other heresies, and hath gathered the poisons of all. As it is written of the Antichrist, that “he opened his mouth to blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His Name, and to make war with His saints,” so do they also dishonour the Son of God, and His martyrs have they not spared. Moreover, that which perchance Antichrist will not do, they have falsified the holy Scriptures” — Ambrose of Milan, Exposition of the Christian Faith. Note: Ambrose says John calls heretics Antichrists, plainly marking the Arians, whose heresy gathered all earlier poisons and who, like the beast, blasphemed and made war on saints. [*1 John 2: 18; Daniel 7: 25; Revelation 13: 6*]

11.54. Ambrose of Milan: Third: Arius, Sabellius

“There is also a third Antichrist, as Arius and Sabellius and all who with evil purpose lead us astray.” — Ambrose of Milan, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose names a third Antichrist: Arius, Sabellius and all who deliberately lead the faithful astray. [*Luke 21: 20; 1 John 2: 18*]

11.55. Pseudo-Ignatius: Rejecting the incarnation is antichrist

“And he that rejects the incarnation, and is ashamed of the cross for which I am in bonds, this man is antichrist.” — Pseudo-Ignatius, Spurious Letters Ascribed to Ignatius. Note: Whoever rejects the incarnation or is ashamed of the cross is called antichrist. [*1 John 4: 3*]

11.56. Macarius Magnes: Manes, Montanus, Marcion as antichrists

“as these are Anti-christs, or contrary to God, their followers are no longer willing to bear the name of Christian, but like to be called, after the name of their leaders, Manichaeans, Montanists, Marcionists, Droserians, and Dositheans. Do you see the baneful armies of many Antichrists terribly inflamed against Christ and the Christians” — Macarius Magnes, *Apocriticus*. Note: Macarius names Manes, Montanus, Marcion and others as many Anti-christs, fulfilling the Saviour’s warning. [*Matthew 24: 5; 1John 2: 18*]

11.57. John Chrysostom: Error beside truth from the beginning

“the devil always setting up error by the side of truth. God from the beginning promised good, the devil came too with a promise. God planted Paradise, the devil deceived, saying, “Ye shall be as gods.” (Gen. iii. 5.) For as he could show nothing in actions, he made the more promises in words. Such is the character of deceivers. After this were Cain and Abel, then the sons of Seth and the daughters of men; afterwards Ham and Japhet, Abraham and Pharaoh, Jacob and Esau; and so it is even to the end, Moses and the magicians, the Prophets and the false prophets, the Apostles and the false apostles, Christ and Antichrist ... In short, there was no time when falsehood was not set up in opposition to truth. Let us not therefore be distressed. That it would be so, was foretold from the beginning” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Timothy*. Note: Heresy is nothing new: the devil always sets error beside truth, down to Christ and Antichrist, so believers should not be distressed. [2

Timothy 3: 1]

11.58. Jerome: Heretics put Antichrist for Christ

“These people take the text in the sense of their heresy, to see an Antichrist in the place of Christ” — Jerome, *Commentary on Jonah*. Note: Commenting on Jonah 2, Jerome says certain heretics read the text in their own sense, putting an Antichrist in the place of Christ and seizing the Churches.

11.59. Jerome: Not of Christ means of Antichrist

“He that gathers not with you scatters; [Matt. 12:30] he that is not of Christ is of Antichrist.” — Jerome, *Letters* (part 1 of 3). Note: Writing to Pope Damasus, Jerome says whoever is not gathered with Rome’s communion is not of Christ and therefore of Antichrist. [*Matthew 12: 30*]

11.60. Jerome: Antichrist's disciple governs the Church

“O misery! Antichrist's disciple governs the Church of Christ.” — Jerome, The Dialogue Against the Luciferians. Note: In the dialogue, a speaker laments that when the bishop teaches error, an 'Antichrist's disciple' governs the Church of Christ.

11.61. Jerome: Sects are the synagogue of Antichrist

“you may be sure that you have there not the Church of Christ, but the synagogue of Antichrist” — Jerome, The Dialogue Against the Luciferians. Note: Jerome's orthodox speaker says groups named after someone other than Christ, such as Marcionites or Valentinians, are the synagogue of Antichrist, because they arose after the Church's foundation. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

11.62. Jerome: Luciferian: 'synagogue of Antichrist'

“it ought more correctly to be called the synagogue of AntiChrist than the Church of Christ” — Jerome, The Dialogue Against the Luciferians. Note: The Luciferian speaker in Jerome's dialogue charges that a church accepting Arian bishops should be called the synagogue of Antichrist; Jerome gives this as his opponent's claim.

11.63. Palladius of Galatia: Is the falling away beginning?

“Can it be that it is the last hour, and the falling away of which Paul speaks is being ushered in by these events, “that the son of perdition, who opposeth, may be revealed?” — Palladius of Galatia, Dialogue on the life of St. John Chrysostom. Note: In Palladius's dialogue a deacon wonders, amid the persecution of Chrysostom's supporters, whether the falling away of 2 Thessalonians is beginning and the son of perdition near. [2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

11.64. Augustine of Hippo: Faith on earth: perfect faith rare

“Our Lord speaks this of perfect faith, which is seldom found on earth. See how full the Church of God is; were there no faith, who would enter it? Were there perfect faith, who would not move mountains?” — Augustine of Hippo, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine reads 'shall he find faith on earth?' as concerning perfect faith, which is rare, not the absence of the Church's faith. [Luke 18: 8]

11.65. Augustine of Hippo: Stars fall: believers give way

“Then shall the stars fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, because many, who seemed to be shining in God’s grace, shall give way to their persecutors, and shall fall, and even the stoutest believers shall be shaken.” — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine reads the falling stars as many apparently graced believers falling under persecution, even the stoutest being shaken. [*Matthew 24:29; 2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

11.66. Augustine of Hippo: All who leave the Church are antichrists

“Certainly all who go out from the Church, and are cut off from the unity of the Church, are antichrists; let no man doubt it” — Augustine of Hippo, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*. Note: Augustine asserts that all who go out from the Church and are cut off from its unity are antichrists, and goes on to argue the point with the Donatists. [*1 John 2:18-19*]

11.67. Augustine of Hippo: Arians, Eunomians, Novatians as antichrists

“Ask the Arians: they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh: ask the Eunomians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh: ask the Macedonians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh: put the question to the Cataphryges; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh: put it to the Novatians; they confess “that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Then have all these heresies the Spirit of God? Are they then no false prophets? Is there then no deception there, no seduction there? Assuredly they are antichrists; for “they went out from us, but were not of us.”” — Augustine of Hippo, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*. Note: Augustine notes that Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, Cataphrygians and Novatians all confess Christ come in the flesh, yet he calls them antichrists because they went out from the Church. [*1 John 4:2-3*]

11.68. Augustine of Hippo: Legislator = Antichrist’s tyranny

“Or, if you will, you may take the legislator in S. Augustine’s sense, as referring to Antichrist; that since man has so far forsaken GOD and so resolutely persisted in his “We will not have this man to reign over us,” such continued rejection of the King of Peace shall be followed by the tyranny of Antichrist.” — Augustine of Hippo, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by

Neale and Littledale (Commentary on the Psalms)); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale give Augustine's reading of the Vulgate 'legislator' as Antichrist: persistent rejection of the King of Peace will be followed by his tyranny. [*Psalm 9: 20*]

11.69. John Cassian: Spirit of Antichrist

"Every spirit," he says, "which confesseth Jesus come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that dissolveth Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of Antichrist, of whom you have heard already, and he is now already in the world. ... Do you recognize him, O you heretic? Do you recognize that it is plainly and markedly spoken of you?" — John Cassian, The Seven Books on the Incarnation of the Lord., Note: Cassian, writing against Nestorius, applies John's 'spirit of Antichrist', which dissolves Jesus, to the heretic who does not confess that Jesus is God. [*1 John 4: 3*]

11.70. Socrates Scholasticus: Alexander's letter: forerunner of Antichrist

"lawless and anti-christian men, teaching apostasy such as one may justly consider and denominate the forerunner of Antichrist" — Socrates Scholasticus, The Ecclesiastical History. Note: Socrates reproduces Alexander of Alexandria's letter calling Arius and his supporters lawless anti-christian men whose apostasy is the forerunner of Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 3*]

11.71. Apocalypse of Sedrach: Impenitent perish with Antichrist

"Peccatores enim non salvantur," for their hearts are like rotten stone: these are they who walk in impious ways and who shall be destroyed with Antichrist." — Apocalypse of Sedrach, The Apocalypse of Sedrach. Note: In this Apocalypse the Lord says that sinners who walk in impious ways and do not repent will perish together with Antichrist; Sedrach pleads for mercy for them. [*Luke 5: 32; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

11.72. Leo the Great: The Tome: dissolving Jesus is Antichrist

"and every spirit which dissolveth Jesus is not of God, and this is Antichrist. Now what is to dissolve Jesus, but to separate the human nature from him" — Leo the Great, The Tome of St. Leo. Note: The Tome of Leo, accepted at Chalcedon, cites John to say that dissolving Jesus, by separating His human nature from Him, is the spirit of Antichrist. [*1 John 4: 3*]

11.73. Testament of Our Lord: Shepherds deny Christ, trust a corruptible king

“But the time shall come when some of them will deny Me, and will stir up confusions in the earth, and put their trust in a corruptible king. But they who in My Name endure unto the end shall be saved.” — Testament of Our Lord, The Testament of Our Lord (Cooper and Maclean translation); scanned text. Note: Among the evil shepherds some will deny Christ and trust a corruptible king, while those who endure are saved. [*Matthew 24: 10-13*]

11.74. Theodoret of Cyrus: Denying Christ's flesh is the spirit of Anti-Christ

“But that you may know that they who deny the flesh of the Saviour are of the opposite spirit, hear the great John in his Catholic Epistle saying “Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God, and this is that spirit of Anti-Christ.” — Theodoret of Cyrus, Dialogues. Note: In the Eranistes, Theodoret's Orthodox cites John to show that those who deny Christ's flesh have the spirit of Anti-Christ. [*1 John 4: 2-3*]

11.75. Leo the Great: Eutyches' denial of Christ's flesh is Antichrist

“Nor has he any fear of the blessed apostle and evangelist John's declaration when he says, “every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh, is of God: and every spirit which destroys Jesus is not of God, and this is Antichrist . But what is “to destroy Jesus,” except to take away the human nature from Him” — Leo the Great, Letters. Note: In the Tome to Flavian, Leo applies John's ‘this is Antichrist’ to Eutyches' denial of Christ's human nature, saying to ‘destroy Jesus’ means taking His nature away. [*1 John 4: 2-3*]

11.76. Leo the Great: Eutyches and Nestorius promote Antichrist

“(Condemning the Latrocinium and maintaining that Eutyches equally with Nestorius promotes the cause of Antichrist.)” — Leo the Great, Letters. Note: The heading to Leo's letter 75 states that Eutyches, like Nestorius, advances the cause of Antichrist.

11.77. Leo the Great: ‘Abomination of antichrist’ on Alexandria's throne

“in preventing the abomination of antichrist any longer occupying the throne of the blessed Fathers” — Leo the Great, Letters. Note: Leo congratulates Timothy on his election at Alexandria, saying the emperor has prevented the ‘abomination of antichrist’ from still occupying the throne of the Fathers, meaning the heretic predecessor.

11.78. Anonymous of Cyzicus: Arianism as forerunner of Antichrist

“lawless men, enemies of Christ, have come forward and are teaching an apostasy which one might reasonably suspect to be the forerunner of the Antichrist” — Anonymous of Cyzicus, Ecclesiastical History of the Council of Nicaea. Note: In this Nicaea history, Alexander's letter calls the Arian teaching an apostasy that one might reasonably suspect to be the forerunner of the Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

11.79. Joshua the Stylite: Disasters are chastisement, not the end

“From these words then of our Lord and of His Apostle we understood that these things did not happen to us because it was the latter time, but that they took place for our chastisement, because our sins were great.” — Joshua the Stylite, Chronicle composed in Syriac in A.D.507. Note: He concludes that the calamities of 502-3 were God's chastisement for sin, not proof that the last time had come. [*Matthew 24:6-7*]

11.80. Pseudo-Zachariah of Mitylene: Leo calls Timothy Antichrist

“And they censured the consecration of Timothy, whom Leo, ... the bishop of Rome, even named "the Antichrist."” — Pseudo-Zachariah of Mitylene, The Syriac Chronicle. Note: In the Chalcedonian dispute the bishops report that Leo of Rome called Timothy (Aelurus) 'the Antichrist'. [*1 John 2:18*]

11.81. Gregory the Great: Signs fulfilled; the end near

“Of all these things, we certainly see some already accomplished, and we dread others as soon to come. For we see nation rising against nation and their pressure bearing down upon the lands more in our own times than we read of in books. How often we have heard from other parts of the world that earthquakes have destroyed countless cities, you well know. We suffer pestilences without ceasing. Signs in the sun, and moon, and stars we do not yet see openly, but that these too are not far off we gather from the very changes in the atmosphere.” — Gregory the Great, 40 Homilies on the Gospels. Note: In a homily on Luke 21, Gregory says many of the predicted signs, such as wars, earthquakes and pestilences, are already fulfilled, and the remaining ones are not far off. [*Luke 21:10-11,25*]

11.82. Gregory the Great: Some who seem to shine fall away

“Now a portion of the stars is drawn by the dragon's tail, in that, in the last efforts of Antichrist to win men, some that appear to shine will be carried

off.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 1 of 5). Note: Gregory reads the dragon’s tail drawing a third of the stars as showing that in Antichrist’s last efforts some who seem to shine will be carried off. [*Revelation* 12: 4]

11.83. Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives: Day comes suddenly; be prepared

“Let us be afraid lest that day come upon us suddenly (or, unexpectedly), and we are found to be naked, and in a miserable state. For it shall come suddenly, and we shall not know how to repent” — *Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives*, *Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The monk’s exhortation warns that the day will come unexpectedly and leave no time to repent. [*Matthew* 24: 38-39]

11.84. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Oppression due to Christians’ sins

“Their actions, of which you are witnesses, are because of the sins committed by my people, because they have rejected my commands and my ordinances in order to resemble this nation.” — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: Christ tells the martyrs the Arab oppression results from His people’s sins in imitating the oppressors. [*Daniel* 12: 7]

11.85. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Endure to the end; many deny

“he who accepts the correction of the Lord with thanks and patience, when it happens to him because of Christ, will be saved according to the word of the holy Gospel: “He who perseveres until the end will be saved. As for he who is impatient and doubts, woe to him forever. Indeed, many of the Christians in that time will disavow Christ because of the short time [of trial] which will pass away.” — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: Endurance with thanks will save; many Christians will deny Christ during the Ishmaelite affliction. [*Matthew* 24: 13]

11.86. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Apostasy through lack of teachers

“Some will disavow Him because of the difficulties which they will have and because (f. 28 v. they will not find anybody to instruct them nor to comfort them in their sorrows” — *Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun*. Note: Some will deny Christ for lack of teachers and comforters; others through fashion, pleasure and idleness. [*Matthew* 24: 12]

11.87. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Godless last king

“He is without decency and he will forget the fear of God. He will not remember the law of Ishmael his father, nor of his mother, who is Roman; he will be arrogant, continuously drunk” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: The last Ishmaelite ruler is portrayed as godless, arrogant and drunken, forgetting the law of both parents.

11.88. Bede: Few elect at His coming

“When the Almighty Creator shall appear in the form of the Son of man, so scarce will the elect be, that not so much the cries of the faithful as the torpor of the others will hasten the world’s fall.” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede says the elect will be so few at Christ’s appearing that the indifference of others will hasten the world’s fall. [*Luke 18:8*]

11.89. Bede: Heretics and bad Catholics as antichrists

“He calls heretics Antichrists; but also those who, by perverse actions, destroy the Catholic faith which they profess, are rightly called Antichrists, that is, contrary to Christ; who all bear witness to that great Antichrist who will come at the end of the age, as to their head. ... although this one only harassed the Church with foul tongues, that one will torment with fierce swords.” — Bede, *Bede’s Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*. Note: Bede says heretics and perverse professing Catholics are antichrists who witness to the great final Antichrist as their head; their persecution resembles the last, but with tongues, not swords. [*1 John 2:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7*]

11.90. Bede: John’s ‘Antichrists’ are heretics

“John wrote his Epistles and the Gospel much later, who, after the Lord’s assassination, returned from exile and found the Church troubled by heretics in his absence, whom he often names Antichrists in his Epistles.” — Bede, *Bede’s Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*. Note: Bede explains that John wrote his Epistles after returning from exile to find the Church troubled by heretics, whom he often names Antichrists. [*1 John 2:18*]

11.91. Bede: Cast alive into the lake of fire

“This seems to indicate that the devil and the Antichrist will be punished with a greater penalty than other humans or demons ... Whether you understand the Antichrist as the false prophet or heretics” — Bede, *Commentary*

on Revelation. Note: Bede says that being cast alive into the lake of fire indicates a greater penalty for the devil and Antichrist than for others, and allows that the false prophet may mean heretics. [Revelation 19:20]

11.92. Bede: Final persecution: stars fall, Church hides

“when the ministers of Antichrist are allowed to attack the servants of Christ. [Revelation 6:12] -- And the whole moon became like blood. The Church will shed blood for Christ more than usual. ... Those who shine outwardly in the Church, driven by the wind of the final persecution, will be shown to have been earthly.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede reads the sixth seal as the ministers of Antichrist attacking Christ's servants: bloodshed, nominal Christians shown to be earthly, and the Church retreating discreetly out of sight. [Revelation 6:12-14]

11.93. Bede: Heretics precede open war of Antichrist

“the fifth, the greater infestation of heretics preceding the time of the Antichrist; the sixth, the open war of the Antichrist and his followers against the Church” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede reads the fifth trumpet as a greater infestation of heretics before Antichrist's time and the sixth as the open war of Antichrist and his followers on the Church. [Revelation 8:2-13]

11.94. Remigius: False brethren are Antichrists

“As the capture of Jerusalem approached, many rose up, calling themselves Christians, and deceived many; such Paul calls false brethren, John Antichrists.” — Remigius, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Remigius says the false brethren Paul names are the Antichrists of John, who arose before Jerusalem's capture. [Matthew 24:10-11; 1 John 2:18]

11.95. Remigius: Many depart; he sends false prophets

“But the whole passage might be referred to the end of the world. For then shall many be offended, and depart from the faith, when they see the numbers and wealth of the wicked, and the miracles of Antichrist, and they shall persecute their brethren; and Antichrist shall send false Prophets, who shall deceive many” — Remigius, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Remigius refers the passage to the end of the world: many will leave the faith

at the sight of the wicked and of Antichrist's miracles, and he will send false prophets. [Matthew 24: 10-12; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

11.96. Theophylact: Dwelling-place of every sin

"For when Antichrist has come, then shall men become wanton, given up to abominable vices, as the Apostle says, Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. For if Antichrist is the dwelling-place of every sin, what else will he then implant in the miserable race of men, but what belongs to himself." — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact says that under Antichrist, the dwelling-place of every sin, men will grow wanton and given to vice, as in the days of Noah and Lot. [Luke 17: 26-29; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

11.97. Anselm: Persecutor with miracles, martyr none

"That fearful persecution of Antichrist, when, if it were possible, the very elect should fall away,—that terrible trial of faith when, as S. Anselm says, the persecutor shall glitter with miracles, and the Martyr shall perform none" — Anselm, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale, citing Anselm, say Antichrist's persecution will be a trial when the persecutor glitters with miracles and the martyr performs none. [Psalm 10: 13; Matthew 24: 24]

11.98. Solomon of Basra: Mass apostasy under Ishmael

"The feeble will deny the true faith, the holy Cross, and the life-giving mysteries; and without compulsion many will deny Christ, and become rebels and slanderers and boasters, denying the faith." — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Under the Ishmaelite oppression many Christians will apostatise, some without compulsion.

11.99. Solomon of Basra: Clergy dishonoured

"Honour shall be taken away from the priests, and the pastors shall become as the people." — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The clergy will lose their honour and become indistinguishable from the laity in these last days.

11.100. Thomas Aquinas: Antichrist the last great winnowing

“And first the Jews winnowed it, then the Gentiles, now the heretics, and after a time shall Antichrist thoroughly winnow it. For as when the blast is gentle, only the lighter chaff is carried off, but the heavier remains; so a slight wind of temptation carries off the worst characters only; but should a greater storm arise, even those who seem steadfast will depart.” — Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 1 (chapters 1–10); scanned text. Note: An anonymous comment says the Church has been sifted by Jews, Gentiles and heretics, and Antichrist will winnow it most thoroughly, so that even seeming steadfast ones depart. [*Matthew 3:12*]

11.101. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Church dreads the great apostasy

“Again ; it is the prayer of the Church, looking forward to the great apostasy of the latter days, and dreading lest her love, waxing cold, should expose her to yet more terrible losses” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers read the aged Church’s prayer as looking toward the great apostasy of the latter days, fearing her love may grow cold. [*Psalm 71:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

11.102. Neale and Littledale (compilers): He uses learning and literal Scripture

“The various reading is said by another to apply to the Church of the last days, resisting the wiles of Antichrist, who will bring to bear all worldly learning, and even a bare literal rendering of Holy Writ, to aid his cause.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale cite one commentator who applies a variant reading of the psalm to the Church of the last days resisting Antichrist, who will use worldly learning and bare literal Scripture. [*Psalm 71:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:9*]

11.103. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Every age thinks it near the end

“They take it of the coming of Antichrist in the last times, when the faith of the Church has become weak, and from Augustine in the fifth century to Parez in the fifteenth, each accounts his own days as near the end, and finds all the marks of decrepitude in the belief and lives of Christians” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text.

Note: The compilers say commentators read 'forsake me not in mine old age' of Antichrist's coming, with each age from Augustine to Perez judging itself near the end amid weakened faith. [*Psalm 71:18*]

11.104. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Church's seven ages to Antichrist*

"They see in it the pilgrimage of the Church from the days of Adam to those of Antichrist, counting the seven ages of man's estate in this wise." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say the Fathers read Psalm 71 as the pilgrimage of the Church from Adam to Antichrist, in seven ages of a human life. [*Psalm 71:1*]

11.105. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Church reduced to few in his days*

"which sometimes, as in the days of Arian success, have reduced the Church to a few, and will do so again in the last days, during the manifestation of Antichrist." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say heresy and schism have at times reduced the Church to few, as under Arian success, and will again during Antichrist's manifestation. [*Psalm 107:39-40*]

11.106. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Great destroying of God's law*

"And that night is foreshadowed here, looking forward to that great destroying of GOD's law which shall be in the time of Antichrist, when, above all other times that the Church has known, she will need to make this prayer." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 4 (Psalms 119–150) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say 'It is time for thee, Lord, to lay to thine hand' looks ahead to the great destroying of God's law under Antichrist, when the Church most needs this prayer. [*Psalm 119:126; John 9:4*]

12. ARE THERE MANY ANTICHRISTS?

"Even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). John's sentence gave the Fathers their first, most frequent and most practical use of the word. From the second century to the eighth they apply it to Gnostics and Marcion, to Mani, to Arius and Eunomius, to Donatist schismatics, to persecuting emperors, and, in Augustine and Gregory the Great, to anyone whose life denies Christ even inside the Church. At the same time nearly all of them also say that one final Anti-

christ is still to come. The two ideas are held together: the many are his members, forerunners and witnesses.

In this chapter

This question draws on 183 quotations from 50 voices. 55 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 128 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Gnostics and heretics of the second century (Polycarp, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Pseudo-Ignatius)

The oldest application is to the heretics John was writing against. Polycarp calls the firstborn of Satan those who deny the resurrection and judgment. Irenaeus applies John's test to Gnostic divisions of Christ. Tertullian calls Marcion an antichrist for denying Christ's bodily reality and names Ebion as another. Clement of Alexandria takes the antichrist to be the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ.

Heretics who dress in Christ's name (Origen, Jerome, Cyprian, Athanasius, Pseudo-Clement)

Origen treats Antichrist as whatever feigns truth or virtue, since Christ is the truth and the virtues: false wisdom, false justice, false word. He reads the abomination standing in the holy place as Antichrist the "false word" standing in the Scriptures. Jerome says heretics speak of Christ while hiding Antichrist behind him. In the Clementine Homilies the false always precedes the true. Cyprian says heretics baptize in Christ's name, which is Antichrist baptizing in Christ's name.

Arius and his successors (Alexander of Alexandria, Hilary, Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, Ambrose)

The fourth century applies the word to Arianism and to the Arian emperors. Alexander says the Arians have come nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies. Hilary says Arianism is the Evil One's suggestion through forerunners and that he will utter it himself hereafter. Athanasius asks what more Antichrist could do than Constantius. Gregory of Nazianzus calls George of Alexandria his forerunner and reports that Julian titled one satire "Antichrist". Ambrose names Arius and Sabellius as a third antichrist, after the devil.

Mani and the Eastern sects (Acts of Archelaus, Macarius Magnes, Paulicians, Leo)

In the Acts of Archelaus, Mani presents himself as the promised Paraclete and Archelaus replies that he is a base vessel of Antichrist, sent ahead to test the Church's strength. Macarius Magnes names Manes, Montanus and Marcion as many Antichrists. Leo applies John's warning to the Manichaeans' denial of Christ's real flesh, and to Eutyches and Nestorius in turn.

Persecuting emperors and rulers (Gregory of Nazianzus, John of Nikiu, Severus, Pseudo-Linus, Chrysostom)

Rulers who attack the Church are called antichrists or forerunners. Gregory of Nazianzus calls the Arian emperor "the Anti-Christian Emperor". John of Nikiu says in Diocletian's persecution everyone thought him Antichrist come to destroy the world. Severus likens the caliph Omar II to Antichrist, and the Acts of Linus calls Nero the Antichrist. Chrysostom, in an argument about hell, calls Nero the Mystery of Antichrist.

Everyone whose life denies Christ, even inside the Church (Augustine, Gregory the Great, Bede)

Augustine presses the point further than anyone. Many antichrists, he says, have not left the Church at all: the perjured, adulterers, drunkards, the covetous. Whoever denies Christ by his conduct is an antichrist, and whoever violates love denies by his life that Christ came in the flesh. Gregory the Great says Cain, Judas and Simon Magus were limbs of Antichrist before he came, and that all the wicked are his members. Bede says many of the baptised already serve his kingdom.

Many now, one at the end (Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem, John of Damascus, Bede)

The Fathers rarely let the many replace the one. Augustine says that as many heretics, called many antichrists by John, left the Church, so at the end one will come. John of Damascus distinguishes the general antichrist, anyone who denies the incarnation, from the particular Antichrist at the end. Bede says heretics and bad Catholics are antichrists who witness to the great final Antichrist as their head.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Even now are there many antichrists (1John 2:18-23)

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. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. [1John 2:18-23]

Try the spirits (1John 4:1-6)

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. [1John 4:1-6]

He is antichrist that denieth (2John 1:7-11)

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. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. [2John 1:7-11]

Take heed that no man deceive you (Matt 24: 4–14)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. [Matthew 24: 4–14]

Wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15–23)

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. [Matthew 7:15–23]

Grievous wolves shall enter in (Acts 20: 28–31)

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples

after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. [*Acts 20: 28-31*]

False teachers among you (2 Pet 2: 1-3)

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. [*2 Peter 2: 1-3*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Polycarp of Smyrna, Antichrist as denier of the incarnation (11.3); Justin Martyr, False christs are the heretics now (11.5); Irenaeus of Lyons, Many antichrists have appeared (11.6); Irenaeus of Lyons, Dividing Christ is antichrist (11.7); Tertullian, Charge of 'human Antichrist' rebutted (11.11); Tertullian, Heresy as present antichrist (11.12); Origen of Alexandria, Antichrist = false word in Scripture (13.2); Origen of Alexandria, One genus, many Antichrists (13.3); Origen of Alexandria, Whatever feigns the truth (13.4); Origen of Alexandria, Antichrist's wonders like Egypt's magicians (3.15); Origen of Alexandria, Many antichrists, many christs (13.6); Secundinus of Carpis, Heretics 'progeny of Antichrist' (11.16); Cyprian of Carthage, Cyprian: heretics are antichrists (11.17); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist cannot threaten his way in (15.14); Cyprian of Carthage, Schismatic violence imitates Antichrist's coming (11.19); Cyprian of Carthage, Pride is the spirit of Antichrist (13.7); Cyprian of Carthage, Christ or Antichrist in the heart (13.8); Cyprian of Carthage, Those who left the Church are antichrists (11.21); Cyprian of Carthage, The spirit of Antichrist possesses heretics (13.9); Cyprian of Carthage, Heretics are called adversaries and antichrists (11.22); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrists are those who leave the Church's unity (11.23); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist baptizes in Christ's name (11.24); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist under the name of Christ (3.17); Cyprian of Carthage, Antiochus is a type of Antichrist (2.19); Dionysius of Alexandria, Deniers of Christ's flesh are anti-Christs (11.26); Acts of Archelaus, Mani as Antichrist's forerunner vessel (3.18); Acts of Archelaus, Mani claims to be the Paraclete (3.19); Victorinus of Pettau, 'Synagogue of Satan' gathered by Antichrist

(16.7); Victorinus of Pettau, Abomination may be church heresy (6.26); Methodius of Olympus, Fallen stars are heresies (11.28); Pseudo-Clement, The false precedes the true (3.21); Pseudo-Clement, Tenth pair: Antichrist and Christ (3.22); Alexander of Alexandria, Arian apostasy: precursor of Antichrist (11.30); Alexander of Alexandria, Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies (15.24); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Apostles on many antichrists (11.31); Hilary of Poitiers, Arians, forerunners of Antichrist (2.26); Athanasius of Alexandria, Devil counterfeits Christ in heresy (3.36); Athanasius of Alexandria, Antichrists give occasion for patience (13.14); Athanasius of Alexandria, Arian apostasy a forerunner (11.35); Athanasius of Alexandria, Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies (11.36); Athanasius of Alexandria, Last heresy, harbinger of Antichrist (11.37); Athanasius of Alexandria, Arianism called antichristian (11.38); Athanasius of Alexandria, A prelude to Antichrist's coming (11.39); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius fits Daniel's portrait (5.30); Athanasius of Alexandria, What more could Antichrist do? (14.38); Athanasius of Alexandria, Constantius, forerunner of the lawless one (6.35); Athanasius of Alexandria, The devil prepares Egypt for Antichrist (11.40); Athanasius of Alexandria, Meletians prepare Antichrist's way (11.41); Athanasius of Alexandria, Come out from among them (15.31); Athanasius of Alexandria, Trials prove long-suffering (13.15); Athanasius of Alexandria, Persecutors called Antichrists (11.42); Athanasius of Alexandria, Antony: Arianism forerunner of Antichrist (11.43); Athanasius of Alexandria, Whoever brings Arianism is Antichrist (15.32); Athanasius of Alexandria, Heresy prepares Antichrist's deceit (13.16); Apostolic Constitutions, Heretics are false christs and prophets (11.46); Cyril of Jerusalem, The falling away is now (11.48); Optatus of Milevis, Schismatics are antichrists (11.50); Gregory of Nyssa, Eunomianism a prelude of Antichrist (11.52); Ambrose of Milan, Heretics (the Arians) are Antichrists (11.53); Ambrose of Milan, Second: the Devil besieging the soul (13.18); Ambrose of Milan, Third: Arius, Sabellius (11.54); Pseudo-Ignatius, Rejecting the incarnation is antichrist (11.55); Marcarius Magnes, Manes, Montanus, Marcion as antichrists (11.56); John Chrysostom, Thief and robber alludes to him (3.42); John Chrysostom, Nero his type; Rome removed (4.21); John Chrysostom, Error beside truth from the beginning (11.57); John Chrysostom, Thieves who skip the Scriptures (3.47); John Chrysostom, Error follows truth: Antichrist after Christ (3.48); John Chrysostom, Nero the mystery of Antichrist (14.49); Jerome,

Christ and Antichrist cannot blend (13.19); Jerome, Heretics put Antichrist for Christ (11.58); Jerome, Heretics hide Antichrist behind Christ (3.51); Jerome, Not of Christ means of Antichrist (11.59); Jerome, Antichrist pretends to be Christ (3.52); Jerome, Antichrist's disciple governs the Church (11.60); Jerome, Sects are the synagogue of Antichrist (11.61); Jerome, Luciferian: 'synagogue of Antichrist' (11.62); Palladius of Galatia, Demon plays Christ (3.54); Sulpicius Severus, False Elias; Antichrist at hand (13.22); Sulpicius Severus, Nero expected to return before Antichrist (2.31); Augustine of Hippo, Exalts his own name (13.23); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrists because lives oppose Christ (13.25); Augustine of Hippo, Enemies of brotherly love are antichrists (13.26); Augustine of Hippo, Wicked members are antichrists (13.27); Augustine of Hippo, The wicked the Church bears belong to Antichrist (13.28); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist honours his own name (13.29); Augustine of Hippo, All who leave the Church are antichrists (11.66); Augustine of Hippo, Denial by deeds, not tongue (13.30); Augustine of Hippo, Denying Christ by one's deeds (13.31); Augustine of Hippo, Unmanifest antichrists inside the Church (13.32); Augustine of Hippo, The 'last hour' is long (15.46); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist means 'contrary to Christ' (13.35); Augustine of Hippo, Arians, Eunomians, Novatians as antichrists (11.67); Augustine of Hippo, Dividing the Church denies Christ come in the flesh (13.37); Augustine of Hippo, Whoever violates charity is an antichrist (13.38); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrists speak of the world (13.39); Augustine of Hippo, Which temple? Uncertain (6.46); Augustine of Hippo, Nero redivivus rejected as rash (2.33); Augustine of Hippo, Many antichrists now, one at the end (13.40); John Cassian, Spirit of Antichrist (11.69); Socrates Scholasticus, Alexander's letter: forerunner of Antichrist (11.70); Leo the Great, The Tome: dissolving Jesus is Antichrist (11.72); Theodoret of Cyrus, Denying Christ's flesh is the spirit of Anti-Christ (11.74); Leo the Great, Eutyches' denial of Christ's flesh is Antichrist (11.75); Leo the Great, Eutyches and Nestorius promote Antichrist (11.76); Leo the Great, 'Abomination of antichrist' on Alexandria's throne (11.77); Leo the Great, Manichaeans' denial of the flesh is Antichrist (13.42); Anonymous of Cyzicus, Arianism as forerunner of Antichrist (11.78); Pseudo-Linus, Nero called the Antichrist (5.38); Pseudo-Zachariah of Mitylene, Leo calls Timothy Antichrist (11.80); Gregory the Great, Cain, Judas, Simon as limbs of Antichrist (13.46); Gregory the Great, All the wicked are his members (4.27); Miscellaneous

Coptic Texts, Antichrist = denier of the incarnation (16.40); Miscellaneous Coptic Texts, Julian a forerunner of Antichrist (5.40); John of Nikiu, Diocletian taken for Antichrist (5.46); Bede, Simon Magus first Antichrist (2.45); Bede, Doeg as Antichrist (14.68); Bede, Heretics and bad Catholics as antichrists (11.89); Bede, Three kinds of denial (16.43); Bede, John's 'Antichrists' are heretics (11.90); Bede, Date-setters and false Christs rejected (15.58); Bede, Early heresiarchs said the day was at hand (15.59); Bede, Court outside the temple; body of the wicked already at work (6.54); Bede, Many baptised already serve his kingdom (13.52); Remigius, False brethren are Antichrists (11.94); Severus of al-Ashmunein, Caliph likened to Antichrist (5.53); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Spiritual Assyrians under Antichrist (14.84); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Four persecutions; Antichrist worst (5.59).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

12.1. Irenaeus of Lyons: Marcus the magician as precursor

"Thus it appears as if he really were the precursor of Antichrist. For, joining the buffooneries of Anaxilaus to the craftiness of the magi, as they are called, he is regarded by his senseless and cracked-brain followers as working miracles by these means." — Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies*. Note: The heretic Marcus, a magician working pseudo-miracles, is called a precursor of Antichrist.

12.2. Clement of Alexandria: Antichrist denies Jesus is the Christ

"Ver. 1 John 2:22. "A liar" and "an antichrist, who denieth that Jesus is the Christ." For Jesus, Saviour and Redeemer, is also Christ the King." — Clement of Alexandria, *Fragments*. Note: Clement's comment on 1 John takes the antichrist to be the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ, the King. [1 John 2:22]

12.3. Tertullian: Modalists as antichrists

"Away, then, with those "Antichrists who deny the Father and the Son." For they deny the Father, when they say that He is the same as the Son; and they deny the Son, when they suppose Him to be the same as the Father" — Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*. Note: Tertullian applies John's 'antichrists' to modalists who merge Father and Son. [1 John 2:22]

12.4. Tertullian: Denial of Christ's flesh

"Surely he is antichrist who denies that Christ has come in the flesh." — Tertullian, *On the Flesh of Christ*. Note: A denier of Christ's real flesh is an antichrist. [*1 John 4:3*]

12.5. Tertullian: False prophets are forerunners

"as it is taught us in both the ancient and the new prophecies, and especially by the Apostle John, who says that "already many false prophets are gone out into the world," the fore-runners of Antichrist, who deny that Christ is come in the flesh" — Tertullian, *The Five Books Against Marcion*. Note: Antichrist is taught in the old and new prophecies; John's many false prophets are his forerunners. [*1 John 4:1-3; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12*]

12.6. Tertullian: Marcion as an antichrist

"whom the Apostle John designated as antichrists, when they denied that Christ was come in the flesh ... Now, the more firmly the antichrist Marcion had seized this assumption, the more prepared was he, of course, to reject the bodily substance of Christ" — Tertullian, *The Five Books Against Marcion*. Note: Tertullian calls Marcion an antichrist for denying Christ's bodily reality. [*1 John 4:3*]

12.7. Tertullian: John's antichrists = Marcion, Ebion

"But in his epistle he especially designates those as "Antichrists" who "denied that Christ was come in the flesh," and who refused to think that Jesus was the Son of God. The one dogma Marcion maintained; the other, Hebion." — Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics*. Note: John's 'antichrists' are those who denied Christ's coming in the flesh or his divine sonship, whom Tertullian links to Marcion and Ebion. [*1 John 2:18,22*]

12.8. Hippolytus of Rome: Antiochus as a type

"For in this wise, too, did Antiochus Epiphanes the king of Syria, the descendant of Alexander of Macedon, devise measures against the Jews. He, too, in the exaltation of his heart, issued a decree in those times, that "all should set up shrines before their doors, and sacrifice" — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Antiochus Epiphanes' decree forcing sacrifice at every door is offered as precedent for Antichrist's measures. [*1 Maccabees 1; Daniel*

11]

12.9. Origen of Alexandria: Warned against those claiming to be Christ

“Jesus, accordingly, in turning away the minds of His disciples, not merely from giving heed to sorcerers in general, and those who profess in any other manner to work miracles—for His disciples did not need to be so warned—but from such as gave themselves out as the Christ of God” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 1 of 2). Note: Origen says Jesus warned not only against sorcerers but against those claiming to be the Christ with apparent miracles. [*Matthew 24: 23-27*]

12.10. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrists made Christians by baptism

“heretics, who are called adversaries of Christ and Antichrists, when they come to the Church, must be baptized with the one baptism of the Church, that they may be made of adversaries, friends, and of Antichrists, Christians.” — Cyprian of Carthage, *The Seventh Council of Carthage Under Cyprian*. Note: Cyprian’s own verdict: heretics are antichrists until baptized into the Church.

12.11. Cyprian of Carthage: John calls those who depart antichrists

“Since our Lord Christ says, “He who is not with me is against me; ” and John the apostle calls those who depart from the Church Antichrists—undoubtedly enemies of Christ—any such as are called Antichrists cannot minister the grace of saving baptism.” — Cyprian of Carthage, *The Seventh Council of Carthage Under Cyprian*. Note: Bishop Secundinus: John calls those who leave the Church antichrists, so they cannot minister baptism. [*1 John 2: 18-19*]

12.12. Eusebius of Caesarea: Simon Magus brought to Rome

“the enemy of man’s salvation contrived a plan for seizing the imperial city for himself. He conducted thither the above-mentioned Simon, aided him in his deceitful arts, led many of the inhabitants of Rome astray, and thus brought them into his own power.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Church History*. Note: Eusebius tells that the enemy brought Simon Magus to Rome, where deceitful arts led many astray.

12.13. Lactantius: Rejects Nero redivivus

“as if he who was the first should also be the last persecutor, and thus prove the forerunner of Antichrist! But we ought not to believe those who, affirming that the two prophets Enoch and Elias have been translated into some

remote place that they might attend our Lord when He shall come to judgment, also fancy that Nero is to appear hereafter as the forerunner of the devil” — Lactantius, *Of the Manner in Which the Persecutors Died*. Note: Lactantius rejects the notion that Nero will return as the forerunner of Antichrist, reporting the view that Enoch and Elijah are translated to attend the Lord's coming. [Revelation 13: 3; Revelation 17: 11]

12.14. Eusebius of Caesarea: Warning against the lying Antichrist

“These things He foretold when warning His Disciples against the lying Antichrist, whom they were expecting” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Theophania*. Note: In the *Theophania* Eusebius reads Jesus's words about another coming in his own name as a warning against the lying Antichrist. [Matthew 24: 5; John 5: 43]

12.15. Eusebius of Caesarea: Other deceivers came before the final one

“and one (of these) shewed of another in the Epistle to the Thessalonians, who (should be) in (the time of) the end. But, that others also should be before this, our Saviour Himself foretold in several places” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Theophania*. Note: Eusebius says Paul to the Thessalonians points to another deceiver at the end, while Jesus foretold other deceivers earlier. [Matthew 24: 5; 2 Thessalonians 2]

12.16. Eusebius of Caesarea: Simon Magus, Dositheus, Montanus as false christs

“Others again, in the times of the Apostles, named Simon Magus “the great power of God” and thought that he was the Christ. Others (thought the same) of Montanus in Phrygia: and others again, of others, in another place. Nor did the deceivers cease.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, *Theophania*. Note: He lists Dositheus, Simon Magus and Montanus as claimants whom followers took for the Christ. [Matthew 24: 5]

12.17. Pseudo-Hippolytus: False Christs, Simon Magus onward

“Now after He was taken up again to the Father, there arose some, saying, “I am Christ,” like Simon Magus and the rest, whose names we have not time at present to mention. Wherefore also in the last day of the consummation, it must needs be that false Christs will arise again” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: False Christs like Simon Magus have already arisen; more will arise at the consummation, and the son of perdition, identified here with the devil, must be seen. [Matthew 24: 5; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

12.18. Hilary of Poitiers: An apostleship of Antichrist

“Let the preachers whose apostleship is of the newest fashion-an apostleship of Antichrist-come forward” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 1 of 2). Note: Hilary calls the preachers who mock the Son of God an apostleship of Antichrist. [*1 John 2:18*]

12.19. Hilary of Poitiers: Denying the Son makes one antichrist

“Let us hear Him speaking to us in the words of the Epistle;-Every one that loveth the Father loveth Him that is born from Him ... It is written, He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son . What will you do now, champion of the creature, conjurer up of a novel Christ out of nothing? Hear the title which awaits you, if you persist in your assertion. Or do you think that perhaps you may still describe the Father and the Son as Creator and Creature, and yet by an ingenious ambiguity of language escape being recognised as antichrist?” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 1 of 2). Note: Hilary applies John's 'he is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son' to those who call the Son a creature. [*1 John 2:22*]

12.20. Hilary of Poitiers: The spirit and name of Antichrist

“destined to possess the spirit and the name of Antichrist” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 1 of 2). Note: Hilary says the wisdom that calls Christ a creature by adoption is void of God's Spirit and bears the spirit and name of Antichrist. [*1 John 5:20*]

12.21. Hilary of Poitiers: Altering the Lord's word: antichrist

“He that would alter this is an antichrist, he that would deny it is a Jew, he that is ignorant a Pagan.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 1 of 2). Note: Hilary says anyone who alters the Lord's statement 'he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' is an antichrist. [*1 John 2:22*]

12.22. Athanasius of Alexandria: Nicaea: forerunner of Antichrist

“the Fathers pronounced the Arian heresy to be the forerunner of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *Councils of Ariminum and Seleucia*. Note: Athanasius states the Nicene Fathers pronounced Arianism the forerunner of Antichrist.

12.23. Athanasius of Alexandria: Antichristian heresy

“that antichristian heresy” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Defence Against the Arians. Note: Athanasius describes the Arian heresy as antichristian when recounting how its supporters renounced it at Sardica.

12.24. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arian heresy forerunner of Antichrist

“the Arian heresy which fights against Christ, and is a forerunner of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Defence Against the Arians. Note: Athanasius presents the sufferings of Liberius and Hosius as models against the Arian heresy, which he calls a forerunner of Antichrist.

12.25. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arius as harbinger

“being known as Christ’s foe, and harbinger of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Four Discourses Against the Arians. Note: Arius’s error was reckoned an extraordinary heresy after the Council cast him out, known as Christ’s foe and harbinger of Antichrist.

12.26. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arian cruelty is antichristian

“well suited to their antichristian heresy” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: Athanasius calls the Arians’ persecution and ill-treatment of the poor and widows suited to their antichristian heresy and opposed to Christ’s command.

12.27. Athanasius of Alexandria: An act like Antichrist’s malice

“truly resembling the malice of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: Athanasius says Constantius’s compelled ordination of Felix in the palace at Rome was an act resembling the malice of Antichrist.

12.28. Athanasius of Alexandria: Constantius ‘as it were Antichrist himself

“This heresy, however, is altogether alien from godliness; and therefore how otherwise should it act, than contrary to our Saviour, seeing also that it has enlisted that enemy of Christ, Constantius, as it were Antichrist himself” — Athanasius of Alexandria, History of the Arians. Note: The Arian heresy, which enlisted Constantius, ‘as it were Antichrist himself’, as leader in impiety, acts contrary to the Saviour by using force rather than persuasion. [1 John

2:18]

12.29. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arians as slaves of Antichrist

“slaves of Antichrist” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Letters of Athanasius.

Note: Athanasius agrees with Lucifer's description of the Arians as slaves of Antichrist, hated by all as they persist in malice.

12.30. Athanasius of Alexandria: Arianism condemned as antichristian

“So the antichristian gang of the Arian madmen has been shewn to be unpleasing to God” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Letters of Athanasius. Note:

After Arius's death, Athanasius says the Lord condemned the Arian heresy, showing the antichristian gang unpleasing to God despite imperial support.

12.31. Athanasius of Alexandria: Antichristian heresy

“for advocating this Antichristian heresy” — Athanasius of Alexandria, To the Bishops of Egypt. Note: Athanasius calls the Arian doctrine an Antichristian heresy when criticising men promoted for advocating it.

12.32. Cyril of Jerusalem: Heretics already say 'I am Christ'

“This has happened in part: for already Simon Magus has said this, and Menander, and some others of the godless leaders of heresy; and others will say it in our days, or after us” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: The saying 'I am Christ' was partly fulfilled in Simon Magus, Menander and other heretic leaders, and others will say it in Cyril's time or later. [*Matthew 24: 5*]

12.33. Cyril of Jerusalem: Many Antichrists; one still to come

“there are many Antichrists to come at this time from earth. For already, as thou hast seen, many have begun to say, I am the Christ: and the abomination of desolation is yet to come, assuming to himself the false title of Christ” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Christ will return from heaven, not from earth, because many Antichrists already arise saying 'I am the Christ', and the abomination of desolation is still to come claiming Christ's title. [*Matthew 24: 5; Matthew 24: 15*]

12.34. Gregory of Nazianzus: George of Alexandria: forerunner

“that servant of the wicked one, that sower of tares, that forerunner of Antichrist” — Gregory of Nazianzus, Orations (part 1 of 2). Note: Gregory of Nazianzus calls the Arian intruder George of Alexandria a servant of the wicked one and forerunner of Antichrist. [*Matthew 13: 25*]

12.35. Gregory of Nazianzus: Julian's own book titled 'Antichrist'

“thy “Misopogon,” or rather “Antichrist,” for thou gavest both names to the book” — Gregory of Nazianzus, Orations (part 1 of 2). Note: Addressing the dead emperor Julian, Gregory notes Julian gave his satire two names, Miso-pogon and ‘Antichrist’, and calls the work contemptible to Christians.

12.36. Gregory of Nazianzus: Persecutor with anti-Christian rage

“possessed during the Christian era with an anti-Christian rage, hating Christ” — Gregory of Nazianzus, Orations (part 2 of 2). Note: Gregory describes the persecuting ruler who afflicted the Church as possessed with an anti-Christian rage.

12.37. Gregory of Nazianzus: The Anti-Christian Emperor

“We were assailed again by the Anti-Christian Emperor, that tyrant of the faith” — Gregory of Nazianzus, Orations (part 2 of 2). Note: In his panegyric on Basil, Gregory calls the Arian emperor ‘the Anti-Christian Emperor’, a tyrant of the faith who renewed the contest against Basil. [Matthew 12: 43-45]

12.38. Shenoute of Atripe: Antichrist among false teachers

“but even more greatly do they curse every false prophet and all the priests who deceive and every anti-Christ, and all false teachers, and everyone who did not believe in our Lord Jesus from the beginning until now.” — Shenoute of Atripe, Works of Shenoute: translated selections from the Sahidic Coptic. Note: Shenoute says the prophets and apostles cursed false prophets, deceiving priests, every antichrist and all false teachers. [1 John 2:18]

12.39. John Chrysostom: Antichrist and his ministers

“He speaks here of Antichrist, and of certain his ministers, whom He calls false Christs and false prophets, such as were many in the time of the Apostles; but before Christ's second coming there shall come others more bitter than the former” — John Chrysostom, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22-28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom takes the false Christs and false prophets as Antichrist and his ministers, of whom there were many in apostolic times and worse ones will come before the second coming. [Matthew 24: 24]

12.40. Jerome: All heresiarchs are Antichrists

“The Apostle John also in his Epistle, Ye have heard that Antichrist shall come; even now there are many Antichrists. I suppose all heresiarchs to be

Antichrists, and under the name of Christ to teach those things which are contrary to Christ.” — Jerome, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Jerome, citing 1 John, counts all heresiarchs as Antichrists who teach against Christ under His name. [*Matthew 24: 5; 1 John 2: 18*]

12.41. *Jerome: 'Many Antichrists' applied to Jovinian*

“The Apostle John says that many Antichrists had come, and to make no difference between John himself and the lowest penitent is the preaching of a real Antichrist.” — Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*. Note: Jerome notes that John said many antichrists had come, and calls the flattening of all distinctions among believers the preaching of a real Antichrist. [*1 John 2: 18*]

12.42. *Jerome: A new apostle of Antichrist*

“like a new apostle of Antichrist” — Jerome, *Letters* (part 3 of 3). Note: Jerome tells the wandering preacher Sabinianus that he acts like a new apostle of Antichrist, moving from city to city when found out. [*Matthew 10: 23*]

12.43. *Jerome: John's 'Antichrists' are Cerinthus and Ebion*

“Cerinthus, Ebion, and the rest who say that Christ has not come in the flesh, whom he in his own epistle calls Antichrists” — Jerome, *Prefaces On The Commentaries*. Note: Jerome says John, in Asia, was urged to write on Christ's divinity against Cerinthus, Ebion and others, whom John's epistle calls Antichrists. [*1 John 2: 18*]

12.44. *Augustine of Hippo: Three persecutions; the third by Antichrist*

“For the first persecution of the Church was violent, when by proscriptions, by torments, by murders, the Christians were compelled to sacrifice: another persecution is crafty, which is now conducted by heretics of any kind and false brethren: there remains a third, which is to come by Antichrist, than which there is nothing more perilous; for it will be at once violent and crafty. Violence he will exert in empire, craft in miracles.” — Augustine of Hippo, *On the Psalms* (part 1 of 4). Note: Augustine distinguishes three persecutions: violent by pagan rulers, crafty by heretics and false brethren, and a third by Antichrist, both violent in empire and crafty in miracles. [*Psalms 10: 9*]

12.45. *Augustine of Hippo: Antichrist's persecution as the eleventh*

“I do not think, indeed, that what some have thought or may think is rashly said or believed, that until the time of Antichrist the Church of Christ is not

to suffer any persecutions besides those she has already suffered,—that is, ten,—and that the eleventh and last shall be inflicted by Antichrist. ... Yet I do not think persecutions were prophetically signified by what was done in Egypt” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine reports the scheme that ten persecutions precede an eleventh by Antichrist, but denies that Egypt's plagues prophesy persecutions, calling the comparison human conjecture. [*Revelation 17:10*]

12.46. John Cassian: Dissolving Jesus makes Antichrist

“If you do not dissolve Jesus, and deny God, no one may call you Antichrist.” — John Cassian, *The Seven Books on the Incarnation of the Lord*. Note: Cassian argues that whoever dissolves Jesus, by calling Him only God or only man, can be called Antichrist, citing the Manichees and Ebionites. [*1 John 4:3*]

12.47. Socrates Scholasticus: Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies

“as hating made a nearer approach to Antichrist” — Socrates Scholasticus, *The Ecclesiastical History*. Note: In the same letter reproduced by Socrates, the Arians are said to have come nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies.

12.48. Leo the Great: Rebel monks as 'soldiers of Antichrist'

“these insolent disturbers, who boast of their insults and injuries to priests, are to be held not the slaves of Christ, but the soldiers of Antichrist” — Leo the Great, *Letters*. Note: Leo calls the monks who rioted in support of Eutyches not Christ's servants but soldiers of Antichrist, and asks the emperor to remove their ringleaders.

12.49. Anonymous of Cyzicus: Nearer to the antichrist

“they have come nearer to the antichrist” — Anonymous of Cyzicus, *Ecclesiastical History of the Council of Nicaea*. Note: The same letter says the Arians, in trying to destroy the divinity of the Word, have come nearer to the antichrist than earlier heresies.

12.50. Gregory of Tours: A Gaulish false Christ killed

“that Christ who ought rather to be named anti-Christ fell dead; and all who were with him dispersed” — Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks* (Brehaut translation). Note: Gregory of Tours reports that a man who gave himself out as Christ in Gaul, deceiving thousands, was killed, and says he ought rather to be called anti-Christ. [*Matthew 24:24*]

12.51. Bede: Heretics announce 'the time is near'

"Many heresiarchs also in the Church have preached that the day of the Lord is at hand, whom the Apostles condemn." — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede notes that many heresiarchs have preached that the day of the Lord is at hand and were condemned by the Apostles. [*Luke 21: 8*]

12.52. Bede: Heretics, last and greatest Antichrist

"Wherefore it is better to understand it of heretics, who, coming to oppose the Church, pretended to be Christs; the first of whom was Simon Magus, but that last one, greater than the rest, is Antichrist." — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede prefers to read the false Christs as heretics, beginning with Simon Magus, with Antichrist as the last and greatest of them. [*Mark 13: 21-22; 1 John 2: 18*]

12.53. Bede: The eleventh hour is the last age

"The last hour, the last time of the age, which is now being carried out, he says, according to that parable of the Lord, where he narrates that workers in the vineyard are hired from the first hour, the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the eleventh. For at the first hour those who cultivated the vineyard of the Lord were serving the will of their Creator either by teaching or by living rightly from the beginning of the age. From the third hour, those from the times of Noah. From the sixth hour, those from the times of Abraham. From the ninth hour, those from the times the law was given. From the eleventh hour, those from the times of the Lord's Incarnation until the end of the age, are serving the heavenly commands: in which hour, both the coming of the Savior in the flesh and the future plague of the Antichrist, who would fight against the heralds of salvation, was marked by the prediction of the prophets." — Bede, *Bede's Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*. Note: Bede links John's 'last hour' to the eleventh hour of the vineyard parable, the age from Christ's Incarnation to the end, in which Antichrist's future plague was foretold. [*1 John 2: 18; Matthew 20: 1-16*]

12.54. John of Damascus: General and special Antichrist

"Every one, therefore, who confesses not that the Son of God came in the flesh and is perfect God and became perfect man, after being God, is Antichrist. But in a peculiar and special sense he who comes at the consumma-

tion of the age is called Antichrist.” — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: John distinguishes the general antichrist (anyone denying the incarnation) from the particular Antichrist who comes at the end. [*1 John 2:18; 1 John 4:3*]

12.55. Severus of al-Ashmunein: Officials like Antichrist

“But God only held back the water on account of those two secretaries, who were like Antichrist in their deeds.” — Severus of al-Ashmunein, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (part 2 of 2). Note: Two oppressive Egyptian secretaries are called ‘like Antichrist in their deeds’; the Nile flood is checked by God. [*1 John 2:18*]

13. IS THERE AN ANTICHRIST INSIDE ME, AND INSIDE THE CHURCH?

This is the reading the modern Bible-reader is least likely to have met, and it is the oldest pastoral use of the word. Augustine, in ten homilies on the first letter of John, insists that antichrist does not mean one who comes before Christ in time but one who is contrary to Christ, and that the one who violates love denies by his life that Christ came in the flesh. Gregory the Great says the wicked are the members of a body whose head is to come. Cyprian, Jerome and Bede hear the same note: pride, a blow, a painted face, the love of the world. Most of them keep the final man as well, and add that he can be found in the heart long before he is found on the throne.

In this chapter

This question draws on 57 quotations from 15 voices. 55 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 2 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

“Contrary to Christ”: examine yourself (Augustine)

Augustine presses the point on every hearer. The word does not mean one who comes “before” Christ in time but one who is against him. He urges the lover of the world to change and become a lover of Christ lest he be an antichrist, and says that whoever fears being called one should fear more being one. Whoever seeks his own glory, he says plainly, is Antichrist.

Denying Christ by one’s deeds (Augustine)

Augustine notes that heretics confess that Jesus is the Christ, so John’s denial must be judged by deeds and life and not by speech. Many antichrists, he says,

have not left the Church at all: the perjured, adulterers, drunkards and usurers are contrary to Christ's word and so are in the Antichrist. Whoever violates love denies by his life that Christ came in the flesh, and is an anti-christ wherever he may be.

Pride is the spirit of Antichrist (Cyprian, Neale and Littledale, Jerome, Gregory the Great)

Cyprian traces proud boasting to the spirit of Antichrist. The compilers Neale and Littledale say that the sin of Satan at the first and of Antichrist at the last is the same: pride. Jerome preaches that whoever receives a blow imitates Christ, while whoever strikes imitates Antichrist. Gregory the Great, writing to the emperor, says that anyone who calls himself or wishes to be called "universal priest" is, in his pride, a precursor of Antichrist, who will call himself God. He wrote it against the Patriarch of Constantinople's title.

A head with many members (Gregory the Great, Bede)

Gregory the Great pictures Antichrist as the head of a body whose members are all the wicked, who already do what he will do. He says whoever nurses evil suggestions is engrafted into his body, and that his preachers are already at work, some in words but most by conduct, like worldly clergy who claim their doings are right. Bede says Antichrist is already dwelling in the minds of all who resist Christ by profession or deed, and that many of the baptised who now commit crimes already serve his kingdom.

The everyday battle (Cyprian, Jerome, Ambrose, Origen, Athanasius)

The reading is practical. Cyprian says a person's speech reveals whether Christ or Antichrist dwells in his heart. Jerome says Christ and Antichrist cannot blend as light and darkness cannot, and urges lodging Christ in the heart; he even tells the widow Furia that cosmetic painting of the face is a mask belonging to Antichrist. Ambrose names a second Antichrist, the devil besieging the peaceful soul. Origen says a sinner may have Antichrist, or an angel of the devil, as the "father" whose working he accepted. Athanasius says trials from antichrists give occasion to prove patience and long-suffering.

False teaching standing in the holy Scriptures (Origen, Bede, Methodius)

Origen reads the abomination standing in the holy place as Antichrist, a "false word" standing in the Scriptures, and says false exposition of Scripture is itself Antichrist; the faithful should flee the letter for the truth. Bede reads

the abomination spiritually as heresies and crimes ruling among those consecrated by the sacraments, and bids the faithful rise higher in virtue. Methodius, in the same spiritual mode, takes the 1,260 days as perfect knowledge of the Trinity and the woman in the wilderness as the Church preserved.

Every sinner's heart rehearses it (Neale and Littledale)

The compilers Neale and Littledale, drawing on the older commentators on the Psalms, say that every evil man rehearses in his heart what Antichrist will do in the final conflict, when he will rule as God in the temple and the earth rejoices over the witnesses' death.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Even now are there many antichrists (1 John 2:18–23)

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. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. [1 John 2:18–23]

Try the spirits (1 John 4:1–6)

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 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. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth

God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. [1 John 4: 1-6]

He is antichrist that denieth (2 John 1: 7-11)

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. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. [2 John 1: 7-11]

The prince of Tyre (Ezek 28: 1-10)

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God: Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: By thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD. [Ezekiel 28: 1-10]

How art thou fallen from heaven (Isa 14: 12-15)

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! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the

sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. [*Isaiah 14: 12-15*]

Satan transformed into an angel of light (2 Cor 11: 13-15)

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. [*2 Corinthians 11: 13-15*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Augustine of Hippo, Restrainer: the hidden wicked in the Church (4.26); Gregory the Great, All the wicked are his members (4.27).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

13.1. Origen of Alexandria: Antichrist can father the sinner

“And also, let us say, the one who immediately worked in me, Antichrist, or some angel of the devil, or a demon, whose working I accepted.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Selected Notes on the Pentateuch*, Joshua, Samuel, Job and Ezekiel. Note: Origen says a sinner may have Antichrist, an angel of the devil or a demon as the ‘father’ whose working he accepted. [*John 8: 44*]

13.2. Origen of Alexandria: Antichrist = false word in Scripture

“Mystically; In the holy place of the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, Antichrist, that is, false word, has often stood; let those who see this flee from the Judæa of the letter to the high mountains of truth.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Origen reads the abomination in the holy place as Antichrist, ‘false word’, standing in the Scriptures; the faithful should flee the letter for the truth. [*Matthew 24: 15*]

13.3. Origen of Alexandria: One genus, many Antichrists

“The genus of Antichrist is one, the species many, just as all lies are of one sort. As all the holy Prophets were Prophets of the true Christ, so understand that each false Christ shall have his own false Prophets, who shall preach as

true the false teachings of some Antichrist.” — Origen of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Origen says Antichrist is one kind with many species, each false Christ having his own false prophets; he names Marcion, Valentinus and Basilides as such impostors. [*Matthew 24: 23; 1 John 2: 18*]

13.4. Origen of Alexandria: Whatever feigns the truth

“For every discourse which professes to expound Scripture faithfully, and has not the truth, is Antichrist. For the truth is Christ, that which feigns itself to be the truth is Antichrist. So also all virtues are Christ, all that feigns itself to be virtue is Antichrist” — Origen of Alexandria, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Origen treats Antichrist as whatever feigns truth or virtue, since Christ is the truth and the virtues: false exposition of Scripture is itself Antichrist. [*Matthew 24: 5; 1 John 2: 18*]

13.5. Origen of Alexandria: Antichrist as the opposite extreme to Christ

“Where is the absurdity, then, in holding that there exist among men, so to speak, two extremes, –the one of virtue, and the other of its opposite; so that the perfection of virtue dwells in the man who realizes the ideal given in Jesus, from whom there flowed to the human race so great a conversion, and healing, and amelioration, while the opposite extreme is in the man who embodies the notion of him that is named Antichrist?” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2 of 2). Note: Origen answers Celsus that Antichrist is the opposite extreme of human wickedness, as Jesus is the extreme of virtue. [*1 John 2: 18; Daniel 7*]

13.6. Origen of Alexandria: Many antichrists, many christs

“For as we have heard that Antichrist cometh, and yet have learned that there are many antichrists in the world, in the same way, knowing that Christ has come, we see that, owing to Him, there are many christs in the world” — Origen of Alexandria, *Against Celsus* (part 2 of 2). Note: Origen pairs the one coming Antichrist and many antichrists with the many ‘christs’, the anointed who follow Christ. [*1 John 2: 18; Psalm 105: 15*]

13.7. Cyprian of Carthage: Pride is the spirit of Antichrist

“Exaltation, and puffing up, and arrogant and haughty boastfulness, spring not from the teaching of Christ who teaches humility, but from the spirit of Antichrist, whom the Lord rebukes by His prophet” — Cyprian of

Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian traces proud boasting to the spirit of Antichrist, rebuked in Isaiah's words about ascending above the stars. [*Isaiah 14:13-14; 1 John 2:18*]

13.8. Cyprian of Carthage: Christ or Antichrist in the heart

"By his mouth, therefore, and by his words, is every one at once betrayed; and whether he has Christ in his heart, or Antichrist, is discerned in his speaking" — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: A person's speech reveals whether Christ or Antichrist dwells in his heart. [*Matthew 12:34*]

13.9. Cyprian of Carthage: The spirit of Antichrist possesses heretics

"how can they transact spiritual and divine matters, who are the enemies of God, and whose hearts the spirit of Antichrist has possessed?" — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian says heretics whose hearts the spirit of Antichrist possesses cannot perform spiritual rites. [*1 John 4:3*]

13.10. Victorinus of Pettau: Ascetic reading of the millennium

"I do not think the reign of a thousand years is eternal; or if it is thus to be thought of, they cease to reign when the thousand years are finished. But I will put forward what my capacity enables me to judge. The tenfold number signifies the decalogue" — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Victorinus gives an ascetic, non-literal reading of the thousand-year reign, tied to the decalogue and virginity. [*Revelation 20:6*]

13.11. Methodius of Olympus: The dragon is the devil

"The dragon, which is great, and red, and cunning, and manifold, and seven-headed, and horned, and draws down the third part of the stars, and stands ready to devour the child of the woman who is travailing, is the devil" — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 8.-Thekla. Note: Methodius reads Revelation's dragon as the devil who lies in wait to destroy the baptised mind. [*Revelation 12:3-4*]

13.12. Methodius of Olympus: The woman in the wilderness is the Church

"Now she who brings forth, and has brought forth, the masculine Word in the hearts of the faithful, and who passed, undefiled and uninjured by the wrath of the beast, into the wilderness, is, as we have explained, our mother the Church." — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 8.-Thekla. Note: The wo-

man is the Church, preserved from the beast's wrath in the wilderness. [*Revelation 12: 6*]

13.13. Methodius of Olympus: 1,260 days as knowledge of the Trinity

“And the thousand two hundred and sixty days that we are staying here, O virgins, is the accurate and perfect understanding concerning the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit” — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 8.-Thekla. Note: Methodius spiritualises the 1,260 days as perfect knowledge of the Trinity rather than a period of persecution. [*Revelation 12: 6*]

13.14. Athanasius of Alexandria: Antichrists give occasion for patience

“how can long-suffering be expected, when opposition on the part of Antichrists has not first existed?” — Athanasius of Alexandria, The Festal Epistles (Burgess translation from the Syriac); scanned text. Note: In the Syriac Festal Letter, trials from the opposition of Antichrists are said to provide occasion for exercising patience and long-suffering.

13.15. Athanasius of Alexandria: Trials prove long-suffering

“how can long-suffering be proved, unless there has first been the calumny of Antichrist ?” — Athanasius of Alexandria, Letters of Athanasius. Note: Athanasius says trials such as Antichrist's slander give occasion to prove patience and long-suffering, so believers should not be distressed.

13.16. Athanasius of Alexandria: Heresy prepares Antichrist's deceit

“make ready, as they think, the way of deceit for Antichrist , who sowed among them the seeds of this heresy” — Athanasius of Alexandria, To the Bishops of Egypt. Note: Athanasius says Arian dominance of the churches and the Meletians' hypocrisy prepare the way of deceit for Antichrist, who sowed the seeds of the heresy.

13.17. Cyril of Jerusalem: Teach the signs

“Guard thyself then, O man; thou hast the signs of Antichrist; and remember them not only thyself, but impart them also freely to all. If thou hast a child according to the flesh, admonish him of this now; if thou hast begotten one through catechizing , put him also on his guard, test he receive the false one as the True ... I fear these wars of the nations ; I fear the schisms of the Churches; I fear the mutual hatred of the brethren. But enough on this subject; only God forbid that it should be fulfilled in our days; nevertheless, let us be on our guard” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note:

Cyril urges teaching the signs to children and catechumens; he fears wars, schisms and hatred among brethren as the mystery of iniquity already works, and hopes it will not come in his days. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 7]

13.18. Ambrose of Milan: Second: the Devil besieging the soul

“There is also another Antichrist, that is, the Devil, who is trying to besiege Jerusalem, i. e. the peaceful soul, with the hosts of his law. When then the Devil is in the midst of the temple, there is the desolation of abomination.” — Ambrose of Milan, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose names a second Antichrist, the Devil, who besieges the peaceful soul; when he is in the midst of the temple, that is desolation. [Luke 21: 20]

13.19. Jerome: Christ and Antichrist cannot blend

“As day is distinct from night, so righteousness and unrighteousness, sin and good works, Christ and Antichrist cannot blend.” — Jerome, *Against Jovinianus*. Note: Jerome says Christ and Antichrist cannot blend, as light and darkness cannot, and urges lodging Christ in the heart. [2 *Corinthians* 6: 14–15]

13.20. Jerome: The one who strikes is Antichrist

“He who is struck imitates Christ: he who strikes, the Antichrist.” — Jerome, *Homilies on Psalms*. Note: Jerome preaches that whoever receives a blow imitates Christ, while whoever strikes imitates Antichrist.

13.21. Jerome: A painted face belongs to Antichrist

“Such adorning is not of the Lord; a mask of this kind belongs to Antichrist.” — Jerome, *Letters* (part 1 of 3). Note: Jerome tells the widow Furia that cosmetic painting of the face is not of the Lord but a mask belonging to Antichrist.

13.22. Sulpicius Severus: False Elias; Antichrist at hand

“there was a young man in Spain, who, having by many signs obtained for himself authority among the people, was puffed up to such a pitch that he gave himself out as being Elias. And when multitudes had too readily believed this, he went on to say that he was actually Christ; and he succeeded so well even in this delusion that a certain bishop named Rufus worshiped him as being the Lord ... We may infer from this, since false prophets of such a kind have appeared, that the coming of Antichrist is at hand; for he is

already practicing in these persons the mystery of iniquity” — Sulpicius Severus, *On the Life of St. Martin*. Note: Sulpicius reports a Spanish youth claiming to be Elias and then Christ and an Eastern man claiming to be John, and infers that Antichrist is near, already practising the mystery of iniquity in them. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 7]

13.23. Augustine of Hippo: Exalts his own name

“Hear John, As ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists. But what dost thou dread in Antichrist, except that he will exalt his own name, and despise the name of the Lord?” — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine, citing John, defines the dread of Antichrist as exalting his own name and despising the Lord’s, a spirit already present among the many. [John 5: 43; 1 John 2: 18]

13.24. Augustine of Hippo: Seeker of own glory is Antichrist

“He who seeketh his own glory is Antichrist.” — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine says plainly that whoever seeks his own glory is Antichrist, contrasting Christ’s humility with self-promotion. [John 7: 18]

13.25. Augustine of Hippo: Antichrists because lives oppose Christ

“all who even within the Church profess that they know God, but deny Him in their deeds, such as are the covetous and envious, and those who, because they hate their brethren, are pronounced to be murderers, not on my testimony, but on that of the holy Apostle John, -all these are both devoid of hope, because they have a bad conscience; and are faithless, because they do not do what they have vowed to God; and liars, because they make false professions; and possessed of devils, because they give place in their heart to the devil and his angels; and their words work corruption, since they corrupt good manners by evil communications; and they are infidels, because they laugh at the threats which God utters against such men; and accursed, because they live wickedly; and antichrists, because their lives are opposed to Christ” — Augustine of Hippo, *On Baptism*. Note: Augustine answers a Carthaginian bishop’s charge against heretics by saying those inside the Church who deny God in deeds are likewise antichrists, because their lives are opposed to Christ. [1 John 2: 18; Titus 1: 16]

13.26. Augustine of Hippo: Enemies of brotherly love are antichrists

“But the enemies of this brotherly love, whether they are openly without, or appear to be within, are false Christians, and antichrists.” — Augustine of Hippo, *On Baptism*. Note: Augustine calls enemies of brotherly love, whether openly outside or apparently within the Church, false Christians and antichrists, citing John that those who left ‘were not of us’. [*1 John 2:19*]

13.27. Augustine of Hippo: Wicked members are antichrists

“since even all the bad that are within—the covetous, the envious, the drunkards, and those that live contrary to the discipline of Christ—may be deservedly called liars, and in darkness, and dead, and antichrists” — Augustine of Hippo, *On Baptism*. Note: Augustine says all the bad within the Church, such as the covetous, envious and drunken, may rightly be called liars, dead and antichrists. [*1 John 2:18*]

13.28. Augustine of Hippo: The wicked the Church bears belong to Antichrist

“Ye therefore who read in the Scriptures, find all those wicked men whom the Church beareth, who are declared cursed, pertain unto Antichrist, pertain unto the devil, pertain to the chaff, pertain to the tares.” — Augustine of Hippo, *On the Psalms* (part 3 of 4). Note: Augustine says the wicked tolerated within the Church belong to Antichrist, the devil, the chaff and the tares. [*Psalms 129:8*]

13.29. Augustine of Hippo: Antichrist honours his own name

“It is said of Antichrist, and all understand of him what the Lord said, “I am come in My Father’s Name, and ye have not received Me; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. ... What is it in Antichrist that we are in horror of, but that he is to honour his own name, and to despise the Name of the Lord?” — Augustine of Hippo, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament* (part 2 of 2). Note: Augustine says all understand Christ’s words about ‘another’ who comes in his own name as spoken of Antichrist, whose horror is that he honours his own name and despises the Lord’s. [*John 5:43; 1 John 2:18*]

13.30. Augustine of Hippo: Denial by deeds, not tongue

“Now therefore let us enquire who denies; and let us mark not the tongue, but the deeds. ... Let the tongue keep still for a little while, ask the life.” — Augustine of Hippo, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*. Note: Au-

gustine notes that heretics confess Jesus is the Christ, and so he proposes that the denial John speaks of must be judged by deeds and life, not by speech. [*1 John 2: 22*]

13.31. Augustine of Hippo: Denying Christ by one's deeds

“we find many antichrists, who with the mouth profess Christ, and in their manners dissent from Christ. Where find we this in Scripture? Hear Paul the Apostle; speaking of such, he saith, “For they confess that they know God, but in their deeds deny Him. We find these also to be antichrists: whosoever in his deeds denies Christ, is an antichrist.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine, citing Paul on those who deny God by their deeds, holds that whoever denies Christ in his conduct is an antichrist. [*1 John 2: 22; Titus 1: 16*]

13.32. Augustine of Hippo: Unmanifest antichrists inside the Church

“not only do we find many antichrists gone out; but many not yet manifest, who have not gone out at all. For as many as the Church hath within it that are perjured, defrauders, addicted to black arts, consulters of fortune-tellers, adulterers, drunkards, usurers, boy-stealers, and all the other vices that we are not able to enumerate; these things are contrary to the doctrine of Christ, are contrary to the word of God. Now the Word of God is Christ: whatever is contrary to the Word of God is in Antichrist.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine says many antichrists have not left the Church at all: the perjured, adulterers, drunkards and usurers in it are contrary to Christ's word and so are 'in Antichrist'. [*1 John 2: 18*]

13.33. Augustine of Hippo: Within or without, an antichrist

“But if thou wilt not, and lovest and embracest thy sins, thou art contrary to Christ. Be thou within, be thou without, thou art an antichrist” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine warns that anyone who loves and embraces his sins is contrary to Christ and is an antichrist whether inside or outside the Church. [*1 John 2: 18*]

13.34. Augustine of Hippo: Fear more to be one than to be called one

“Let each one, looking well to his own conscience, if he be a lover of the world, be changed; let him become a lover of Christ, that he be not an antichrist. If one shall tell him that he is an antichrist, he is wroth, he thinks it a wrong done to him; perchance, if he is told by him that strives with him

that he is an antichrist, he threatens an action at law. Christ saith to him, Be patient; if thou hast been falsely spoken of, rejoice with me, because I also am falsely spoken of by the antichrists: but if thou art truly spoken of, come to an understanding with thine own conscience; and if thou fear to be called this, fear more to be it.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine urges the lover of the world to change and become a lover of Christ lest he be an antichrist, saying that one who fears being called it should fear more being it. [*1 John 2: 22-23*]

13.35. Augustine of Hippo: Antichrist means 'contrary to Christ'

“All heretics, all schismatics went out from us, that is, they go out from the Church; but they would not go out, if they were of us. Therefore, before they went out they were not of us. If before they went out they were not of us. many are within, are not gone out, but yet are antichrists. ... For antichrist in our tongue means, contrary to Christ.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine says heretics and schismatics who left the Church are antichrists, that some antichrists are still inside it, and that the word means 'contrary to Christ'. [*1 John 2: 18-19*]

13.36. Augustine of Hippo: Not 'before Christ' but 'against'

“each person ought to question his own conscience, whether he be an antichrist. For antichrist in our tongue means, contrary to Christ. Not, as some take it, that antichrist is to be so called because he is to come ante Christum, before Christ, i.e. Christ to come after him: it does not mean this, neither is it thus written, but Antichristus, i.e. contrary to Christ.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine urges each hearer to examine his own conscience and insists the word does not mean one who comes 'before Christ' in time but one contrary to Christ. [*1 John 2: 18*]

13.37. Augustine of Hippo: Dividing the Church denies Christ come in the flesh

“He came to gather in one, thou comest to unmake. Thou wouldest pull Christ's members asunder. How can it be said that thou deniest not that Christ is come in the flesh, who rendest asunder the Church of God which He hath gathered together? Therefore thou goest against Christ; thou art an antichrist. Be thou within, or be thou without, thou art an antichrist: only, when thou art within, thou art hidden; when thou art without, thou art made manifest.” — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine says that whoever rends the Church that Christ

gathered 'unmakes' Christ and is an antichrist; inside he is hidden, outside manifest. [1 John 4: 3]

13.38. *Augustine of Hippo: Whoever violates charity is an antichrist*

"Whosoever therefore violates charity, let him say what he will with his tongue, his life denies that Christ is come in the flesh; and this is an antichrist" — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine holds that whoever violates love denies by his life that Christ came in the flesh, and is an antichrist wherever he may be. [1 John 4: 3-4]

13.39. *Augustine of Hippo: Antichrists speak of the world*

"These are of the world." Who? The antichrists. ... And ye have heard that to love the world and neglect charity is to deny that Jesus came in the flesh." — Augustine of Hippo, Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John. Note: Augustine identifies the antichrists of 1 John 4:5 as those who speak the language of the world, such as refusing forgiveness, and equates love of the world with denying that Christ came in the flesh. [1 John 4: 5]

13.40. *Augustine of Hippo: Many antichrists now, one at the end*

"As therefore there went out from the Church many heretics, whom John calls "many antichrists," at that time prior to the end, and which John calls "the last time," so in the end they shall go out who do not belong to Christ, but to that last Antichrist, and then he shall be revealed." — Augustine of Hippo, The City of God (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says that as many heretics, called 'many antichrists' by John, left the Church, so at the end those belonging to the last Antichrist will go out and then he will be revealed. [1 John 2: 18-19; 2 Thessalonians 2: 7]

13.41. *Augustine of Hippo: Not sent, only permitted; seek not own glory*

"In Antichrist, however, there is unrighteousness, and he is not true; because he will seek his own glory, not His by whom he was sent: for, indeed, he was not sent, but only permitted to come. Let us all, therefore, that belong to the body of Christ, seek not our own glory, that we be not led into the snares of Antichrist." — Augustine of Hippo, Tractates on John (part 1 of 3). Note: Augustine says Antichrist is not sent but only permitted to come, and exhorts members of Christ's body not to seek their own glory lest they be led into his snares. [John 7: 18]

13.42. Leo the Great: Manichaeans' denial of the flesh is Antichrist

“we anathematize the blasphemy of those who deny the flesh of our nature in Christ: about which the blessed Apostle John has forewarned us in no doubtful utterance, saying, “every spirit which confesses Christ Jesus to have come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which destroys Jesus is not of God, and this is Antichrist.” — Leo the Great, Sermons. Note: In a sermon on the Epiphany, Leo applies John's warning about Antichrist to those who deny Christ's real flesh, and urges Christians to have no dealings with such people. [1 John 4: 2-3]

13.43. Gregory the Great: Head of the wicked, whose members are all the wicked

“These things are more plainly understood of the head of the wicked himself, i.e. Antichrist, who, while lifting up his hand against God, is said to be ‘strengthened,’ in that for a little time he is permitted to be exalted ... but seeing that all the wicked are his members” — Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory explains that Antichrist is the head of the wicked and permitted for a little time to be exalted, while all the wicked are his members and do now what he will do pre-eminently. [Job 12: 6]

13.44. Gregory the Great: Engrafted into the body of Antichrist

“who is the head of the sons of perdition, save Antichrist? Therefore ‘that, which is hatched, will break out into a basilisk,’ in that he who harbours in himself the counsel of the ‘asp’ to nourish them to life, being made a member of the wicked head, is engrafted into the body of Antichrist.” — Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory identifies the basilisk of Isaiah as Antichrist, head of the sons of perdition, and says whoever nurses evil suggestions is engrafted into his body. [Isaiah 59: 5]

13.45. Gregory the Great: Antichrist: the devil's vessel

“that vessel of the devil is the den and covert of the beast, so that, when lying in ambush against men who are journeying through this life, he both escapes their notice by his wonders, and kills them by his malice, in his person. But yet he possesses even now the hearts of all reprobates, before he manifests himself openly” — Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory calls Antichrist the vessel in which the ancient enemy dwells, deceiving by wonders and killing by malice, while already possessing the hearts of all reprobates before his open manifestation. [Job 40: 21-22; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9]

13.46. Gregory the Great: Cain, Judas, Simon as limbs of Antichrist

“Cain saw not the time of Antichrist, and yet was deservedly a limb of Antichrist. Judas knew not the fierceness of that persecution, and yet yielded to the might of his cruelty, by the persuasion of avarice. Simon was far removed from the times of Antichrist, and yet joined himself to his pride, by perversely seeking for the power of miracles. [Acts 8, 19. 20. Thus a wicked body is united to its head” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says Cain, Judas and Simon Magus lived before Antichrist yet were his limbs, since the wicked are united to their head by wicked deeds. [1 John 2:18]

13.47. Gregory the Great: His preachers are already at work

“But we must not suppose that the preachers of Antichrist will appear then only, and that now they take no part in the deception of men. For even now, before he appears himself, some preach him in words, but most by their conduct.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the preachers of Antichrist are not confined to the end: even now some preach him in words, most by conduct, such as worldly clergy who claim their doings are virtues. [Job 41:11]

13.48. Gregory the Great: Title 'sole bishop' shows Antichrist near

“But in this pride of his what else is denoted than that the times of Antichrist are already near at hand?” — Gregory the Great, *Register of Epistles* (part 1 of 2). Note: Writing to the empress, Gregory says the Patriarch of Constantinople’s attempt to be called sole bishop shows the times of Antichrist are near, since he imitates Lucifer’s pride. [Isaiah 14:13-14]

13.49. Gregory the Great: 'Universal bishop' is Antichrist's precursor

“Now I confidently say that whosoever calls himself, or desires to be called, Universal Priest, is in his elation the precursor of Antichrist, because he proudly puts himself above all others.” — Gregory the Great, *Register of Epistles* (part 1 of 2). Note: Gregory tells the emperor that anyone who calls himself or wishes to be called Universal Priest is, in his pride, a precursor of Antichrist, who will call himself God. [2 Thessalonians 2:4; Luke 14:11]

13.50. Bede: Spiritual reading: heresy and crime

“In a spiritual sense, however, when we see the abomination of desolation standing where it ought not, that is, heresies and crimes reigning amongst

them, who appear to be consecrated by the heavenly mysteries, then whosoever of us remain in Judæa, that is, in the confession of the true faith, ought to mount the higher in virtue” — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede reads the abomination spiritually as heresies and crimes ruling among those consecrated by the sacraments, and bids the faithful rise higher in virtue. [*Mark 13: 14*]

13.51. Bede: A man born more wicked than all; already in minds

“He comes with the imminent day of judgment, born into the world as that man more wicked than all others, the son of iniquity. And now he is already in the world, dwelling in the minds of those who resist Christ either by profession or by deed” — Bede, *Bede's Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*. Note: Bede says Antichrist will come with the imminent judgment as a man more wicked than all, while already dwelling in the minds of all who resist Christ by profession or deed. [*1 John 4: 3*]

13.52. Bede: Many baptised already serve his kingdom

“For not only those who attach themselves to Antichrist in the end times, visibly rising against God, are considered to serve his kingdom: but even today, many who have been initiated into the mysteries of faith, when they immerse themselves in various crimes, are found to be serving his kingdom impiously” — Bede, *Commentary on Samuel*. Note: Bede says that not only those who join Antichrist at the end serve his kingdom, but also many of the initiated who now commit crimes. [*1 Samuel 12: 14-15, 25*]

13.53. Paulician Church of Armenia: Satan as 'son of perdition'

“So firmly at this season this son of perdition, in the hour of the Lord's temptation, cherished in himself the determination to sow his evil longings in the hearts and ears of those who should please Him even until the end of the world.” — Paulician Church of Armenia, *The Key of Truth: a Manual of the Paulician Church of Armenia* (Conybeare translation); scanned text. Note: The Paulician Key of Truth calls Satan himself the 'son of perdition', who sows evil in the hearts of believers until the end of the world. [*Luke 22: 40; 1 Peter 5: 8*]

13.54. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Satan and Antichrist: same pride

“Satan at first, Antichrist at last, the sin was the same, the ungodly is so proud” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2);

scanned text. Note: The compilers say the sin of Satan at the first and of Antichrist at the last is the same: pride. [*Psalm 10: 4; Isaiah 14: 13*]

13.55. Neale and Littledale (compilers): *Every sinner's heart rehearses it*

"every evil man shall do that in the battle-field of his own heart which Antichrist shall do in the great and final conflict between good and evil. He shall have the dominion over all his enemies, when "as GOD, he shall sit in the temple of GOD, showing himself that he is God;" "When they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over the two witnesses,"" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say every evil man rehearses in his heart what Antichrist will do in the final conflict, when he will rule as God in the temple and the earth rejoices over the two witnesses. [*Psalm 10: 5; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4; Revelation 11: 10*]

14. HOW DOES IT END?

"Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" (2 Thessalonians 2:8). All the Fathers agree on the ending: Christ's own return, with no intermediate rescue party and no battle that Christians have to win. They disagree on what comes next. Irenaeus, Justin, Commodian and Lactantius expect a thousand-year kingdom of the righteous on earth. Victorinus, Hippolytus (in the fragments) and Augustine read the thousand years as the present age or as one perfect day. Everyone expects resurrection, judgment and the lake of fire.

In this chapter

This question draws on 146 quotations from 45 voices. 85 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 61 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Slain by Christ's coming, not by an army (Irenaeus, Chrysostom, Augustine, John of Damascus, Coptic Daniel)

Irenaeus says Paul's wicked one is slain by the Lord's coming. Chrysostom says Christ will destroy the lawless one by his commandment and mere presence, as a fire's approach disables small creatures. Augustine says Jesus himself will extinguish the last persecution by his presence. John of Damascus says Christ returns visibly from heaven and destroys him with the breath of his

mouth. In the Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Christ as the Ancient of Days revives the witnesses, comes on the clouds and kills Antichrist and his host.

Resurrection and judgment follow at once (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Augustine, Theophylact)

Tertullian says the resurrection follows the extirpation of Antichrist. Hippolytus says after the divided week, the abomination and the witnesses' course, nothing remains but Christ's coming from heaven with the judgment. Theophylact says Christ's coming follows at once after the woes of Antichrist, with no interval. Augustine lists what happens at the judgment, Elias, the Jews, Antichrist, the judgment, the resurrection and the renewal of the world, and adds that human understanding cannot say in what order.

The lake of fire (Irenaeus, Commodian, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Bede, Solomon of Basra)

The fate is the lake of fire or Gehenna, with the false prophet. Irenaeus says Christ sends this man and his followers into the lake of fire; Commodian has the tyrant and the false prophet seized and cast alive into Gehenna. Bede says being cast alive into the lake of fire indicates a greater penalty for the devil and Antichrist than for the other damned. Solomon of Basra has Christ destroy Antichrist body and soul, and Satan and the devils go to Gehenna.

A thousand-year kingdom, before or after? (Justin, Irenaeus, Commodian, Lactantius; against: Victorinus, Dionysius, Hippolytus, Augustine)

The second-century and third-century Fathers who expect a literal earthly kingdom put it after Antichrist. Justin cites John's Revelation for a thousand years in Jerusalem. Irenaeus says the earthly kingdom follows the coming of Antichrist and the resurrection of the just. Commodian and Lactantius have six thousand years of toil followed by a seventh thousand of rest. Others deny it: Dionysius of Alexandria challenges the literal earthly kingdom of Nepos; Victorinus rejects an earthly millennium as Cerinthian; Hippolytus, as Bar Salibi reports him, takes the thousand years as one perfect day.

Is Satan bound now, or not yet? (Victorinus, Augustine, Bede, Tyconius; Hippolytus)

Victorinus says the years in which Satan is bound run from Christ's first advent to the end of the age, and that the "little season" of his release is three and a half years in which the devil works through Antichrist. Augustine says Satan will be loosed and work through Antichrist with all his power, and that he will rage for three years and six months. Bede and Tyconius agree.

Hippolytus, by contrast, says the Devil is not yet bound and will be flung into the pit at the Lord's coming.

Gog and Magog (Hippolytus, Samuel of Kalamoun, Solomon of Basra)

In several writers the final conflict includes Gog and Magog. Hippolytus, as Bar Salibi reports, reads the loosing of Satan after the thousand years as justified judgment gathering Gog and Magog. Samuel of Kalamoun has them ravage the earth five months before an angel destroys them in an hour; Solomon of Basra has them burst from Alexander's gate in a time of deep security and be destroyed on the plain of Joppa.

The days are shortened; the Church is kept (Pseudo-Hippolytus, Lactantius, Cyprian, Neale and Littledale)

The ending is also a rescue. Pseudo-Hippolytus says God will shorten the three and a half years for the sake of the hidden remnant. Lactantius describes the righteous besieged on their mountain who cry to God, and a great king sent from heaven destroys the impious. Cyprian says that in persecution Antichrist threatens but Christ protects and paradise opens. Neale and Littledale list Antichrist's time among the occasions on which God keeps his people as the apple of his eye.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the

brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2: 1-17]

The breath of his lips shall slay the wicked (Isa 11: 4-5)

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. [Isaiah 11: 4-5]

The fourth beast explained (Dan 7: 15-28)

I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and ... [Daniel 7: 15-28]

The beast and the false prophet taken (Rev 19: 11-21)

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and

make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false ... [*Revelation 19:11-21*]

The thousand years and Gog and Magog (Rev 20:1-10)

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and

Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the ... [*Revelation 20: 1-10*]

The three unclean spirits (Rev 16: 12-16)

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. [*Revelation 16: 12-16*]

Gog, of the land of Magog (Ezek 38: 1-9)

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee. Be thou prepared, and prepare for thyself, thou, and all thy company that are assembled unto thee, and be thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. [*Ezekiel 38: 1-9*]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Irenaeus of Lyons, Roman empire divided into ten kings (5.5); Irenaeus of Lyons, Slays three, is the eighth king (5.6); Irenaeus of Lyons, Ten toes are

ten kings (5.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, Gathers all apostasy; cast into fire (11.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Reign, then fire, then kingdom (6.5); Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Beliar cast into fire for ever (16.2); Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Lord's salvation wars against Beliar (9.2); Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, Israel's repentance ends the enemy's kingdom (4.2); Tertullian, Enoch and Elijah reserved to die (9.3); Tertullian, Elijah, Antichrist, Babylon not yet (9.4); Tertullian, Order of the last times (5.9); Hippolytus of Rome, 2 Thess 2 means Antichrist (6.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Witnesses killed and raised (9.6); Hippolytus of Rome, Little horn kills witnesses (5.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Do not admit the falling away (11.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Daniel shows kingdoms then Antichrist (5.15); Hippolytus of Rome, Three horns: Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia (5.16); Hippolytus of Rome, Ten kings burn the harlot city (5.18); Hippolytus of Rome, Lamb-horns: imitates the Son of God (3.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Programme of the treatise (8.21); Hippolytus of Rome, Antichrist kills Enoch and Elijah (9.11); Origen of Alexandria, Not every sign proves God (3.14); Victorinus of Pettau, Elijah precursor; recalls Jews (9.16); Victorinus of Pettau, After Elijah, the devil cast down (9.19); Victorinus of Pettau, Sent from Rome; three kings killed (5.26); Victorinus of Pettau, Ascetic reading of the millennium (13.10); Lactantius, Antichrist falsely calls himself Christ (3.24); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Son of perdition judged and condemned (16.12); Revelation of John (apocryphal), Three years; Enoch and Elias killed (9.27); Basil of Caesarea, Is this the falling away? (11.44); Cyril of Jerusalem, Eleventh king, three-and-a-half years (5.31); Cyril of Jerusalem, Deliverance of the elect (9.28); John Chrysostom, Elijah comes against him (9.31); Jerome, 'He that letteth' removed (4.22); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (5.33); Augustine of Hippo, Elijah restores those Antichrist overthrew (9.33); Augustine of Hippo, Order of last events: Elias, Jews, Antichrist (9.36); Apocalypse of Sedrach, Impenitent perish with Antichrist (11.71); Cave of Treasures, Elijah from Paradise (9.37); Cosmas Indicopleustes, Elijah leads against Antichrist (9.39); Gregory the Great, Head of the wicked, whose members are all the wicked (13.43); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Sinners sent to Antichrist's place (5.39); Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, Antichrist bound; Devil claims God (3.57); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Michael commissions the Greek king (5.42); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Hundredfold retribution (5.43); Apocalypse of Samuel

of Kalamoun, Gog and Magog five months (2.42); Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, Roman king crushes Ishmael (5.47); Bede, Daniel: abomination in the temple, 1290 days (6.56); Bede, Cast alive into the lake of fire (11.91); Bede, Enoch and Elijah killed by Antichrist (9.48); John of Damascus, Enoch and Elijah turn synagogue (9.49); Timothy I of Baghdad, Elijah rebukes Antichrist (9.50); Theophylact, John with Elias, killed by him (9.53); Solomon of Basra, Last Greek king rises (5.56); Solomon of Basra, Greek king crushes Ishmaelites (5.57); Solomon of Basra, Last emperor yields crown at Golgotha (4.32); Solomon of Basra, Elijah convicts the deceiver (9.54); Kebra Nagast, Kingdom of Christ until False Messiah (16.51); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Slaughter of two witnesses, then end (9.59); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Two witnesses slain and raised (9.60); Neale and Littledale (compilers), 'Like the Most High' but smitten (3.67).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

14.1. Epistle of Barnabas: The Son ends the lawless one's time

“when his Son comes and puts an end to the time of the lawless one, judges the ungodly, and changes the sun, the moon, and the stars, then he will truly rest on the seventh day.” — Epistle of Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas. Note: The Son's coming ends the time of the lawless one, brings judgment and a changed cosmos, and begins the true sabbath rest. [*Genesis 2:2*]

14.2. Ascension of Isaiah: 1,332 days, then the Lord comes

“of these few in those days will be left as His servants, while they flee from desert to desert, awaiting the coming of the Beloved. 14. And after (one thousand) three hundred and thirty-two days the Lord will come with His angels” — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: Few believers remain, fleeing from desert to desert; after 1,332 days the Lord comes with his angels. [*Daniel 12:11-12; Matthew 24:16*]

14.3. Ascension of Isaiah: Beliar dragged into Gehenna

“and He will drag Beliar into Gehenna and also his armies.” — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: At his coming the Lord drags Beliar and his armies into Gehenna. [*Revelation 20:10*]

14.4. Sibylline Oracles: Fire burns Beliar and his followers

“It shall burn Beliar too, and faithless men, / All, even as many as put their trust in him.” — Sibylline Oracles, The Sibylline Oracles (Terry translation); scanned text. Note: The flaming power at God’s threatening burns Beliar and all who trusted him. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.5. Justin Martyr: John foretold the thousand years

“among us a certain man named John, one of the apostles of Christ, prophesied in a revelation given to him that those who believed in our Christ would spend a thousand years in Jerusalem. After that, he said, the universal and, in short, eternal resurrection and judgment of all together would take place.” — Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho. Note: He cites the apostle John’s Revelation for a thousand years in Jerusalem followed by universal resurrection and judgment. [*Revelation 20: 4-6*]

14.6. Irenaeus of Lyons: The lion is antichrist

“indicating that sin, which was set up and spread out against man, and which rendered him subject to death, should be deprived of its power, along with death, which rules [over men]; and that the lion, that is, antichrist, rampant against mankind in the latter days, should be trampled down by Him” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: Irenaeus reads ‘the lion’ of Psalm 91 as Antichrist, rampant in the last days and trampled by Christ. [*Psalm 91: 13; Genesis 3: 15*]

14.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Slain by the Lord’s coming

“And then shall the wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy by the presence of His coming; whose coming [i.e., the wicked one’s] is after the working of Satan, in all power, and signs, and portents of lies” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: Paul’s wicked one comes by Satan’s working with signs and lying portents and is slain by the Lord’s coming. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8-12*]

14.8. Irenaeus of Lyons: Earthly kingdom follows Antichrist

“For all these and other words were unquestionably spoken in reference to the resurrection of the just, which takes place after the coming of Antichrist, and the destruction of all nations under his rule; in [the times of] which [resurrection] the righteous shall reign in the earth” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: The earthly kingdom promised by the prophets fol-

lows the coming of Antichrist, the destruction of his nations, and the resurrection of the just. [*Isaiah 11; Revelation 20: 4-6*]

14.9. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Beliar bound by the new priest

“And Beliar shall be bound by him, And he shall give power to His children to tread upon the evil spirits.” — Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: In Levi’s testament, the coming priest binds Beliar and gives his children power over evil spirits. [*Revelation 20: 2*]

14.10. Tertullian: Resurrection after his destruction

“and after the extirpation of Antichrist shall be busily transacted the great process of the resurrection.” — Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh. Note: The resurrection follows the extirpation of Antichrist. [*Isaiah 26: 20*]

14.11. Tertullian: Martyrs triumph over Antichrist

“For yet again a countless throng are revealed, clothed in white and distinguished by palms of victory, celebrating their triumph doubtless over Antichrist, since one of the elders says, “These are they who come out of that great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” — Tertullian, Scorpiace. Note: The white-robed multitude of Revelation 7 are martyrs triumphant over Antichrist, washed in the Lamb’s blood. [*Revelation 7: 9-14*]

14.12. Tertullian: Creator sends the delusion

“If therefore he be Antichrist, (as we hold), and comes according to the Creator’s purpose, it must be God the Creator who sends him to fasten in their error those who did not believe the truth, that they might be saved” — Tertullian, The Five Books Against Marcion. Note: Tertullian argues that if the coming one is Antichrist, as Christians hold, then the Creator sends him as a judgement on unbelievers. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 9-12*]

14.13. Hippolytus of Rome: Satan loosed, Gog and Magog

“But as for what he has said, that after the thousand years he shall be loosed, and shall deceive the nations [Rev. xx. 7, 8], it is this: that justly he is to be loosed, and to be cast into the burning, and to be judged [ib. 10, 12] ; with those who from old time were gathered together with him, when he gathered the strangers of the kingdom, and Gog and Magog [ib. 8].” — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by

Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: Hippolytus (via Bar Salibi) reads the loosing of Satan after the 'thousand years' as justified judgement, gathering Gog and Magog. [Revelation 20: 2-8; Isaiah 30: 26]

14.14. Hippolytus of Rome: Thousand years = one perfect day

"And the number of the years is not the number of days, but it represents the space of one day, glorious and perfect; in which, when the King comes in glory with His slain, the creation is to shine" — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The 'thousand years' symbolise one glorious perfect day rather than a literal span, as cited from Hippolytus. [Revelation 20: 2; 2 Peter 3: 8]

14.15. Hippolytus of Rome: Beast's body is the devil

"The body he speaks of is the devil, he who worketh [2 Thess. ii. 7, 9] in the false Christ : and the city he speaks of is Jerusalem, where these things are to come to pass. For Paul said concerning him who is Antichrist, He sitteth in the temple of God as God" — Hippolytus of Rome, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by reported by Dionysius bar Salibi). Note: The beast's 'body' destroyed in Daniel 7:11 is the devil working in the false Christ; Jerusalem is the scene, and Antichrist sits in God's temple. [Isaiah 27:1; Daniel 7:11; 2 Thessalonians 2: 7-9]

14.16. Hippolytus of Rome: A man claiming 'I am God'

"Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the sea; yet art thou a man, and not God" — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: Ezekiel's prince of Tyre who says 'I am God' yet is only a man is cited as speaking of Antichrist. [Ezekiel 28:2]

14.17. Hippolytus of Rome: Then Christ's coming and judgment

"These things, then, being to come to pass, beloved, and the one week being divided into two parts, and the abomination of desolation being manifested then, and the two prophets and forerunners of the Lord having finished their course, and the whole world finally approaching the consummation, what remains but the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from heaven, for whom we have looked in hope? who shall bring the conflagration and just judgment upon all who have refused to believe on Him." — Hippolytus of Rome, On Christ and Antichrist. Note: After the divided week, the abomination and the witnesses' course, nothing remains but

Christ's coming from heaven with the conflagration and judgment. [Matthew 24:30-31]

14.18. Hippolytus of Rome: Satan bound at the Lord's coming

"Accordingly, in the end of times, the Devil is to be bound and to be flung into the bottomless pit, when the Lord comes ; even as Esaias hath said, that the wicked shall be taken away in order that he see not the glory of the Lord" — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: The Devil is not yet bound; he will be bound and cast into the abyss at the Lord's coming at the end of times. [Revelation 20:2-3; Isaiah 26:10]

14.19. Hippolytus of Rome: Thousand years as one perfect day

"And the number of the years is not the number of days, but it represents the space of one day ... glorious and perfect; in which, when the King comes in glory with His slain, the creation is to shine" — Hippolytus of Rome, *Quotes on Revelation* recorded by Dionysius Syrus. Note: The thousand years of Revelation 20 stand for one perfect, glorious day of Christ's reign, not a literal count. [Revelation 20:2-8; Psalm 118:24]

14.20. Commodian: Seized and cast alive into Gehenna

"Moreover, when the tyrant shall dash himself against the army of God, his soldiery are overthrown by the celestial terror; the false prophet himself is seized with the wicked one, by the decree of the Lord; they are handed over alive to Gehenna." — Commodian, *On Christian Discipline*. Note: The tyrant attacks God's army, is overthrown, and he and the false prophet are seized and cast alive into Gehenna. [Revelation 19:19-20; Daniel 7:11]

14.21. Commodian: Martyrs reign in a fleshly millennium

"They shall come also who overcame cruel martyrdom under Antichrist, and they themselves live for the whole time, and receive blessings because they have suffered evil things; and they themselves marrying, beget for a thousand years." — Commodian, *On Christian Discipline*. Note: Martyrs under Antichrist share in a thousand-year renewed earth in which the saints even marry and beget. [Revelation 20:4-6; Revelation 21]

14.22. Commodian: Six thousand years; Antichrist conquered

"when six thousand years are completed, and the world has come to an end. ... Those who are more worthy, and who are begotten of an illustrious stem, and the men of nobility under the conquered Antichrist, according to God's

command living again in the world for a thousand years, indeed, that they may serve the saints” — Commodian, On Christian Discipline. Note: At the end of six thousand years the dead rise; after Antichrist’s defeat the noble among his subjects live a thousand years serving the saints before being judged again. [Revelation 20]

14.23. Commodian: Tyrant and false prophet to Gehenna

“Moreover, when the tyrant shall dash himself against the army of God, his soldiery are overthrown by the celestial terror; the false prophet himself is seized with the wicked one, by the decree of the Lord; they are handed over alive to Gehenna.” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: The tyrant attacks God’s army, is overthrown, and he and the false prophet are handed alive to Gehenna. [Revelation 19: 19-20]

14.24. Commodian: Martyrs under Antichrist share the thousand years

“They shall come also who overcame cruel martyrdom under Antichrist, and they themselves live for the whole time, and receive blessings because they have suffered evil things” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: Those who endured martyrdom under Antichrist rise in the first resurrection and share the thousand years. [Revelation 20: 4]

14.25. Commodian: Antichrist’s nobles serve the saints

“Those who are more worthy, and who are begotten of an illustrious stem, and the men of nobility under the conquered Antichrist, according to God’s command living again in the world for a thousand years, indeed, that they may serve the saints, and the High One, under a servile yoke” — Commodian, The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline. Note: Nobles of the conquered Antichrist live again for a thousand years to serve the saints under a yoke. [Revelation 20: 4]

14.26. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist threatens, Christ protects

“In persecutions, earth is shut up, but heaven is opened; Antichrist is threatening, but Christ is protecting; death is brought in, but immortality follows” — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 11. Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus. Note: In persecution Antichrist threatens but Christ protects and paradise opens.

14.27. Dionysius of Alexandria: Dionysius contests an earthly kingdom

“Seeing that they bring forward a composition of Nepos, on which they rely too much as showing irrefutably that the Kingdom of Christ will be on earth, though I accept and love Nepos for many other things” — Dionysius of Alexandria, *Letters and Treatises* (Feltoe translation). Note: Dionysius challenges Nepos's literal earthly-kingdom reading of Revelation while honouring him. [*Revelation 20:1-6*]

14.28. Victorinus of Pettau: Angels extinguish his kingdom

“we read in the Gospel that the prayers of the Church are sent from heaven by an angel, and that they are received against wrath, and that the kingdom of Antichrist is cast out and extinguished by holy angels” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: Church prayers are received against wrath and holy angels will cast out and extinguish Antichrist's kingdom. [*Revelation 8:2; Matthew 24:21-22,31*]

14.29. Victorinus of Pettau: Slain by His mouth's breath

“And Paul, speaking of Antichrist to the Thessalonians, says: “Whom the Lord Jesus will slay by the breath of His mouth.” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: Victorinus reads the two-edged sword from Christ's mouth in Revelation 1 as the breath by which Paul says Antichrist is slain. [*2 Thessalonians 2:8; Isaiah 11:4; Revelation 1:16*]

14.30. Victorinus of Pettau: Satan bound from the first advent

“Those years wherein Satan is bound are in the first advent of Christ, even to the end of the age; and they are called a thousand, according to that mode of speaking, wherein a part is signified by the whole” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: The thousand years of Satan's binding are the present age from Christ's first coming, 'a thousand' being a figurative round number. [*Revelation 20:1-3*]

14.31. Victorinus of Pettau: Little season = 3.5 years

“The little season signifies three years and six months, in which with all his power the devil will avenge himself trader Antichrist against the Church. Finally, he says, after that the devil shall be loosed, and will seduce the nations in the whole world, and will entice war against the Church” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: The 'little

season' of Satan's release is 3.5 years in which the devil works through Anti-christ against the Church. [Revelation 20: 3,7-8]

14.32. Victorinus of Pettau: Seventh millennium: Christ reigns

"Wherefore to those seven days the Lord attributed to each a thousand years ... Wherefore, as I have narrated, that true Sabbath will be in the seventh millenary of years, when Christ with His elect shall reign." — Victorinus of Pettau, On the Creation of the World. Note: Victorinus equates each day of creation with a thousand years; the true Sabbath is the seventh millennium, when Christ reigns with His elect. [Psalm 90: 4; Revelation 20: 6]

14.33. Lactantius: Six ages, then a thousand-year Sabbath

"the world must continue in its present state through six ages, that is, six thousand years. ... at the end of the six thousandth year all wickedness must be abolished from the earth, and righteousness reign for a thousand years; and there must be tranquillity and rest" — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: The six days of creation signify six thousand years of toil, followed by a seventh millennium of righteousness and rest. [Genesis 2:2; Psalm 90: 4; Revelation 20]

14.34. Lactantius: Righteous besieged, rescued by heavenly king

"And when he hears of this, the impious king, inflamed with anger, will come with a great army, and bringing up all his forces, will surround all the mountain in which the righteous shall be situated, that he may seize them. ... and God shall hear them, and send from heaven a great king to rescue and free them, and destroy all the wicked with fire and sword." — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: The impious king besieges the righteous on their mountain; they cry to God and He sends a great king from heaven to destroy the wicked. [Revelation 19: 11-21]

14.35. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Reigns 3.5 years

"the one half of the week is for the preaching of the prophets, and for the other half of the week—that is to say, for three years and a half—Antichrist will reign upon the earth. And after this his kingdom and his glory shall be taken away." — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Of Daniel's week of seven years, half is for the prophets' preaching and the other three and a half years Antichrist reigns before his kingdom is taken away. [Daniel 9: 27; Revelation 11: 2]

14.36. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Days shortened for the remnant

“but He will shorten even those days and the period of three years and a half, and He will curtail those times on account of the remnant of those who hide themselves in the mountains and caves ... and the kingdom of the deceiver and Antichrist shall be speedily removed. And then, in fine, in the glance of an eye shall the fashion of this world pass away” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: God will shorten the three and a half years for the sake of the hidden remnant, quickly remove Antichrist's kingdom, and the present world will pass. [*Matthew 24: 22*]

14.37. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Cross-sign heralds the Judge

“For the sign of the cross shall arise from the east even unto the west, in brightness exceeding that of the sun, and shall announce the advent and manifestation of the Judge, to give to every one according to his works.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: The sign of the cross will shine from east to west, announcing Christ's coming as Judge. [*Matthew 24: 27-28*]

14.38. Athanasius of Alexandria: What more could Antichrist do?

“Now what is yet wanting to make him Antichrist? or what more could Antichrist do at his coming than this man has done? Will he not find when he comes that the way has been already prepared for him by this man easily to deceive the people? ... Again , he claims to himself the right of deciding causes, which he refers to the Court instead of the Church, and presides at them in person.” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *History of the Arians*. Note: Athanasius asks what more Antichrist could do than Constantius, who prepared his way by judging ecclesiastical causes himself and presiding over them.

14.39. Apostolic Constitutions: The deceiver of the world, prince of lies

“And then shall appear the deceiver of the world, the enemy of the truth, the prince of lies, whom the Lord Jesus “shall destroy with the spirit of His mouth, who takes away the wicked with His lips; and many shall be offended at Him. But they that endure to the end, the same shall be saved.” — Apostolic Constitutions, *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Book 7*. Note: After the cooling of love and betrayal, the deceiver of the world appears and is destroyed by the Lord's mouth. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8; Matthew 24: 13*]

14.40. Apostolic Constitutions: The Lord comes to condemn the deceiver

“And then shall the Lord come, and all His saints with Him, with a great concussion above the clouds, with the angels of His power, in the throne of His kingdom, to condemn the devil, the deceiver of the world” — Apostolic Constitutions, Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Book 7. Note: The Lord comes with his saints to condemn the devil, the deceiver of the world. [*Matthew 24: 30; 1 Thessalonians 4: 16*]

14.41. Cyril of Jerusalem: The horn wars on the saints

“For he says, I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Daniel's horn makes war with the saints in a time of unparalleled trouble; Cyril calls the beast a mighty dragon unconquerable by man. [*Daniel 7: 21; Daniel 12: 1*]

14.42. Tyconius: Tyconius: the beast as the whole body of the devil

“at the end of the world, he is released from the prison of his confinement and will perish forever by the spirit of the Lord's mouth (2 Thess. 2). Tyconius refers the beast to the entire body of the devil, which is replenished by the succession of departing and following generations.” — Tyconius, Commentary on Revelation (quoted by The Venerable Bede). Note: Bede says the devil, cast out at the cross, is released at the end and perishes by the Lord's breath, and reports Tyconius reading the beast as the devil's whole body across generations. [*Revelation 17: 7; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.43. Ambrose of Milan: Slain by the Spirit

“neither would He punish Antichrist, whom, as we read, “the Lord Jesus shall slay with the Spirit of His mouth,” unless He had before judged of his deserts” — Ambrose of Milan, On the Holy Spirit. Note: Ambrose uses 2 Thessalonians 2:8 to show Christ judges and punishes in the Spirit: Antichrist is slain with the Spirit of His mouth. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.44. John Chrysostom: Short tribulation of Antichrist's times

“By the tribulation, He means the times of Antichrist and the false Prophets; for when there are so many deceivers, the tribulation will be great. But it shall not extend through any great length of time.” — John Chrysostom, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom takes the tribulation

of Matthew 24:29 as the times of Antichrist and the false prophets, great but short, with Christ following immediately. [*Matthew 24: 29*]

14.45. John Chrysostom: Christ consumes Antichrist

“Christ too herein also doth discover His own majesty when He “shall consume” Antichrist “with the breath of His mouth, and bring him to nought with the manifestation of His coming.”” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Corinthians. Note: Christ displays His majesty by consuming Antichrist with the breath of His mouth, as fire shows its power by burning thorns. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.46. John Chrysostom: Christ's mere appearing ends him

“For as fire merry coming on even before its arrival makes torpid and consumes the little animals that are afar off; so also Christ, by His commandment only, and Coming. It is enough for Him to be present, and all these things are destroyed. He will put a stop to the deceit, by only appearing” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: Christ will destroy the lawless one by His commandment and mere presence, as a fire's approach disables small creatures; his display of power is deceit. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8-9*]

14.47. John Chrysostom: Antichrist's tribulation is short

“Of the tribulation of what days doth He speak? Of those of Antichrist and of the false prophets? For there shall be great tribulation, there being so many deceivers. But it is not protracted to a length of time. For if the Jewish war was shortened for the elect's sake, much more shall this temptation be limited for these same's sake ... For the false prophets and false Christs shall come and cause confusion, and immediately He Himself will be here” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3). Note: Chrysostom takes the tribulation after which the sun darkens as that of Antichrist and false prophets, brief for the elect's sake; Christ comes immediately after. [*Matthew 24: 29*]

14.48. John Chrysostom: Revelry in the days of Antichrist

“Whereby He shows, that when Antichrist is come, the pursuit of unlawful pleasures shall be more eager among the transgressors, and those that have learnt to despair of their own salvation. Then shall be gluttony, then revelings, and drunkenness ... so also now, Antichrist indeed shall appear, after whom is the end, and the punishments at the end, and vengeance intolerable” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3). Note: As in

Noah's days, when Antichrist appears the wicked will pursue pleasures and revel, unperceiving, though the end and judgment follow him. [*Matthew 24: 37-39*]

14.49. John Chrysostom: Nero the mystery of Antichrist

"Dost thou not hear what Nero's character was, whom Paul even calls the Mystery of Antichrist? For "the mystery of iniquity," he says, "already worketh. (ib. ii. 7. ... Is Antichrist to suffer nothing? or the Devil nothing? Then he will always be Antichrist, and so the Devil." — John Chrysostom, Homilies on Romans (part 2 of 2). Note: In arguing for hell, Chrysostom calls Nero the 'Mystery of Antichrist' and asks whether Nero, Antichrist or the Devil could escape punishment. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 7*]

14.50. Rufinus of Aquileia: Foretold lest he be mistaken

"For this reason, therefore, is this "delusion" foretold unto us by the words of Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles, lest any one should mistake the coming of Antichrist for the coming of Christ. But as the Lord Himself says, "When they shall say unto you, lo, here is Christ, or lo, He is there, believe it not." — Rufinus of Aquileia, A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed. Note: Rufinus says the delusion is foretold so that no one mistakes Antichrist's coming for Christ's; the true Christ comes visibly like lightning and sits in judgment. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8-11; Matthew 24: 23-27*]

14.51. Sulpicius Severus: Last persecution: Antichrist's

"nor do I believe that there will be any further persecutions, except that which Antichrist will carry on just before the end of the world" — Sulpicius Severus, The Sacred History. Note: Sulpicius expects no more persecutions after Constantine except Antichrist's, just before the world's end, as the tenth of ten afflictions.

14.52. Augustine of Hippo: Satan unchained works through him

"For then shall Satan be unchained, and work through Antichrist in all his power, wonderfully indeed, but falsely." — Augustine of Hippo, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine says that Satan will be loosed and will work through Antichrist with all his power, producing wonders that are in truth false. [*Mark 13: 22; 2 Thessalonians 2: 9; Revelation 20: 7*]

14.53. Augustine of Hippo: Only the unwritten consent to him

“what saith the Spirit of God, when the same Scripture was speaking of the oppressions that should be from Antichrist? “There shall give consent to him all they that have not been written in the book of life.” — Augustine of Hippo, *On the Psalms* (part 2 of 4). Note: Augustine says that, in the Apocalypse's account of Antichrist's oppressions, only those not written in the book of life will consent to him; those written in it will not. [*Psalm 69: 28; Revelation 13: 8*]

14.54. Augustine of Hippo: Christ slays him; no date-setting

“Truly Jesus Himself shall extinguish by His presence that last persecution which is to be made by Antichrist. For so it is written, that “He shall slay him with the breath of His mouth, and empty him with the brightness of His presence. ... In vain, then, do we attempt to compute definitely the years that may remain to this world” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine says Christ will end Antichrist's persecution by His presence, and rebukes attempts to compute the years remaining, since Christ said it is not for us to know times. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8; Acts 1: 6-7*]

14.55. Augustine of Hippo: Fire from heaven: the saints' firmness

“for they shall be impotent to draw away the saints to the party of Antichrist ... Or if by this fire coming down out of heaven and consuming them, John meant that blow wherewith Christ in His coming is to strike those persecutors” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine reads the fire that devours the attackers as the firmness of the saints, or alternatively as Christ's blow when He kills Antichrist with the breath of His mouth. [*Revelation 20: 9; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.56. Augustine of Hippo: Beast is a wicked city; false prophet

“We have already said that by the beast is well understood the wicked city. His false prophet is either Antichrist or that image or figment of which we have spoken in the same place.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 2 of 3). Note: Augustine takes the beast of Revelation to be the wicked city, and the false prophet to be either Antichrist or the 'image' spoken of in the same passage. [*Revelation 19: 20; Revelation 20: 10*]

14.57. Augustine of Hippo: Certain only: Antichrist comes first

“Thus various, then, are the conjectural explanations of the obscure words of the apostle. That which there is no doubt he said is this, that Christ will not come to judge quick and dead unless Antichrist, His adversary, first come to seduce those who are dead in soul; although their seduction is a result of God’s secret judgment already passed. For, as it is said “his presence shall be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all seduction of unrighteousness in them that perish. For then shall Satan be loosed, and by means of that Antichrist shall work with all power in a lying though a wonderful manner.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine calls the explanations of Paul’s obscure words conjectural and holds as certain that Christ will not come to judge unless Antichrist first comes, working lying wonders when Satan is loosed. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 8-10]

14.58. Augustine of Hippo: Seduced, then judged

“Therefore, being judged, they shall be seduced, and, being seduced, they shall be judged. But, being judged, they shall be seduced by those secretly just and justly secret judgments of God, with which He has never ceased to judge since the first sin of the rational creatures; and, being seduced, they shall be judged in that last and manifest judgment administered by Jesus Christ, who was Himself most unjustly judged and shall most justly judge.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says that God permits the devil’s work as a just judgment: those who are seduced will in turn be judged at the last judgment by Christ. [2 *Thessalonians* 2: 11-12]

14.59. Augustine of Hippo: Utterly perishes

“S. Augustine takes it in a more terrible sense: He shall not be found, because he shall so utterly perish: as Pharaoh and his host were not found” — Augustine of Hippo, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Augustine, as cited, reads the verse as Antichrist perishing so utterly that he is not found, like Pharaoh and his host. [*Psalms* 10: 17]

14.60. Theodoret of Cyrus: Paul predicts Antichrist’s destruction

“And a little further on when predicting the destruction of antichrist he adds, “Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall

destroy with the brightness of his coming. ... believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east” — Theodoret of Cyrus, Letters of the Blessed Theodoret. Note: Theodoret, in a letter, cites Paul's prediction that Antichrist will be consumed by the Lord's coming, together with Christ's warning to disbelieve those who say 'Here is Christ'. [*2 Thessalonians 2:8; Matthew 24:23-27*]

14.61. Gregory the Great: Antichrist passes himself off as 'day'

“it is clearly shewn, that the destruction of Antichrist, to be at the end of the world, is foreseen by the holy man. For the evil spirit, who by rights is night, at the end of the world passes himself for the day, in that he shews himself to men as God, while he takes to himself deceitfully the brightness of the Deity, and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 1 of 5). Note: Gregory finds Antichrist's destruction at the world's end foreseen in Job 3: the evil spirit will pass himself off as day by showing himself as God. [*Job 3:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:4*]

14.62. Gregory the Great: Consumed with his people at Christ's coming

“it is written, that the Lord Jesus shall consume him, with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming. [*2 Thess. 2, 8*] And so, then, whereas his wickedness is ended together with the settled constitution of the world, there shall be 'no offspring of him left in his people,' in that both he himself and his people along with him are equally forced to punishment” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 2 of 5). Note: Gregory says that at the brightness of Christ's coming Antichrist and his people are destroyed together, and his iniquity ends with the end of the world. [*Job 18:18-19; 2 Thessalonians 2:8*]

14.63. Gregory the Great: Lifted up, then undone by the true Judge

“For he in truth will be lifted up on high when he will feign that he is God. But he will appear a fool when lifted up on high, because he will fail in his very loftiness through the coming of the true Judge.” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory applies Proverbs 30 to Antichrist, who will be lifted up when he feigns to be God, but will fail in that loftiness at the coming of the true Judge. [*Proverbs 30:32; 2 Thessalonians 2:4*]

14.64. Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives: Judgement: Antichrist in the lake of fire

“And forthwith I shall utter curses upon Satan that day, and I will make them to seize him, and to fetter him in the bonds which cannot be broken, and I will curse that lying prophet who hath led astray all the nations, and Antichrist, the son of perdition, and they shall cast them into the Lake of Fire which burneth with fire and sulphur” — Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives in the Dialect of Upper Egypt (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: In Timothy's Discourse on Abbaton, Christ at the judgement curses Satan, the lying prophet and Antichrist, binding them and casting them into the Lake of Fire. [*Revelation 20:10; Revelation 19:20*]

14.65. Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery: Sinners numbered with Antichrist

“They shall behold Me with them as I come down from the gates of the Heavens—even the sinners who were numbered with the anti-Christ: these are they who shall be upon the earth in the days of My Appearing.” — Coptic Texts from St. Macarius' Monastery, New Coptic Texts from the Monastery of Saint Macarius (Evelyn White translation); scanned text. Note: In an Egyptian apocalyptic Gospel fragment, the sinners following Antichrist are left on earth when Christ appears with his risen martyrs. [*Revelation 19:20; Revelation 20:4*]

14.66. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Blessed who overcomes him

“Blessed is he who will fight against him and will overcome him, because he will reign eternally with Christ in the future age.” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: Those who resist and overcome the false Messiah will reign with Christ eternally. [*Revelation 2:26-27*]

14.67. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Christ slays Antichrist

“Then the Ancient of Days will bring them back to life. It is He whom I see coming with the clouds from Heaven, similar to a son of man. His power is an eternal power and His reign will have no end. It is he which will put Antichrist to death and all the multitude which is with him.” — Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel, The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel. Note: Christ as Ancient of Days revives the witnesses, comes on the clouds and kills Antichrist and his host. [*Daniel 7:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:8*]

14.68. Bede: Doeg as Antichrist

“Some say that Doeg is Antichrist, of whom Judas was a member; because, as the same Doeg slew eighty priests, so will Antichrist destroy all those who hold the faith of CHRIST.” — Bede, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Bede notes an opinion that Doeg the Edomite stands for Antichrist, of whom Judas was a member, as Doeg slew the priests. [*Psalm 52:1; 1 Samuel 22:18*]

14.69. Bede: Sabbath rest after Antichrist's destruction

“This Sabbath of holy souls will continue until the end of the world, and when the last age of the world, after its evening, which we have spoken of before, reaches its end, with the Antichrist destroyed by the Lord Jesus” — Bede, *Commentary on Genesis*. Note: Bede says the Sabbath of the holy souls continues until the world's last age ends with Antichrist destroyed by Jesus, when it is blessed further by bodily resurrection. [*Genesis 2: 2-3*]

14.70. Bede: The beast: devil, Antichrist or impious city

“For the beast should be understood according to the context: sometimes it means the devil, sometimes the Antichrist, sometimes the very impious city. The name of the fire descending from heaven can also signify the sudden destruction of the wicked when the Lord comes and will slay the Antichrist with the breath of His mouth” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede says the 'beast' can mean the devil, Antichrist or the impious city depending on context, and that the fire from heaven can signify the Lord slaying Antichrist with the breath of His mouth. [*Revelation 20: 9-10; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.71. Bede: 45 days after Antichrist's death (Jerome)

“After the destruction of the Antichrist, a brief rest is believed to come in the Church, about which Daniel predicted thus: “Blessed is he who waits and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days” (Daniel XII). Which blessed Jerome explains thus: “Blessed,” he says, “is he who, after the Antichrist is killed, awaits beyond the one thousand two hundred and ninety days, that is, three and a half years, forty-five days, during which the Lord and Savior is to come in his majesty.” — Bede, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Bede cites Jerome that after Antichrist is killed there is a delay of

forty-five days beyond the 1290 days before the Lord comes in majesty, and says the reason is known only to God. [*Daniel 12: 11-12; Revelation 8: 1*]

14.72. John of Damascus: Christ destroys the lawless one

“And the Lord shall come out of heaven, just as the holy apostles beheld Him going into heaven perfect God and perfect man, with glory and power, and will destroy the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction, with the breath of His mouth .” — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: Christ returns visibly from heaven and destroys the man of lawlessness with the breath of His mouth; no one should expect Him from earth. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8; Acts 1: 11*]

14.73. Theophylact: Christ comes right after

“so also after the woes of Antichrist, at once, without an interval, shall be the coming of Christ” — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact says that Christ’s coming follows at once, with no interval, after the woes of Antichrist. [*Mark 13: 28-29*]

14.74. Bruno: Impenitent see their king overthrown

“We have in these words set before us the doom of the finally impenitent, who will see the overthrow of their king Antichrist, and the dominion of the Son of Man established over all creation, and who will then pass from His judgment-seat to their place of punishment.” — Bruno, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale, in a passage attributed to Bruno the Carthusian, read the verse as the doom of the impenitent, who see Antichrist overthrown and the Son of Man’s dominion established. [*Psalms 83: 17-18*]

14.75. Solomon of Basra: Arabia and Hebron laid waste

“Egypt shall be ravaged, Arabia shall be burnt with fire, the land of Hebron shall be laid waste, and the tongue of the sea shall be at peace.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Egypt, Arabia and the land of Hebron are devastated in the Greek king’s victory.

14.76. Solomon of Basra: The 'last peace'

“And there shall be great peace on earth, the like of which has not been from the creation of the world until its end; for it is the last peace.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: A unique, final peace follows the Greek king's victory, before the northern nations are released.

14.77. Solomon of Basra: Alexander's nations released

“Then shall the gates of the north be opened, and the nations shall go forth that were imprisoned there by Alexander the king.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: After the last peace the nations shut in by Alexander are released. [*Revelation 20: 8*]

14.78. Solomon of Basra: Gog destroyed at Joppa

“After one week of that sore affliction, they will all be destroyed in the plain of Joppa, for thither will all those (people) be gathered together, with their wives and their sons and their daughters; and by the command of God one of the hosts of the angels will descend and will destroy them in one moment.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: After one week of affliction the nations are destroyed by an angel on the plain of Joppa. [*Revelation 20: 9*]

14.79. Solomon of Basra: Cross appears after Elijah

“After Elijah comes and conquers the son of destruction, and encourages the believers, for a space and a time which is known to God alone, there will appear the living sign of our Lord's Cross, honoured and borne aloft in the hands of the Archangel Gabriel.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Elijah overcomes Antichrist, and after an interval known only to God the Cross appears carried by Gabriel. [*Matthew 24: 30*]

14.80. Solomon of Basra: Christ destroys him body and soul

“He will then make an end of the son of perdition, and destroy him body and soul, and He will hurl Satan and the devils into Gehenna.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: At Christ's second appearing at the second trumpet he destroys Antichrist body and soul, and Satan with the devils goes to Gehenna. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 8*]

14.81. Thomas Aquinas: Christ's Advent crushes Antichrist

"That CHRIST, by His holy Advent, will crush Antichrist." — Thomas Aquinas, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: The argument ascribed to Thomas Aquinas for Psalm 9 states that Christ, by His holy Advent, will crush Antichrist. [*Psalm 9:1*]

14.82. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Satan crushed, righteousness begins

"Thou shalt take away his ungodliness, and it shall not be found; because then, when he is destroyed, all iniquity will have come to an end; Satan will be crushed for ever; the kingdom of righteousness will begin" — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers read the verse of Antichrist's destruction ending all iniquity, Satan crushed for ever, and the kingdom of righteousness beginning. [*Psalm 10:17*]

14.83. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Slain by the breath of His lips

"Every tyrant, every persecutor of the righteous, every tempter of the Church, shall partake of the punishment of Antichrist, according to that saying, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers read the breaking of the oppressor as the punishment of Antichrist, shared by every tyrant and persecutor, citing Isaiah 11:4. [*Psalm 72:4; Isaiah 11:4*]

14.84. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Spiritual Assyrians under Antichrist

"The spiritual Assyrians, under their king Antichrist, riding on the black horses of lying and the pale ones of envy, shall be cast into the deep sleep of the second death at the last day." — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 2 (Psalms 39–80) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: A sermon comment on Psalm 76 pictures spiritual Assyrians under their king Antichrist, riding horses of lying and envy, cast into the second death at the last day. [*Psalm 76:5; Revelation 19:11*]

14.85. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Judgment must come before he ravages

“Asaph, inasmuch as he had already foretold many things touching the LORD’S Incarnation, is now in the first portion about to speak of His second Advent; beseeching Him, that as His enemies are to be greatly uplifted by means of Antichrist at the end of the world, His judgment ought to come quickly, lest the prolonged licence of that most grievous foe should avail to lay the whole Church waste.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: An unnamed ancient argument for Psalm 83 says that, as God’s enemies will be greatly uplifted through Antichrist at the end, Christ’s judgment ought to come quickly lest his prolonged licence lay the Church waste. [*Psalm 83: 1*]

15. WHAT SHOULD CHRISTIANS DO?

Whatever the Fathers say about the man, they say remarkably little about forecasts and a great deal about conduct. The commands are the same across the centuries and across languages: hold the tradition, test every claim against Scripture and against Christ’s own lightning-like coming, refuse the mark and the sacrifice, do not be afraid, pray for the world’s peace and its delay, do not be curious about dates, and prepare by repentance, almsgiving and fasting. Often the question “is he coming now?” is answered by turning it into “what kind of person am I?”.

In this chapter

This question draws on 169 quotations from 51 voices. 68 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 101 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

Hold the tradition (Chrysostom, Polycarp, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Pseudo-Hippolytus)

Paul’s own answer in 2 Thessalonians 2:15 is “stand fast, and hold the traditions”. Chrysostom treats Church tradition, written and unwritten, as the believers’ response. Polycarp’s remedy is to return to the word delivered from the beginning, with watchful prayer and fasting. Cyril wants the signs taught to children and catechumens. Athanasius bids believers separate from the heretics. The Pseudo-Hippolytan sermon says those who know the Scriptures will see through the deception and flee to the mountains and caves.

Test every claim: Christ's coming is like lightning (Chrysostom, Eusebius, Athanasius, Rufinus, Hilary)

The practical test is the character of Christ's return. Chrysostom: it will be open and visible to all at once, like lightning, so believers must not go out to the desert or the inner room. Eusebius: if Antichrist's fame spreads as though Christ had appeared, do not follow. Rufinus: the delusion is foretold so that no one mistakes Antichrist's coming for Christ's. Athanasius reads even the Son's "not knowing the day" as protection against deceivers. Hilary says false prophets will point to Christ in the desert or in secret chambers.

Do not be afraid (Cyprian, Hermas, Neale and Littledale, Samuel of Kalamoun)

Cyprian tells his people that they need not be terrified of the coming Antichrist, since Christ follows to avenge and deliver, and consoles those who die in the plague that they escape his threats and corruptions. Hermas promises blessing to those who endure the great tribulation and says repentance in advance enables believers to escape it. Samuel of Kalamoun says those who resist and overcome the false Messiah will reign with Christ eternally. Neale and Littledale list his time among those in which God keeps his people.

Refuse the mark; endure (Hippolytus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Theophylact, Didache, Cyprian)

Hippolytus describes a compulsory sacrifice, and the believer's duty is to refuse it. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon records a formula of denial required of the sealed, abjuring Creator and baptism, which the faithful must not give. Theophylact says believers must not submit to save their lives. The Didache already says that many fall away in the fiery trial but those who endure in faith are saved. Cyprian ties the Apocalypse's warning about worshipping the beast and receiving the mark to the Antichrist who is coming.

Pray for the empire and for the delay (Tertullian, Lactantius)

Tertullian says Christians pray for the emperors and for a long peace because the Roman empire's continuance holds back the shock that will end all things, and "we are lending our aid to Rome's duration". Lactantius says that God is to be entreated, if his arrangements can be delayed, lest the detestable tyrant come sooner than we think. Yet Tertullian elsewhere criticises praying for a protraction of the age and wants the kingdom hastened rather than delayed. The tension is not resolved.

Prepare by renunciation and repentance (Origen, Palladius, Samuel of Kalamoun, Coptic Martyrdoms, Theophylact)

Origen, as the compilers report him, exhorts believers in the sixth age of the world to store up spiritual manna against the famine. Palladius records Melania urging the Roman senatorial families to renounce wealth, since the last hour was announced four hundred years ago and Antichrist's days may surprise them. Samuel of Kalamoun says repentance and keeping the church's canons could spare Christians the Ishmaelite oppression. The Coptic monk's exhortation warns that the day will come suddenly and leave no time to repent; Theophylact says the parable teaches prayer in the last days.

Prepare to die, if it comes to that (Cyprian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Tertullian)

Cyprian writes his exhortation to martyrdom because the hateful time of Antichrist is beginning; he praises a restored confessor who urged the people toward martyrdom because Antichrist is near. Cyril says martyrs of that time will fight Satan in person. Pseudo-Hippolytus says those who overcome the tyrant will be more illustrious than the earlier martyrs. Tertullian sees the white-robed multitude of Revelation 7 as martyrs triumphant over Antichrist.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be

taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 Thessalonians 2:1-17]

Take heed that no man deceive you (Matt 24: 4-14)

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. [Matthew 24: 4-14]

The abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15-28)

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or

there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. [Matthew 24: 15-28]

The abomination where it ought not (Mark 13: 5-23)

And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows. But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them. And the gospel must first be published among all nations. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth ... [Mark 13: 5-23]

Jerusalem compassed with armies (Luke 21: 8-28)

And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and

pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them ... [*Luke 21: 8-28*]

The beast and his number (Rev 13: 1-18)

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. 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. 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. 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? 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. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 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. 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. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the ... [*Revelation 13: 1-18*]

Grievous wolves shall enter in (Acts 20: 28–31)

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. [Acts 20: 28–31]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Epistle of Barnabas, Stand firm so the Black One gets no entry (11.2); Shepherd of Hermas, Angel Thegri shuts the beast's mouth (4.1); Ascension of Isaiah, 1,332 days, then the Lord comes (14.2); Irenaeus of Lyons, Dividing Christ is antichrist (11.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, Sacrifice taken away in half-week (6.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, 666 attested by eyewitnesses (8.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, Warning against vain name-guessing (8.6); Irenaeus of Lyons, Wrong guess makes one easy prey (8.7); Irenaeus of Lyons, Wait for the ten kings first (8.8); Irenaeus of Lyons, Declines to name him (8.12); Irenaeus of Lyons, Number given, name withheld (8.13); Tertullian, Elijah, Antichrist, Babylon not yet (9.4); Tertullian, Martyrs triumph over Antichrist (14.11); Tertullian, Roman empire delays the end (4.5); Tertullian, Praying for the end's delay (4.6); Hippolytus of Rome, Sacrifice = prayers of the upright (6.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Enoch and Elias oppose him (9.5); Hippolytus of Rome, Proclaimed king; 1290 and 1335 days (2.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Time, times, half-time: 3.5 years (11.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Do not admit the falling away (11.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Do not anticipate; patience and prayer (5.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Mark = compulsory sacrifice (8.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Be prepared, not deceived (8.20); Hippolytus of Rome, Jews rally against the saints (16.4); Hippolytus of Rome, Church flees 1260 days (11.15); Hippolytus of Rome, Satan bound at the Lord's coming (14.18); Hippolytus of Rome, Sacrifice that ceases is prayer (6.17); Hippolytus of Rome, Enoch and Elijah against Antichrist (9.10); Hippolytus of Rome, Worship suppressed; witnesses killed and raised (6.21); Commodian, Six thousand years; Antichrist conquered (14.22); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist at hand, discipline must stand (11.18); Cyprian of Carthage, Antichrist threatens, Christ protects (14.26); Victorinus of Pettau, Angels extinguish his kingdom

(14.28); Victorinus of Pettau, 144,000 believe through Elijah (9.18); Victorinus of Pettau, Ascetic reading of the millennium (13.10); Lactantius, Mark; burning; 42 months (8.25); Lactantius, Righteous besieged, rescued by heavenly king (14.34); Lactantius, While Rome stands, pray for delay (4.15); Eusebius of Caesarea, Do not follow the false appearing (3.25); Pseudo-Hippolytus, 666 read as 'I deny' (8.26); Pseudo-Hippolytus, The formula of denial (9.26); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Eucharist and public worship cease (6.33); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Cross-sign heralds the Judge (14.37); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Corruption of church before the end (11.32); Revelation of John (apocryphal), Holy things removed from the earth (11.33); Hilary of Poitiers, Church worn by his spirit (11.34); Hilary of Poitiers, Jews will believe a lie (16.13); Hilary of Poitiers, Draw the distracted into his service (3.32); Athanasius of Alexandria, Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies (11.36); Athanasius of Alexandria, Ignorance of the day protects (3.37); Athanasius of Alexandria, Meletians prepare Antichrist's way (11.41); Athanasius of Alexandria, Trials prove long-suffering (13.15); Basil of Caesarea, Is this the falling away? (11.44); Basil of Caesarea, Perhaps the approach of Antichrist (11.45); Apostolic Constitutions, The Lord comes to condemn the deceiver (14.40); Cyril of Jerusalem, Christ comes from heaven (3.38); Cyril of Jerusalem, Teach the signs (13.17); Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishops against bishops foretold (11.49); John Chrysostom, Christ's coming needs no herald (3.43); John Chrysostom, Antichrist removes every excuse (3.45); John Chrysostom, Antichrist is local; Christ like lightning (3.50); John Chrysostom, Revelry in the days of Antichrist (14.48); Rufinus of Aquileia, Foretold lest he be mistaken (14.50); Jerome, The one who strikes is Antichrist (13.20); Sulpicius Severus, Martin and the devil as 'Christ' (3.55); Augustine of Hippo, Faith on earth: perfect faith rare (11.64); Augustine of Hippo, Within or without, an antichrist (13.33); Augustine of Hippo, Fear more to be one than to be called one (13.34); Augustine of Hippo, Not 'before Christ' but 'against' (13.36); Augustine of Hippo, Christ slays him; no date-setting (14.54); Augustine of Hippo, Order of last events: Elias, Jews, Antichrist (9.36); Augustine of Hippo, Not sent, only permitted; seek not own glory (13.41); Testament of Our Lord, Shepherds deny Christ, trust a corruptible king (11.73); Theodoret of Cyrus, Paul predicts Antichrist's destruction (14.60); Leo the Great, Manichaeans' denial of the flesh is Antichrist (13.42); Joshua the Stylite, Disasters are chastisement, not the end (11.79); Cave of Treasures, Danite in Jerusalem temple (2.35); Gregory of

Tours, Circumcision, then his statue in the Jerusalem temple (6.49); Gregory the Great, Signs fulfilled; the end near (11.81); Gregory the Great, His preachers are already at work (13.47); Gregory the Great, Title 'sole bishop' shows Antichrist near (13.48); Gregory the Great, 'Universal bishop' is Antichrist's precursor (13.49); Gregory the Great, Antichrist feigns death and resurrection (3.56); Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, Roman Empire's end, then Antichrist (4.28); Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives, Day comes suddenly; be prepared (11.83); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Oppression due to Christians' sins (11.84); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Endure to the end; many deny (11.85); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, 40 years' peace, Ethiopian union (5.44); Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, Blessed who overcomes him (14.66); Bede, Few elect at His coming (11.88); Bede, Elijah prepares men to resist Antichrist (9.46); Bede, Final persecution: stars fall, Church hides (11.92); John of Damascus, Gospel to all nations first (16.46); John of Damascus, Christ destroys the lawless one (14.72); Paulician Church of Armenia, Satan as 'son of perdition' (13.53); Anselm, Persecutor with miracles, martyr none (11.97); Solomon of Basra, Clergy dishonoured (11.99); Thomas Aquinas, Antichrist the last great winnowing (11.100); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Daily sacrifice taken away (6.60); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Every age thinks it near the end (11.103); Neale and Littledale (compilers), Great destroying of God's law (11.106).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

15.1. Didache: Endure the fiery trial

"Then all humanity will come to the fire of testing. Many will fall away and be lost, but those who endure in their faith will be saved by the curse itself."
— Didache, The Didache. Note: A universal fiery trial follows; many fall away, but those who endure in faith are saved. [*Matthew 24:10; Matthew 24:13*]

15.2. Epistle of Barnabas: The final stumbling block is near

"The final stumbling block is near. Scripture speaks about it, as Enoch says. For this is why the Master has cut short the times and the days" — Epistle of Barnabas, The Epistle of Barnabas. Note: Barnabas announces that the last

stumbling block is near, citing Enoch that the times have been shortened.

[Matthew 24: 22]

15.3. Polycarp of Smyrna: Return to the word from the beginning

“So let us leave behind the emptiness of the crowd and their false teachings, and turn back to the word that was handed down to us from the beginning. Let us stay alert in prayer and persevere in fasting” — Polycarp of Smyrna, Polycarp to the Philippians. Note: His remedy is to return to the original handed-down word, with watchful prayer and fasting. [Matthew 26: 41]

15.4. Shepherd of Hermas: Blessed who endure the great tribulation

““So stay firm, you who work righteousness, and do not be double-minded, so that your passage may be with the holy angels. Blessed are you who endure the great tribulation that is coming, and all who will not deny their life.”” — Shepherd of Hermas, The Shepherd of Hermas. Note: Blessing is promised to those who endure the coming great tribulation without denying their life.

15.5. Shepherd of Hermas: Prepare by repentance for the tribulation

“Tell them that this beast is a picture of the great tribulation to come. If you prepare yourselves beforehand and turn to the Lord in repentance with all your heart, you will be able to escape it.” — Shepherd of Hermas, The Shepherd of Hermas. Note: The beast pictures the coming great tribulation; repentance and a pure heart in advance enable believers to escape it.

15.6. Ascension of Isaiah: He persecutes the apostles' plant

“Will persecute the plant which the Twelve Apostles of the Beloved have planted. Of the Twelve one will be delivered into his hands.” — Ascension of Isaiah, The Ascension of Isaiah (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: This king persecutes the Church planted by the Twelve; one of the Twelve is delivered into his hands. [Matthew 24: 9]

15.7. Irenaeus of Lyons: Church caught up; last contest

“And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this, it is said, “There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be.” For this is the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned with incorruption.” — Irenaeus of Lyons, Against Heresies. Note: At the end the Church is suddenly caught up; the tribulation is the last contest, in which the victorious righteous are crowned with incorruption. [Matthew 24: 21]

15.8. Tertullian: 'Antichrist now close at hand'

"with Antichrist now close at hand, and gaping for the blood, not for the money of Christians-how can it be pointed out to me that there is the command, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's? "" — Tertullian, *On Flight in Persecution*. Note: Tertullian says Antichrist is 'now close at hand' and hungry for Christians' blood, as grounds for refusing to buy off persecutors. [Matthew 22: 21]

15.9. Tertullian: Children prepared for Antichrist's savagery

"Let them prepare for Antichrist (children) upon whom he may more passionately (than Pharaoh) spend his savagery. He will lead to them murderous midwives." — Tertullian, *On Monogamy*. Note: Tertullian sarcastically tells those who reject continence to raise children for Antichrist's slaughter, as Pharaoh did. [Matthew 24: 19]

15.10. Tertullian: Hasten the kingdom, not delay it

"how do some pray for some protraction of the age, when the kingdom of God, which we pray may arrive, tends unto the consummation of the age? Our wish is, that our reign be hastened, not our servitude protracted." — Tertullian, *On Prayer*. Note: In *On Prayer*, Tertullian criticises praying for a protraction of the age and wants the kingdom hastened rather than servitude prolonged. [Matthew 6: 10]

15.11. Hippolytus of Rome: End about 500 years after Christ

"From the birth of Christ, then, we must reckon the 500 years that remain to make up the 6000, and thus the end shall be. ... in order that in the remaining half time the gospel might be preached to the whole world, and that when the sixth day was completed He might end the present life." — Hippolytus of Rome, *Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture*. Note: Counting 500 years from Christ's birth to complete the 6,000, Hippolytus places the end about five centuries after Christ (roughly AD 500). [John 19: 14]

15.12. Hippolytus of Rome: Keep faith, await the appearing

"maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offence both toward God and toward men, "looking for that blessed hope and appearing of our God and Saviour,"" — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus's pas-

toral conclusion: hold fast what is written, anticipate coming events and remain blameless, looking for Christ's appearing. [*Titus 2:13*]

15.13. Origen of Alexandria: Store up manna before the famine

"Origen, mystically expounding the manna's ceasing to fall on the seventh day, and being gathered in a double portion on the sixth, exhorts us in this sixth age of the world to lay up in store for ourselves against the season of Antichrist, when spiritual manna will cease; when the elect must live, so to speak, on what they have already provided; when there will be a famine of God's Word throughout the earth" — Origen of Alexandria, *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 2 of 2) (quoted by Neale and Littledale (*Commentary on the Psalms*)); scanned text. Note: Neale and Littledale report Origen's exhortation, in the sixth age of the world, to store up spiritual manna against the season of Antichrist, when God's Word will be scarce. [*Psalms 37:19; Exodus 16:22*]

15.14. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist cannot threaten his way in

"For even Antichrist, when he shall begin to come, shall not enter into the Church because he threatens; neither shall we yield to his arms and violence, because he declares that he will destroy us if we resist." — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*. Note: Cyprian says even Antichrist will not enter the Church by threats, nor will bishops yield to schismatic bullying.

15.15. Cyprian of Carthage: The time of Antichrist draws near

"you ought to know and to believe, and hold it for certain, that the day of affliction has begun to hang over our heads, and the end of the world and the time of Antichrist to draw near, so that we must all stand prepared for the battle" — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*. Note: Cyprian warns the people of Thibaris that affliction, the world's end and the time of Antichrist are drawing near. [*Matthew 24:6–14*]

15.16. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist is coming, but Christ above him

"Antichrist is coming, but above him comes Christ also. The enemy goeth about and rageth, but immediately the Lord follows to avenge our sufferings and our wounds. The adversary is enraged and threatens, but there is One who can deliver us from his hands." — Cyprian of Carthage, *Letters*. Note: Believers need not be terrified of the coming Antichrist, since Christ follows to avenge and deliver. [*Revelation 14:9–11; Matthew 10:28*]

15.17. Cyprian of Carthage: Beast, image and mark in the Apocalypse

“And in the Apocalypse He instructs and forewarns, saying, “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian ties the coming Antichrist to the Apocalypse’s warning about worshipping the beast and receiving its mark. [Revelation 13: 16–17; Revelation 14: 9–10]

15.18. Cyprian of Carthage: A fiercer fight is threatening

“A severer and a fiercer fight is now threatening, for which the soldiers of Christ ought to prepare themselves with uncorrupted faith and robust courage” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian says a severer, fiercer fight threatens and soldiers of Christ must prepare with uncorrupted faith.

15.19. Cyprian of Carthage: Antichrist is near: prepare for martyrdom

“a priest is assisting at the altar of God, who exhorts the people to take up the arms of confession, and to submit to martyrdom, that Antichrist is near, prepares the soldiers for the battle” — Cyprian of Carthage, Letters. Note: Cyprian praises a restored confessor-priest who exhorts the people to martyrdom because Antichrist is near.

15.20. Cyprian of Carthage: Hateful time of Antichrist beginning

“since the burden of persecutions and afflictions is lying heavy upon us, and in the ending and completion of the world the hateful time of Antichrist is already beginning to draw near, I would collect from the sacred Scriptures some exhortations for preparing and strengthening the minds of the brethren” — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 11. Exhortation to Martyrdom, Addressed to Fortunatus. Note: Cyprian writes his martyrdom exhortation because in the world’s completion the hateful time of Antichrist is beginning to draw near. [Matthew 24: 9–13]

15.21. Cyprian of Carthage: Spared from Antichrist's corruptions

“Lo, virgins depart in peace, safe with their glory, not fearing the threats of the coming Antichrist, and his corruptions and his brothels.” — Cyprian of Carthage, Treatise 7. On the Mortality. Note: Cyprian consoles that those who die in the plague escape the coming Antichrist’s threats, corruptions and brothels.

15.22. Methodius of Olympus: Midnight is the kingdom of Antichrist

“Now the slumbering and sleeping of the virgins signifies the departure from life; and the midnight is the kingdom of Antichrist, during which the destroying angel passes over the houses.” — Methodius of Olympus, Discourse 6.-Agathe. Note: In reading the parable of the ten virgins, Methodius calls the midnight the kingdom of Antichrist. [Matthew 25:6]

15.23. Lactantius: The end is drawing near

“I have already shown above, that when six thousand years shall be completed this change must take place, and that the last day of the extreme conclusion is now drawing near.” — Lactantius, The Divine Institutes Book 7. Note: Lactantius repeats that the change comes when six thousand years are completed and the end is drawing near.

15.24. Alexander of Alexandria: Nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies

“But these by all their words have attempted to do away with the Godhead of Christ, have made those seem righteous, since they have come nearer to Antichrist ... Moreover, concerning these very men, warnings are not wanting to us, for the Lord foretold: “Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in My flame, saying, I am Christ; and the tithe draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.” Paul, too, having learnt these things from the Saviour, wrote, “In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils which turn away from the truth” — Alexander of Alexandria, Epistles on the Arian Heresy. Note: Alexander says the Arians have come nearer to Antichrist than earlier heresies and cites the Lord’s warning that many come saying ‘I am Christ’, and Paul on departing from the faith. [Matthew 24: 4-5; 1 Timothy 4: 1]

15.25. Eusebius of Caesarea: Persecution by the son of perdition

“He hereby implies that a persecution will come from the son of perdition upon Christ’s faithful.” — Eusebius of Caesarea, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Eusebius takes Christ’s warning as implying a persecution of the faithful by the son of perdition before the end. [Luke 17: 31; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3]

15.26. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Famine drives people to his mark

“Then that abominable one will send his commands throughout every government by the hand at once of demons and of visible men, who shall say, “A mighty king has arisen upon the earth; come ye all to worship him ... for, behold, he will give you corn; and he will bestow upon you wine, and great riches, and lofty honours. ... And by reason of the scarcity of food, all will go to him and worship him” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: In a famine Antichrist offers bread, wine and honours, and the hungry go to worship him and take his mark.

[*Revelation 13:17*]

15.27. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Overcomers greater than earlier martyrs

“Blessed shall they be who overcome the tyrant then. For they shall be set forth as more illustrious and loftier than the first witnesses; for the former witnesses overcame his minions only, but these overthrow and conquer the accuser himself, the son of perdition.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: Those who overcome the tyrant himself will be more illustrious than the former martyrs who overcame only his servants. [*Revelation 12:11*]

15.28. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Scripture-readers see through him

“But many who are hearers of the divine Scriptures, and have them in their hand, and keep them in mind with understanding, will escape his imposture. For they will see clearly through his insidious appearance and his deceitful imposture, and will flee from his hands, and betake themselves to the mountains” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: Those who know the Scriptures will see through the deception and flee to the mountains and caves. [*Matthew 24:15-16*]

15.29. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Meditate daily on the judgment

“Let us therefore ponder this every day; let us meditate on this both day and night, both in the house, and by the way, and in the churches, that we may not stand forth at that dread and impartial judgment condemned, abased, and sad, but with purity of action, life, conversation, and confession” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: The homily's moral conclusion: meditate daily on the judgment and live in purity of action and confession.

15.30. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Take heed: end not yet

“Take heed that ye be not deceived; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not yet by and by.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, *Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus*. Note: Quoting the Lord, the author warns against being deceived by many claiming to be Christ and against fear at wars: the end is not yet. [Matthew 24: 4-6, 12]

15.31. Athanasius of Alexandria: Come out from among them

“One might say much more against this detestable and antichristian heresy, and might demonstrate by many arguments that the practices of Constantius are a prelude to the coming of Antichrist. But seeing that, as the Prophet has said, from the feet even to the head there is no reasonableness in it, but it is full of all filthiness and all impiety, so that the very name of it ought to be avoided as a dog's vomit or the poison of serpents; and seeing that Costyllius openly exhibits the image of the adversary” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *History of the Arians*. Note: Athanasius says more could be said that Constantius's practices prelude Antichrist's coming, and bids believers separate from heretics as Scripture commands. [Isaiah 52: 11]

15.32. Athanasius of Alexandria: Whoever brings Arianism is Antichrist

“it becomes us to watch and be sober, brethren, as the Lord has said, lest any deception arise from subtlety of speech and craftiness; lest any one come and pretend to say, 'I preach Christ,' and after a little while he be found to be Antichrist. These indeed are Antichrists, whosoever come to you in the cause of the Arian madness.” — Athanasius of Alexandria, *To the Bishops of Egypt*. Note: Athanasius warns that someone may preach Christ and later prove to be Antichrist; he calls those who come in the Arian cause Antichrists. [Matthew 24: 4; 1 John 2: 18]

15.33. Ambrosiaster: Final persecution from Antichrist

“Since, then, the Savior was speaking of the final persecution, which is to come from the Antichrist” — Ambrosiaster, *Questions on the Old and New Testaments* (part 2 of 2). Note: Ambrosiaster reads the Lord's warning about flight in winter or on the Sabbath as about the final persecution from Antichrist, when afflictions will be so grievous that scarcely anyone escapes. [Matthew 24: 20]

15.34. Cyril of Jerusalem: Three and a half years

“For this cause the Lord knowing the greatness of the adversary grants indulgence to the godly, saying, Then let them which be in Judaea flee to the mountains . But if any man is conscious that he is very stout-hearted, to encounter Satan, let him stand ... But thanks be to God who hath confined the greatness of that tribulation to a few days; for He says, But for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened ; and Antichrist shall reign for three years and a half only. We speak not from apocryphal books, but from Daniel; for he says, And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time . A time is the one year in which his coming shall for a while have increase; and the times are the remaining two years of iniquity, making up the sum of the three years; and the half a time is the six months” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: The Lord permits the fearful to flee; the tribulation is shortened and Antichrist reigns three and a half years, read as a time, times and half a time. [*Matthew 24:16-22; Daniel 7:25*]

15.35. Cyril of Jerusalem: Martyrs of that time

“I say that the Martyrs of that time excel all martyrs. For the Martyrs hitherto have wrestled with men only; but in the time of Antichrist they shall do battle with Satan in his own person . And former persecuting kings only put to death; they did not pretend to raise the dead, nor did they make false shows of signs and wonders. But in his time there shall be the evil inducement both of fear and of deceit, so that if it be possible the very elect shall be deceived ... But as in the persecutions which happen from time to time, so also then God will permit these things, not because He wants power to hinder them, but because according to His wont He will through patience crown His own champions like as He did His Prophets and Apostles” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Martyrs under Antichrist will fight Satan in person against false signs and pretended resurrections; God permits it, as in other persecutions, to crown His champions. [*Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:11*]

15.36. Cyril of Jerusalem: No curiosity about the time

“as to the time let no one be curious. For it is not far you, He says, to know times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power . And venture not thou to declare when these things shall be, nor on the other hand supinely slumber ... that we may not die deceived and be led astray by that false

Antichrist” — Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lectures. Note: Believers are forbidden to be curious about the time yet told not to slumber; the signs are given so none die deceived by the false Antichrist. [*Acts 1:7; Matthew 24:3-4*]

15.37. *John Chrysostom: Antichrist is the sign*

“not indeed revealing the time itself, but showing the sign of the time, namely, Antichrist” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: Paul comforts the Thessalonians by pointing not to the time of the end but to its sign, namely Antichrist. [*2 Thessalonians 2:1-3*]

15.38. *John Chrysostom: Rejects nursery tales about him*

“And have you not often heard, when you were children, persons talking much even about the name of Antichrist, and about his bending the knee? For the devil scatters these things in our minds, whilst yet tender, that the doctrine may grow up with us, and that he may be able to deceive us. Paul therefore, in speaking of Antichrist, would not have passed over these things if they had been profitable. Let us not therefore enquire into these things. For he will not come so bending his knees, but “exalting himself against all that is called God, or that is worshiped” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: Chrysostom dismisses childhood tales about Antichrist bending his knee as fables the devil scatters; Paul says rather that he will exalt himself against all that is called God. [*2 Thessalonians 2:4*]

15.39. *John Chrysostom: Hold the traditions*

“So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by Epistle of ours.” Hence it is manifest, that they did not deliver all things by Epistle, but many things also unwritten, and in like manner both the one and the other are worthy of credit. Therefore let us think the tradition of the Church also worthy of credit” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on 2 Thessalonians. Note: Paul’s command to hold the traditions, written and unwritten, is the believers’ response; Chrysostom treats Church tradition as trustworthy. [*2 Thessalonians 2:15*]

15.40. *Jerome: Descendants may fall to Antichrist*

“who will perhaps fall into the clutches of Antichrist” — Jerome, Against Jovinianus. Note: Jerome argues against desiring children and descendants, who may perhaps fall into the clutches of Antichrist.

15.41. Jerome: Judas's date-setting convicted of error

"He is convicted of error in respect of this work in that he prophesied that the advent of Anti-Christ would be about his period" — Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men*. Note: Jerome records that the chronographer Judas wrongly predicted Antichrist's advent about his own time (c. AD 202), because the persecutions seemed to forebode the end. [*Daniel 9: 24-27*]

15.42. Palladius of Galatia: Antichrist's day overtakes

"Take ye heed lest the day of Antichrist overtake you, and keep not fast hold upon your own riches" — Palladius of Galatia, *The Lausiac History of Palladius*, first book (Syriac version, Budge translation); scanned text. Note: In the Syriac *Lausiac History*, Melania warns that the last time was announced four hundred years before and the day of Antichrist might overtake those clinging to riches. [*1 John 2: 18*]

15.43. Palladius of Galatia: Antichrist's days may surprise

"it was written 400 years ago, It is the last hour. Why do you love to linger in life's vanities? Perchance the days of antichrist will surprise you" — Palladius of Galatia, *The Lausiac History*. Note: The elder Melania urged Roman senatorial families to renounce wealth, saying the 'last hour' had been written 400 years before and the days of antichrist might surprise them. [*1 John 2: 18*]

15.44. Augustine of Hippo: Rebukes date-setting

"The Gospel then says, Of that day and hour knoweth no man; but you say, That neither the month nor the year of His coming can be known. This exactness of yours up to this point seems as if you meant that the year could not be known, but that the week or the decade of years might be known" — Augustine of Hippo, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine rebukes a correspondent who allows that the year of Christ's coming cannot be known but supposes the decade might be, since the Gospel allows no one to fix it. [*Matthew 24: 36*]

15.45. Augustine of Hippo: Six-thousand-year computations rebuked

"A man makes as it were a calculation with himself: "Lo, so many years have passed since Adam, and the six thousand years are being completed, and then immediately according to the computation of certain expositors, the Day of Judgment will come;" ... Hear the Lord Himself, "It is not for you to know

the times or the seasons which the Lord hath put in His own power.” — Augustine of Hippo, *Sermons on Selected Lessons of the New Testament* (part 1 of 2). Note: Augustine mentions the calculation that six thousand years since Adam are being completed and the Judgment is near, and answers that Christ will come unexpectedly and the times are not for us to know.

[*Matthew 25: 6; Acts 1: 7; 1 Thessalonians 5: 2*]

15.46. Augustine of Hippo: The 'last hour' is long

“This same last hour is long; yet it is the last. For he has put “hour” for “the last time;” because it is in the last times that our Lord Jesus Christ is to come. But some will say, How the last times? how the last hour? Certainly antichrist will first come, and then will come the day of judgment. ... Could it have many antichrists, except it were “the last hour?” — Augustine of Hippo, *Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John*. Note: Augustine says John’s ‘last hour’ is a long one, and that the presence of many antichrists is what proves it is the last hour, even though the Antichrist is still to come. [*1 John 2: 18*]

15.47. Augustine of Hippo: Unparalleled tribulation under Antichrist

“In the end of the world there shall be in the time of Antichrist tribulation such as has never before been.” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine states that in the time of Antichrist there will be tribulation such as has never been before, testing the works built on Christ the foundation. [*Matthew 24: 21; 1 Corinthians 3: 12-15*]

15.48. Augustine of Hippo: Wonders seduce those who deserve it

“Why they are called signs and lying wonders, we shall then be more likely to know when the time itself arrives. But whatever be the reason of the name, they shall be such signs and wonders as shall seduce those who shall deserve to be seduced” — Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God* (part 3 of 3). Note: Augustine says the reason for the name can be known only when the time comes, but the wonders will seduce those who did not receive the love of the truth. [*2 Thessalonians 2: 10-12*]

15.49. Testament of Our Lord: Son of Perdition boasts and works signs

“Then shall come the Son of Perdition, the Adversary, who boasteth and exalteth himself, working many signs and miracles, that he may deceive the whole earth, and overcome the innocent, My holy ones. Blessed are they who endure in those days. But woe to those who are deceived.” — Testament of Our Lord, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Cooper and Maclean translation);

scanned text. Note: The Son of Perdition boasts, works signs to deceive the whole earth, and attacks the holy; blessing is on those who endure. [*2 Thessalonians* 2: 9-10]

15.50. Gennadius of Massilia: Chronicle silences guesses about Antichrist's advent

"It shuts the mouths of those who, on some daring guess, idly philosophize concerning the advent of Antichrist, or of our Lord." — Gennadius of Massilia, *Lives of Illustrious Men*. Note: Gennadius says the Chronicle of James, bishop of Nisibis, built only on Scripture, silences those who guess idly about the coming of Antichrist or of the Lord.

15.51. Joshua the Stylite: End not before the false Christ

"we remembered too the words of S. Paul, wherewith he warned the Thessalonians concerning the coming of our Lord, saying that they should not be astonished either by word, or by spirit, or by beguiling epistle, as if it were from him, declaring the day of the Lord to be now come; and (how) he showed that it is not possible that the end should be until the false Christ is revealed." — Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* composed in Syriac in A.D.507. Note: Joshua the Stylite, amid wars, plague and Persian invasion in AD 502-3, argues from 2 Thessalonians that the end cannot come before the false Christ appears. [*Matthew* 24: 6; *2 Thessalonians* 2: 1-3]

15.52. Gregory the Great: Elect tempted by his signs

"those who are chosen to remain firm are to be tempted to fall by the signs of the preachers of Antichrist." — Gregory the Great, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark* (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Gregory says the Lord's 'if it were possible' expresses the elect's trembling: they will be tempted to fall by the signs of Antichrist's preachers. [*Mark* 13: 22]

15.53. Gregory the Great: Wonders draw the carnal

"When then Antichrist shall have wrought wonderful prodigies before the eyes of the carnal, he shall draw men after him, all such as delight in present goods, surrendering themselves irrevocably to his sway" — Gregory the Great, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22-28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Gregory says Antichrist's prodigies will draw the carnal, those who delight in present goods, irrevocably under his rule. [*Matthew* 24: 24]

15.54. Gregory the Great: Preachers of Antichrist give great signs

“And Truth itself says in the Gospel concerning the preachers of Antichrist: “They will give great signs and wonders, so as to lead into error, if it be possible, even the elect.” — Gregory the Great, Homilies on Ezekiel. Note: Gregory refers Christ’s warning of false prophets giving signs and wonders to the preachers of Antichrist. [Matthew 24: 24]

15.55. Gregory the Great: The elect will be tempted but not fall

“Therefore this doubt in the Lord’s speech was a designation of temptation from the hearts of the elect, because those who are elect unto persisting will be tempted unto falling through the signs of Antichrist’s preachers.” — Gregory the Great, Homilies on Ezekiel. Note: Gregory explains ‘if it were possible’ to mean that the elect will be tempted and tremble through the signs of Antichrist’s preachers, yet will not fall. [Matthew 24: 24]

15.56. Gregory the Great: Antichrist near: let him find nothing of his in titles

“And because Antichrist, the enemy of God, is near at hand, I studiously desire the he may not find anything belonging to himself, not only in the manners, but even in the titles of priests.” — Gregory the Great, Register of Epistles (part 1 of 2). Note: Gregory writes that because Antichrist is near, he wants him to find nothing of his own among priests, in manners or titles. [1 Thessalonians 5: 2]

15.57. Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun: Dates unknown; repentance spares

“nobody knows the disposition of dates nor their vicissitudes, except the Creator alone, but if the Christians repent and give up their ill deeds, fulfil the canons of the church and maintain them with vigilance and uprightness before God, then God will spare them these sorrows” — Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun, The Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun. Note: Samuel says no one knows the dates; repentance and keeping the church’s canons could spare the Christians the Ishmaelite affliction. [Acts 1: 7]

15.58. Bede: Date-setters and false Christs rejected

“there arose some who, calculating the courses of ages, would say they had found the certain year, day, and hour of the end of the world, against the authority of the Lord saying: It is not for you to know the times or the moments (Acts I). As for the person, because many heretics came against the Church, and many will come, who assert themselves to be Christs, the first

of whom is Simon Magus, and the last, greater than others, is the Antichrist.” — Bede, Commentary on Luke (part 2 of 2). Note: Bede says some calculate the year, day and hour of the end against the Lord’s word, and that many heretics claim to be Christ, the first being Simon Magus and the last, greatest, Antichrist. [*Luke 17: 23; Acts 1: 7*]

15.59. Bede: Early heresiarchs said the day was at hand

“Many in the Church, even in the times of the apostles, arose as heresiarchs who, among numerous other things contrary to the truth, preached that the day of the Lord was at hand. Whom the Apostle condemns in the letter to the Thessalonians. Many in the name of Christ came as Antichrists, the first of whom was Simon the Magician” — Bede, Commentary on Luke (part 2 of 2). Note: Bede says even in the apostles’ day heresiarchs preached that the day of the Lord was at hand, and many came as antichrists, the first being Simon the Magician. [*Luke 21: 8; 2 Thessalonians 2: 2*]

15.60. Bede: Signs at the end: whose side is unclear

“When at the end of the world there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning (Matt. 24), very great signs will also clearly appear. But whether from the side of the good, or from the side of the wicked, or from both sides converging towards each other, it is not made sufficiently clear here.” — Bede, Commentary on Revelation. Note: Bede says that in the final tribulation great signs will appear, but Revelation does not make clear whether they come from the good, the wicked or both, as with Moses and Pharaoh’s magicians. [*Revelation 16: 18; Exodus 7: 11*]

15.61. Severus of al-Ashmunein: Judas computes Antichrist’s date

“Then a Jewish scribe, named Judas, who had read in the book of the Visions of Daniel, in the tenth year of the reign of Severus, explained the years and dates mystically up to the epoch of Antichrist, on a system of his own, and declared that the time was at hand, on account of the deeds of Severus, the hostile prince.” — Severus of al-Ashmunein, History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (part 1 of 2). Note: A Judas computed Daniel’s years in AD 202 and declared Antichrist’s time at hand, on account of the emperor Severus. [*Daniel 9: 24-27*]

15.62. Theophylact: Do not submit to save your life

“Let no man in the persecutions of Antichrist seek to secure his life, for he shall lose it, but whoso shall expose himself to trials and death shall be safe,

never submitting himself to the tyrant from his love of life.” — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact applies ‘whoever seeks to save his life shall lose it’ to Antichrist’s persecution: believers must not submit to the tyrant to save their lives. [*Luke 17:33*]

15.63. Theophylact: Pray in the last days

“After having taught us that we must in the last days resort to prayer because of the dangers that are coming, our Lord adds, Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” — Theophylact, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Theophylact says the parable teaches prayer in the last days because of coming dangers, followed by the question of faith at Christ’s return. [*Luke 18:7-8*]

15.64. Dionysius bar Salibi: Editor: public prayer suppressed

“in the latter days of the world the Church shall suffer persecution for three years and a half, which period he identifies with the ‘half-week’ foretold by Daniel (ix. 27); and the ‘sacrifice caused to cease in the midst of the week,’ signifies accordingly the suppression of the public prayers of the Church by the tyranny of Antichrist” — Dionysius bar Salibi, *Commentary on Revelation*. Note: Editor Gwynn summarises Bar Salibi: three and a half years of persecution, the cessation of public prayer under Antichrist, who is the little horn. [*Revelation 11:2; Daniel 9:27*]

15.65. Solomon of Basra: Ends prayers and offerings

“He will put an end to prayers and offerings, as if at his appearance prayers are to be abolished and men will not need sacrifices and offerings along with him.” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: He abolishes prayers and offerings on the pretext that his presence makes them unnecessary. [*Daniel 9:27*]

15.66. Kebra Nagast: Ethiopia holds faith against False Christ

“And one answered and said unto the Worker of Wonders (i.e. Gregory), “Now when Samályál cometh, who is the False Christ (Antichrist), will the faith of the people of Ethiopia be destroyed by his attack?” And Gregory answered and said, “Assuredly not. Hath not David prophesied saying, ‘Ethiopia shall make her hands come to God?’” — Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek: the Kebra Nagast* (Budge translation);

scanned text. Note: In the Kebra Nagast Gregory says the faith of Ethiopia will survive the False Christ, named Samályál, on the strength of Psalm 68:31. [*Psalm 68:31; 2 Thessalonians 2:3*]

15.67. Kebra Nagast: Ethiopia orthodox till the end

“[Ethiopia] shall continue in the orthodox faith until the coming of our Lord, and she shall in no way turn aside from the word of the Apostles, and it shall be so even as we have ordered until the end of the world.” — Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek: the Kebra Nagast* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: Gregory predicts Ethiopia will remain orthodox until Christ’s coming.

15.68. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Elect kept in Antichrist’s time

“and finally, in the time of Antichrist, when, if it were possible, the very elect should perish; but because they are elect they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of His hand.” — Neale and Littledale (compilers), *A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers*, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers list Antichrist’s time among God’s keeping His people as the apple of His eye: even then the elect cannot perish. [*Psalm 17:8; Matthew 24:24*]

16. WHAT DID THE FATHERS SAY ABOUT THE JEWS AND ANTICHRIST?

This chapter records one of the most uncomfortable parts of the tradition and does not soften it. The Fathers expect Antichrist to win the Jews by presenting himself as the Messiah, to rebuild the temple, to be received by them, and in several texts to persecute the Church with their help. They also expect Elijah to bring Israel to faith before the end. Both ideas became part of the stock of later Christian anti-Jewish teaching, and the first was used to justify centuries of hatred and violence. The Fathers wrote about a figure in the future; they did not write a verdict on the Jews of any age, and Paul says plainly that “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26). Jewish readers and many Christian scholars reject the picture in these sources.

In this chapter

This question draws on 91 quotations from 30 voices. 52 of them are printed in full below, at the end of the chapter, because their main concern is this question; the other 39 belong chiefly to other questions and are listed here by number.

A Messiah-figure for Israel: David's heir, circumcision, the temple (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Cyril of Jerusalem, Victorinus, Pseudo-Hippolytus, Gregory of Tours)

The setting of the Fathers' Antichrist is Jewish by design. Irenaeus has him move his kingdom to Jerusalem and sit in the temple as if he were Christ. Hippolytus says he will gather the dispersion of Israel, promising to restore their land and kingdom, so as to be worshipped as God. Cyril says he comes as the descendant of David who will rebuild Solomon's temple. Victorinus and Gregory of Tours have him call people to circumcision. The pseudo-Hippolytan sermon has him begin gentle and favour the Jews and hand the temple to them.

"Another shall come in his own name": the Jews will receive him (Hilary, Chrysostom, Augustine, Cyril of Alexandria, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Bede, John of Damascus, Alcuin)

The texts behind this are John 5:43 ("if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive") and 2 Thessalonians 2:11. From Hilary onward the Fathers read the first as a prophecy that the Jews will accept Antichrist. Augustine connects it to the carnal people of Israel, expecting a visible kingdom. Cyril of Alexandria cites Paul's "son of transgression". Jerome says they are being made ready for his advent. Gregory the Great and Bede describe them as looking for Antichrist instead of Christ. John of Damascus and Alcuin repeat it, Alcuin calling it a fitting punishment that those who refused the Truth should believe a lie.

Elijah brings Israel to faith first (Augustine, Chrysostom, Gregory the Great, John of Damascus, Bede, Durandus)

The opposite expectation is equally old. Augustine calls it a familiar belief that before the judgment the Jews will believe through Elias. Chrysostom says Elias himself will come and correct the unbelief of the Jews of that time. Gregory the Great says that as Antichrist draws near, many unbelievers are converted and a remnant of Israel is saved. John of Damascus has Enoch and Elijah sent to turn the synagogue to Christ. Durandus says believing Gentiles and repentant Jews will be one in faith before Antichrist's tribulation.

A divided Israel, and a persecuted remnant (Hippolytus, Gregory the Great, Bede, Hilary, Commodian)

Several writers expect Israel to split. Gregory the Great says Jews who come to faith will suffer grievous persecution in Antichrist's time, partly from unbe-

lieving Jews. Bede says that in the final persecution evil Jews will deceive and be deceived while others, taught by Elijah, convert. Hippolytus predicts that the Jews will turn to Antichrist for vengeance against Christians. Commodian expects Christ to come to a hidden remnant of Israel's lost tribes who will return with him against the wicked king.

A different expectation: no restored Jewish worship (Eusebius, Chrysostom, Augustine)

Not all the Fathers expect a rebuilt temple or a Jewish Antichrist. Eusebius reads the desolation of Jerusalem as final: it will not be set up again nor its legal rites restored, so no one should expect a restoration. Chrysostom and Augustine place the abomination of desolation in Roman history. Augustine also rejects Ambrose's reading of the kid in the parable of the prodigal as Antichrist.

The Scripture behind it

The Scripture on which the Fathers drew for this question is set out here in the King James text.

Another shall come in his own name (John 5: 43-44)

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? [*John 5: 43-44*]

The man of sin (2 Thess 2:1-17)

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the

brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure ... [2 *Thessalonians* 2:1-17]

Elijah the prophet (Mal 4:5-6)

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. [*Malachi* 4:5-6]

The sealed tribes (Rev 7:4-8)

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. [*Revelation* 7:4-8]

The two witnesses and the beast from the pit (Rev 11:1-13)

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over

waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in ... [Revelation 11:1-13]

Dan, a serpent by the way (Gen 49:16-18)

Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD. [Genesis 49:16-18]

Also relevant: quotations printed under other questions

Irenaeus of Lyons, Unjust judge; kingdom moved to Jerusalem (2.4); Irenaeus of Lyons, From the tribe of Dan (2.5); Hippolytus of Rome, Rebuilds Jerusalem; taken for Christ (6.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Two abominations: Antiochus and Antichrist (6.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Proclaimed king; 1290 and 1335 days (2.8); Hippolytus of Rome, Dan, the lion's whelp (2.9); Hippolytus of Rome, Samson partial, Antichrist full (2.11); Hippolytus of Rome, Rome's beast; Jewish kingdom raised (2.12); Hippolytus of Rome, Gathers the dispersion of Israel (2.13); Hippolytus of Rome, Unjust judge and widow Jerusalem (6.14); Hippolytus of Rome, Imitates Christ point by point (6.16); Hippolytus of Rome, Matthew 24: Antichrist, not AD 70 (6.18); Hippolytus of Rome, Siege of Vespasian does not fit (6.19); Hippolytus of Rome, Devil works in him; Jerusalem (6.22); Commodian, Hidden tribes return with Christ (9.13); Victorinus of Pettau, Nero raised up, received as Christ (2.20); Eusebius of Caesarea, No restoration of the temple (6.28); Eusebius of Caesarea, Abomination remains until the end (6.30); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Born of Dan, not Judah (2.24); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Longer list of imitations (6.31); Pseudo-Hippolytus, Builds the temple, then blasphemes (6.32); Hilary of Poitiers, Abomination = Antichrist in the holy place (6.34); Cyril of Jerusalem, Jewish temple, not the Church (6.36); John Chrysostom, Elias himself corrects Jewish unbelief (9.30); Sulpicius Severus, Nero destroyed by Antichrist (2.30); Augustine of Hippo, Antichrist honours his own name (13.29); Augustine of

Hippo, Elias converts the Jews (9.34); Gregory the Great, Converted Jews persecuted in his time (9.40); Gregory the Great, Elias strengthens faithful; Israel converts (9.42); Bede, Enoch and Elijah convert many Jews (9.44); Bede, Jews humbled; some convert through Elijah (9.47); Bede, Jews await Antichrist as their savior (2.49); John of Damascus, Temple is the Jewish temple (6.57); John of Damascus, Enoch and Elijah turn synagogue (9.49); Rabanus, Enoch and Elijah versus Antichrist's spirit (9.51); Remigius, Enoch and Elias preach to Israel (9.52); Thomas Aquinas, Jews believe at Enoch and Elijah (9.55); Durandus, Gentiles and Jews one before him (9.56); Kebra Nagast, Enoch and Elias come to testify (9.57).

The quotations

The quotations that follow are in order of date, from the earliest writers to the latest. Each is word for word from the translation named after it. The short note is ours, and says only what the passage claims.

16.1. Sibylline Oracles: He leads many astray but perfects nothing

"But nothing to perfection will he bring, / But many mortals he will lead astray, / Elect and faithful Hebrews; also men / Without law, such as never heard God's word." — Sibylline Oracles, The Sibylline Oracles (Terry translation); scanned text. Note: His wonders are never perfected, yet he leads many astray, both Hebrews and Gentiles.

16.2. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Beliar cast into fire for ever

"And there shall be there no spirit of deceit of 'Beliar', For he shall be cast into the fire for ever." — Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Charles translation); scanned text. Note: In the final restoration the spirit of Beliar's deceit is gone, he being cast into the fire for ever. [Revelation 20:10]

16.3. Hippolytus of Rome: Little horn restores Judah's kingdom

"by which none other is meant than the antichrist that is to rise; and he shall set up the kingdom of Judah. And in saying that "three horns" were "plucked up by the roots" by this one, he indicates the three kings of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia, whom this one will slay in the array of war." — Hippolytus of Rome, Fragments - Exegetical. Fragments from Commentaries on Various Books of Scripture. Note: In the Daniel commentary too, the little horn is Antichrist, who sets up the kingdom of Judah and slays the kings of Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. [Daniel 7:8,24]

16.4. Hippolytus of Rome: Jews rally against the saints

“At all times they showed themselves enemies and betrayers of the truth, and were found to be haters of God, and not lovers of Him; and such they shall be then when they find opportunity: for, rousing themselves against the servants of God, they will seek to obtain vengeance by the hand of a mortal man. And he, being puffed up with pride by their subserviency, will begin to despatch missives against the saints” — Hippolytus of Rome, *On Christ and Antichrist*. Note: Hippolytus predicts that the Jews, rejecting the true Saviour, will turn to Antichrist for vengeance against Christians, and he will then send out edicts against the saints. [*Isaiah 18: 1-2; Deuteronomy 32: 34-35*]

16.5. Commodian: Latin conqueror says 'I am Christ'

“Then the whore Babylon, being reduced to ashes, its embers shall thence advance to Jerusalem; and the Latin conqueror shall then say, I am Christ, whom ye always pray to; and, indeed, the original ones who were deceived combine to praise him. He does many wonders, since his is the false prophet. Especially that they may believe him, his image shall speak.” — Commodian, *On Christian Discipline*. Note: After Babylon (Rome) is burned, a Latin conqueror in Jerusalem claims to be Christ, works wonders with a false prophet and a speaking image, and is praised by those deceived. [*Revelation 13: 13-15; Revelation 18*]

16.6. Commodian: The Jews cry out they were deceived

“The Jews, recapitulating Scriptures from him, exclaim at the same time to the Highest that they have been deceived.” — Commodian, *The Instructions of Commodianus in Favour of Christian Discipline*. Note: Commodianus says the Jews, recalling Scripture, cry out that they were deceived.

16.7. Victorinus of Pettau: 'Synagogue of Satan' gathered by Antichrist

“they deny the blasphemy of the Jews, who say that they are Jews and are not; but they are the synagogue of Satan, since they are gathered together by Antichrist” — Victorinus of Pettau, *Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John*. Note: The 'synagogue of Satan' in Smyrna is described as those gathered together by Antichrist. [*Revelation 2: 9*]

16.8. Victorinus of Pettau: Calls to circumcision; rises from hell

“Finally, also, he will recall the saints, not to the worship of idols, but to undertake circumcision, and, if he is able, to seduce any; for he shall so conduct

himself as to be called Christ by them. But that he rises again from hell, we have said above in the word of Isaiah” — Victorinus of Pettau, Commentary on the Apocalypse of the Blessed John. Note: Antichrist (Nero redivivus) will call believers not to idols but to circumcision, so as to be called Christ, and rises again from hell. [Daniel 11: 37; Revelation 17: 8]

16.9. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Roman fourth beast; Antichrist restores Judah

“the kingdom of the Romans, which also is meant by the iron, by which it will crush all the seats of empire that were before it, and will lord it over the whole earth? ... And by this offshoot horn none other is signified than the Antichrist that is to restore the kingdom of the Jews. And the three horns which are to be rooted out by it signify three kings, namely those of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: The fourth beast is Rome with ten kings; the little horn is Antichrist who restores the Jewish kingdom after uprooting the kings of Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia. [Daniel 7: 7-8, 24]

16.10. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Begins gentle, pious, loves the Jews

“Above all, moreover, he will love the nation of the Jews. ... But in his first steps he will be gentle, loveable, quiet, pious, pacific, hating injustice, detesting gifts, not allowing idolatry; loving, says he, the Scriptures, reverencing priests, honouring his elders, repudiating fornication” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: Antichrist will begin as a gentle, pious, apparently righteous ruler, especially favouring the Jewish nation. [Matthew 24: 24; Daniel 11]

16.11. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Virtue as route to throne

“And all this he will do corruptly and deceitfully, and with the purpose of deluding all to make him king. For when the peoples and tribes see so great virtues and so great powers in him, they will all with one mind meet together to make him king.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: His apparent virtues are a deception aimed at winning kingship, and peoples will unite to enthrone him, the Jews especially.

16.12. Pseudo-Hippolytus: Son of perdition judged and condemned

“Then shall the son of perdition be brought forward, to wit, the accuser, with his demons and with his servants, by angels stern and inexorable. And they shall be given over to the fire that is never quenched, and to the worm

that never sleepeth, and to the outer darkness.” — Pseudo-Hippolytus, Dubious and Spurious Pieces Attributed to Hippolytus. Note: At the judgment Antichrist, the accuser, is handed with his demons and servants to unquenchable fire. [*Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 25:41*]

16.13. Hilary of Poitiers: Jews will believe a lie

“And because this error will be peculiar to the Jews, that having rejected the truth they should adopt a lie, He warns them to leave Judæa, and flee to the mountains, that no pollution or infection might be gathered by admixture with a people who should believe on Antichrist.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary says the Lord tells the faithful to flee Judaea lest they be contaminated by a people who will believe in Antichrist. [*Matthew 24:16*]

16.14. Hilary of Poitiers: Antichrist the Synagogue's branch

“The Synagogue is likened to the fig tree; its branch is Antichrist, the son of the Devil, the portion of sin, the maintainer of the law; when this shall begin to swell and to put forth leaves, then summer is nigh, i. e. the approach of the day of judgment shall be perceived.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary reads the fig tree as the Synagogue and its branch as Antichrist, son of the Devil, whose budding signals the nearness of judgment. [*Matthew 24:32*]

16.15. Hilary of Poitiers: Barabbas prefigures Antichrist

“At the desire of the Priests the populace chose Barabbas, which is interpreted 'the son of a Father,' thus shadowing forth the unbelief to come when Antichrist the son of sin should be preferred to Christ.” — Hilary of Poitiers, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Matthew*, part 3 (chapters 22–28) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Hilary sees in the choice of Barabbas, 'son of a Father', a foreshadowing of the future unbelief in which Antichrist, son of sin, is preferred to Christ. [*Matthew 27:16–17*]

16.16. Hilary of Poitiers: They receive Antichrist, not Christ

“they receive Antichrist, and Himself they will not receive” — Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* (part 2 of 2). Note: Hilary notes that Christ's reproach to those who reject Him while accepting another coming in the same name concerns receiving Antichrist. [*John 5:43*]

16.17. Ambrose of Milan: Man of sin as synagogue's leaves

“Or, when the man of sin shall clothe himself in his light and fickle boasting as it were the leaves of the synagogue, we must then suppose the judgment to be drawing near.” — Ambrose of Milan, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Ambrose says the leafing of the fig tree may signify the man of sin clothing himself in boasting like synagogue leaves, a sign of nearing judgment. [*Luke 21: 29–31; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3*]

16.18. John Chrysostom: Proclaims himself God

“If it was the love of God that made you persecute me, you would persecute Antichrist much more: for he does not profess to be sent by the Father, or to come according to His will; but, on the contrary, usurping what does not belong to him, will proclaim himself to be God over all.” — John Chrysostom, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Chrysostom says Antichrist will not claim a sending by the Father but will usurp divine honour and proclaim himself God over all. [*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

16.19. John Chrysostom: Jews will fall to Antichrist

“For even now the Jews say, that another will come; and having deprived themselves of Him that is will fall into the hands of Antichrist.” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Hebrews*. Note: Chrysostom says the Jews, awaiting another Messiah, will fall into the hands of Antichrist. [*Hebrews 13: 8*]

16.20. John Chrysostom: He comes in his own name

“He alludeth here to Antichrist, and putteth an incontrovertible proof of their unfairness ... For he will neither say that he is sent by the Father, nor that he cometh according to his will, but in everything contrariwise, seizing like a tyrant what belongeth not to him, and asserting that he is the very God over all, as Paul saith, ‘Exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, showing himself that he is God.’ (2 Thess. ii. 4. This is to ‘come in his own name.’” — John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John* (part 1 of 2). Note: Christ’s ‘another shall come in his own name’ refers to Antichrist, who will claim to be God over all and seize what is not his, unlike Christ who came in the Father’s name. [*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

16.21. John Chrysostom: Rejecters of Christ will receive him

“For when they received not One who asserteth that He was sent by God, and are about to worship one who knoweth Him not, and who saith that he is God over all, it is clear that their persecution proceeded from malice and from hating God ... Now Paul speaking concerning Antichrist said prophetically, that “God shall send them strong delusion,—that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” — John Chrysostom, Homilies on John (part 1 of 2). Note: Chrysostom argues that those who rejected Christ and will worship one who knows not God show hatred of God; Paul says God sends strong delusion on those who believed not the truth. [*2 Thessalonians 2:11-12*]

16.22. Jerome: Jews will support Antichrist

“the next, which will support the Antichrist in place of Christ” — Jerome, Commentary on Ecclesiastes. Note: In his Ecclesiastes commentary, Jerome reads two nations of Israel: the first before Christ, and the latter which will support Antichrist in place of Christ and in the end not rejoice in Christ. [*Ecclesiastes 4:13-16*]

16.23. Jerome: Jews made ready for antichrist

“as they do not believe in the Lord's resurrection they are being made ready for the advent of antichrist” — Jerome, Letters (part 1 of 3). Note: Jerome says the Jews, because they do not believe in the Lord's resurrection, are being made ready for the advent of antichrist.

16.24. Augustine of Hippo: Jews expect an Antichrist

“And now even at the present time Christ saith by the Gospel, I am He, and an Antichrist is expected by the Jews: to the end that they may go backward, and fall to the ground; because that forsaking heavenly, they desire earthly things.” — Augustine of Hippo, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John, part 2 (chapters 11–21) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine says that when Christ says ‘I am He’, the Jews, who expect an Antichrist, go backward and fall, because they prefer earthly things. [*John 18:6*]

16.25. Augustine of Hippo: Augustine doubts that reading

“But I do not see the object of this interpretation, for it is very absurd for him to whom it is afterwards said, Thou art ever with me, to have wished for this from his father, i. e. to believe in Antichrist.” — Augustine of Hippo,

Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine rejects Ambrose's reading that the kid stands for Antichrist: the elder son, always with the father, cannot be one who longs to believe in him. [*Luke 15: 29*]

16.26. Augustine of Hippo: Jews first to receive him

“For if they are the first and foremost to receive Antichrist, that same people may rather be said to cause than to suffer tribulation.” — Augustine of Hippo, Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Mark (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Augustine holds that the unrepeatable tribulation spoken of fits Jerusalem's siege, since the Jews, who will first receive Antichrist, will inflict rather than suffer it in his day. [*Mark 13: 19; Matthew 24: 21*]

16.27. Augustine of Hippo: The Jews will receive 'another' in his own name

“But when the Jews suppose that that prophecy belongeth to their visible kingdom, because they know not how to rejoice in the hope of good things unseen, they are about to rush into the snares of him, of whom the Lord saith, “I am come in My Father's Name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. Of whom the Apostle Paul saith: “that Man of Sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition,” etc. ... Thus they will believe a lie, because they have not received the love of truth” — Augustine of Hippo, On the Psalms (part 3 of 4). Note: Augustine connects John 5:43 and 2 Thessalonians 2: the carnal people of Israel, expecting a visible kingdom, will take the man of sin to fulfil Psalm 106, believing a lie.

[*Psalm 106: 47; John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 3-11*]

16.28. Augustine of Hippo: Seeks his own glory; the Jews receive him

“This will be he who is called Antichrist, 'exalting himself,' as the apostle says, “above all that is called God, and that is worshipped. ... He intimated that they would receive Antichrist, who will seek the glory of his own name, puffed up, not solid” — Augustine of Hippo, Tractates on John (part 1 of 3). Note: Augustine identifies the one who comes 'in his own name' with Antichrist, who exalts himself and seeks his own glory, and whom the Jews will receive. [*John 7: 18; John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

16.29. Cyril of Alexandria: Another in his own name: the son of transgression

“but ye will surely receive (for as God, I know things to come) the falsely-called, who does not offer the glory to God the Father, and demands credence from you, yet works in his own name. Whence I suppose the blessed

Paul too, having understanding, says something true concerning the Jews and the son of transgression” — Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Gospel of John (part 1 of 4). Note: Cyril takes Christ's 'another who shall come in his own name' as a prediction of the falsely-called one whom the Jews will receive, citing Paul's 'son of transgression' and the working of error.

[*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 10-11*]

16.30. Cyril of Alexandria: Jews attach themselves to Antichrist

“God will send them a strong delusion, so that they may believe the lie; and he says that the antichrist is the working of error, to whom the Jews, having attached themselves, will be condemned.” — Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets (part 3 of 3). Note: Cyril, on Zechariah 11, says Paul teaches that Antichrist is the working of error, to whom the unbelieving Jews will attach themselves and be condemned.

[*Zechariah 11: 15-17; 2 Thessalonians 2: 11*]

16.31. Cyril of Alexandria: The worthless shepherd is Antichrist

“Having made a very sufficient narrative concerning, I say, the good shepherd, that is Christ, and moreover concerning the worthless and most cruel shepherd who devours the sheep; and this we say is the antichrist” — Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets (part 3 of 3). Note: Cyril identifies the worthless, cruel shepherd of Zechariah 11 who devours the sheep as Antichrist, set against Christ the good shepherd. [*Zechariah 11: 15-17*]

16.32. Philoxenus of Mabbug: Jews await the lying Christ

“Now the Jews say, 'This Christ Who came, and Whom the Christians worship, was a deceiver and a liar, and being a man He made Himself out to be God, that is to say, the true Christ; and while looking for the lying Christ, that is Antichrist, they will say that He is about to come.’” — Philoxenus of Mabbug, 13 Ascetic Discourses (part 2 of 2). Note: Philoxenus reports the Jewish view that Jesus was a deceiver, and that they await the 'lying Christ', Antichrist. [*John 5: 43*]

16.33. Gregory the Great: Antichrist proven not to be God

“the Jews are struck by these individual words, who, while they despise the Redeemer, await the Antichrist, who is clearly proven not to be God. Hence it is also said through blessed Job: "Let the companions of him who is not dwell in his tent" (Job 18:15). The tent of the Antichrist is the love of faithlessness, by which he contradicts the faith of the Redeemer.” — Gregory the

Great, Commentary on 1 Kings (part 1 of 2). Note: Gregory says the Jews who despise the Redeemer await Antichrist, who is clearly not God, and that his 'tent' is the love of unbelief contradicting faith in the Redeemer. [Job 18:15]

16.34. Gregory the Great: Jewish believers persecuted by unbelieving Jews

"because in the last days, when Judea shall have believed, she will experience the most grievous persecutions in the time of Antichrist, so that the ministers of iniquity will not receive his preaching, but by resisting will press it down with the bonds of sorrows. And he does not go out into their midst, because preaching does not reach the hearts of the wicked, while the tongue of the good, bound by tribulations, is silent. For there will be at that time many of the unbelieving Jews who will persecute those very ones from among the Jews who shall have believed." — Gregory the Great, Homilies on Ezekiel. Note: Gregory expects that the Jews who come to faith will suffer grievous persecution in Antichrist's time, partly from the unbelieving Jews who persecute them. [Revelation 11: 2; Ezekiel 3: 25-26]

16.35. Gregory the Great: Chief of all hypocrites

"In that, then, which is said, Who maketh a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people, may be designated Antichrist, the very chief of all hypocrites. For that seducer then pretends to sanctity, that he may draw men away to iniquity." — Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (part 3 of 5). Note: Gregory takes the hypocrite made to reign in Job 34 to mean Antichrist, the chief of hypocrites, who feigns holiness to draw men to iniquity and reigns because of the people's sins. [Job 34: 30; John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 10-11]

16.36. Gregory the Great: Permitted to rule unbelieving Jews

"the Lord makes the evening star to rise over the sons of earth, because He permits Antichrist to hold sway over the unbelieving hearts of the Jews, as their desert demands." — Gregory the Great, Morals on the Book of Job (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the Lord permits Antichrist to hold sway over the unbelieving hearts of the Jews as their desert demands, because they chose earthly things. [Job 38: 32]

16.37. Gregory the Great: Synagogue prepares for Antichrist

"But the wounds, which it inflicted on the faithful at the coming of the Redeemer, are much less than those with which it still aims to smite the Church, by the coming of Antichrist." — Gregory the Great, Morals on the

Book of Job (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the synagogue's wounds to the Church at Christ's coming are far less than those it plans to inflict by the coming of Antichrist. [Job 39:17]

16.38. Gregory the Great: Jews believe the man of lies to be God

“For being changed into the limbs of the devil, and believing the man of lies to be God, it exalts itself the higher against the faithful” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says the synagogue, becoming limbs of the devil and believing the man of lies to be God, will exalt itself against the faithful. [Job 39:18]

16.39. Gregory the Great: Judaea awaits Antichrist instead of Christ

“And because Judaea, entangled with the snares of its own error, is looking for Antichrist, instead of Christ, Jacob, in the same passage, rightly turned round suddenly in the language of the Elect” — Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job* (part 4 of 5). Note: Gregory says Judaea, entangled in error, looks for Antichrist instead of Christ, and that Jacob's 'I will wait for Thy salvation' is the elect refusing to believe in him. [Genesis 49:18]

16.40. Miscellaneous Coptic Texts: Antichrist = denier of the incarnation

“And is it not written, “He who doth not confess that Jesus the Christ hath come in the flesh is a deceiver and an Antichrist, like thyself”? And again, “Whosoever shall come unto thee, and bring a doctrine that is different from thine, receive him not into thy house, neither say unto him, Hail!” — *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts*, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (Budge translation) (part 1 of 2); scanned text. Note: Cyril's Theotokos discourse applies John's 'deceiver and antichrist' to a heretical opponent and forbids receiving those with different doctrine. [1 John 4:3; 2 John 7; 1 John 2:19]

16.41. Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel: Gathers Jews to Jerusalem

“Being a child, he will reign in order to do much evil. He will order all the Jews which are in all places to gather in Jerusalem.” — *Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel*, *The Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel*. Note: This final king commands all Jews everywhere to assemble in Jerusalem.

16.42. Bede: Jews wait for Antichrist

“But the Jews prefer not to receive Christ, but to wait for Antichrist; for they desire to be delivered not from the dominion of sin within, but from the

yoke of man's bondage without." — Bede, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Bede says the Jews prefer waiting for Antichrist, because they seek deliverance from outward bondage and not from sin. [*Luke 1: 77*]

16.43. Bede: Three kinds of denial

"This denial is proper to the Jews, that they say Jesus is not the Christ. But even heretics who wrongly believe about Christ deny Jesus is the Christ, because they do not think rightly about Christ; nor do they confess him as such as divine truth teaches, but as their vanity invents. Wicked Catholics also who despise obeying the commands of Christ deny Jesus is the Christ" — Bede, *Bede's Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*. Note: Bede says three groups deny that Jesus is the Christ: the Jews, heretics who think wrongly of Christ, and wicked Catholics who disobey His commands. [*1 John 2: 22*]

16.44. Bede: Comes in his own name, calls himself Son of God

"The Antichrist will come in his own name, who, although the most wicked of all men and full of the devil as his companion, will not disdain to call himself the Son of God" — Bede, *Bede's Genuine Homilies*. Note: Bede says Antichrist will come in his own name and, though the worst of men, will call himself the Son of God, exalting himself above all that is called God. [*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 4*]

16.45. Bede: Witch's calf as Antichrist's birth and reign

"express the birth and reign of the Antichrist, and the breaking of the hearts of those who serve him with foolish humility" — Bede, *Commentary on Samuel*. Note: Bede takes the calf and bread the medium of Endor served to Saul as an image of the birth and reign of Antichrist, offered by the synagogue of Satan to its hearers. [*1 Samuel 28: 24*]

16.46. John of Damascus: Gospel to all nations first

"First, then, it is requisite that the Gospel should be preached among all nations, as the Lord said , and then he will come to refute the impious Jews." — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: The Gospel must first reach all nations; then Antichrist comes to confront the unbelieving Jews. [*Matthew 24: 14; John 5: 43*]

16.47. John of Damascus: Jews receive the impostor

“The Jews accordingly did not receive the Lord Jesus Christ who was the Son of God and God, but receive the impostor who calls himself God.” — John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*. Note: John says the Jews who rejected Christ will receive the impostor who names himself God. [*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 10-12*]

16.48. Alcuin: Comes in his own name

“But Antichrist will come not in the Father's name, but in his own, to seek, not the Father's glory, but his own.” — Alcuin, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Alcuin takes ‘another shall come in his own name’ as Antichrist, who seeks his own glory rather than the Father's. [*John 5: 43*]

16.49. Alcuin: Rejected Truth, receive a lie

“was a fit punishment on them, that they should receive Antichrist, and believe a lie, as they would not believe the Truth.” — Alcuin, *Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John*, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (quoted by Thomas Aquinas); scanned text. Note: Alcuin says it was a fitting punishment that the Jews, who refused the Truth, should receive Antichrist and believe a lie. [*John 5: 43; 2 Thessalonians 2: 11*]

16.50. Solomon of Basra: Jews and Indians accept him

“before all the Indians and before all men will the mad Jewish nation believe in him, saying, ‘This is the Christ, the expectation of the world.’” — Solomon of Basra, *The Book of the Bee* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: The Jews, with ‘the Indians’ and devils gathered to him, acclaim Antichrist as the Messiah. [*John 5: 43*]

16.51. Kebra Nagast: Kingdom of Christ until False Messiah

“Then the kingdom of the Jews shall be made an end of and the Kingdom of Christ shall be constituted until the advent of the False Messiah.” — Kebra Nagast, *The Queen of Sheba and her only son Menyelek: the Kebra Nagast* (Budge translation); scanned text. Note: After the defeat of the Jews, the Kingdom of Christ is established until the False Messiah comes. [*Daniel 9: 27*]

16.52. Neale and Littledale (compilers): Awaiting ‘another Messiah’ = Antichrist

“by praying for another Messiah than Him Who hath come, it is in fact asking for the manifestation of Anti-Christ.” — Neale and Littledale (com-

plers), A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 2 of 2); scanned text. Note: The compilers say that the Jewish prayer for another Messiah is in fact asking for the manifestation of Antichrist. [*Psalm 109*: 7]

PART THREE

The Orthodox and Eastern Reading

*What the Greek, Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopic Fathers and the
Orthodox churches taught and kept in worship, with a note on
how well each point is sourced.*

The Orthodox and Eastern Reading

SERMONINDEX

What the Greek, Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopic Fathers and the Orthodox churches taught about the Antichrist, with a note on how well each point is sourced.

THE ORTHODOX AND EASTERN READING

The Fathers whose language was Greek, Syriac, Coptic or Ethiopic are a large share of this book. This part sets what they say beside what the Orthodox churches later did with it: in commentary, in worship, in the ascetic life, and in the history of Russia. The oldest witnesses come first and the modern writers last.

How far to trust this part. The quotations from the Fathers in the rest of this volume are word for word. What follows is a different kind of material: summaries of what scholars and Orthodox writers say about the sources, compiled from books and web pages, many of which the compiler could read only in part. Each item carries a rating of how well it is sourced, a note of what could not be checked, and the pages read. Only items rated “well sourced” or “partly verified” are printed here; leads that could not be confirmed are left out. This part was prepared with the help of artificial intelligence and may be wrong. Check any of it against the primary text before relying on it.

HOW THE ORTHODOX READING IS DIFFERENT

Anyone raised on modern evangelical charts of the end will find a few things unfamiliar in the Eastern churches. We list them here with a note of how sure we are of each, since most of what follows comes from reading about the sources and not from the sources themselves.

A fixed centre and an open edge. The Creed settles that Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and that his kingdom will have no end. The details a modern reader likes to chart, the Antichrist’s bio-

graphy, the order of events, the length of the tribulation, are not articles of faith. Orthodox writers say the Church stresses that Christ will come, and not when, and they criticize date-setting. The picture of the end that Orthodox believers do hold is mostly received tradition, with John of Damascus as its classic summary.

No “rapture” and no earthly millennium. The Orthodox writers we read treat a pre-tribulation rapture as a nineteenth-century development, and a literal thousand-year reign as chiliasm. Revelation 20 is read, following Andrew of Caesarea, as the time between the two comings. Two older sentences that pre-tribulation writers sometimes cite, one in Pseudo-Ephrem and one in Andrew on Revelation 3:10, are disputed, and the sources we found for them are advocates on both sides.

Revelation is read differently. Revelation is the one New Testament book that is not read in the Church’s daily lectionary, and its acceptance in the East took centuries. Most Orthodox commentary on it descends from Andrew, who, on the account of the scholars we read, wrote to guide readers to a good end and not to supply a timetable.

The end-time figures live in the calendar. The compiler could not find the Antichrist named in any hymn we could open. He appears in the Life of the prophet Elijah on 20 July, where Elijah is to be slain by him, in the Gospels of Great Monday and Tuesday of Holy Week (Matthew 24), and in homilies for the Sunday of the Last Judgment. The figures the feasts keep before the faithful are Elijah, and in the tradition Enoch beside him, as the two witnesses.

The ascetic and sacramental reading. For the ascetic tradition the Antichrist is first met as delusion, prelest, in which the soul takes a counterfeit of grace for the real thing. A contemporary Greek bishop, Hierotheos of Nafpaktos, says that the “many antichrists” of John are already at work, and that Christians tell Christ from Antichrist by the anointing of chrismation, which he links to the seal of Revelation 7. This puts the question differently: not only “who is he?” but “what is the seal on me?”.

A political and ecclesial dimension. The old sources tie the end to the Roman empire. For Tertullian and Chrysostom the restrainer is Rome. In Pseudo-Methodius and the Tiburtine Sibyl a last Roman emperor lays his crown on the cross at Jerusalem and the Antichrist follows. After the Arab conquests the same pattern was repainted in Syriac, Coptic and Arabic apoca-

lypses. In Russia the imagery produced the Old Believer conviction that the Antichrist already ruled church and state after Nikon's reforms; the Church did not teach this, and St Dimitry of Rostov wrote against it.

THE GREEK COMMENTATORS

The line from Andrew of Caesarea through Theophylact and the Byzantine writers who read Paul and John in the Fathers' light.

Andrew of Caesarea, Commentary on the Apocalypse [Partly verified]

Date and language: c. 600–614 (date debated: late 6th to early 7th c.) · Greek (Byzantine), Cappadocia.

The oldest surviving Greek patristic commentary on Revelation, and the base of nearly all later Orthodox commentary on the book. Andrew reads it on several levels (historical, moral, heavenly) and writes to console and guide readers toward a good end, not to supply a doomsday timetable. Reviewers of Constantinou's 2011 translation describe a 'de-eschatologizing' tendency. Secondary summaries say he took the first beast of Rev 13 to be the Antichrist, expected him to rule as a 'king of the Romans' and to kill the two witnesses in Jerusalem. The Slavic, Armenian and Georgian churches took the work over.

^A Andrew was Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia; Wikipedia gives c. 563–614 and says the late 6th/early 7th c. is now 'unquestionable'; the Schaff-Herzog article only fixes a post-533 terminus because he cites 'Dionysius the Areopagite'.

^A His commentary became the standard patristic commentary for the Greek East and was translated into Church Slavonic, Armenian and Georgian; English translation by Eugenia Scarvelis Constantinou (Catholic University of America Press, 2011), per Wikipedia and Whiteford.

^A The HFS Books listing of Constantinou's 2024 study says Andrew recast Revelation from a doomsday text into a guide 'to a blessed end' and helped secure its acceptance in the East; reviewers there call his approach 'de-eschatologizing'.

^A Per Froom (secondary, Adventist historicist), Andrew identifies the dragon with Satan, the sea beast with the Antichrist and the second beast with the false prophet, and links 666 to a name-title he renders 'iniquitous lamb'.

^APer Froom, Andrew expects the Antichrist to arise in the Euphrates region, to claim the title ‘king of the Romans’, and to kill the two witnesses in Jerusalem.

Caution. The compiler could not open Andrew’s own text (the CUA Press translation page was blocked by robots rules and a Scribd copy was declined). The Antichrist details come from Froom, an Adventist historicist writer who selects early authorities that fit his scheme; check them against Constantinou’s translation before relying on it. Dating still varies by source.

Read for this item: Silouan Thompson, summary of Constantinou’s dissertation (611; ‘most important patristic...; Wikipedia: Andrew of Caesarea; Schaff-Herzog: Andrew of Caesarea; HFS Books: Constantinou, Guiding to a Blessed End (2024); Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* vol. 1, p. 570 (Andreas).

Andrew on the ‘thousand years’ and the binding of Satan [Partly verified]

Date and language: c. 600 · Greek (Byzantine).

Orthodox writers cite Andrew for a non-literal reading of Rev 20. According to Fr John Whiteford, who quotes the Constantinou translation, Andrew takes the thousand years as an indefinite time between the first and second comings, and the binding of Satan as a restraint (linked to Christ binding the ‘strong man’) until the end of the age. This is the root of the Orthodox rejection of an earthly millennium and sits behind the idea that the Antichrist is let loose only at the end, not during a ‘Kingdom age’ after Christ returns.

^AWhiteford says Andrew reads the thousand years as indefinite.

^AWhiteford says Andrew ties Satan’s binding to Christ’s words about the strong man (Matt 12:29).

^AWhiteford links the binding to the ‘restrainer’ of 2 Thess 2 in his own reasoning.

^AWhiteford’s series is anti-chiliasm (it treats premillennialism as a heresy) and quotes Constantinou’s 2011 translation.

Caution. Secondary quotation from an Orthodox priest writing a polemic, not Andrew himself. The ‘link to the restrainer’ is Whiteford’s inference.

Read for this item: Fr John Whiteford, ‘If Satan is Alive, Why Not Millennialism?’ (OrthoChristian, 2015).

Who or what 'restrains' (2 Thess 2:6-7): the Church, Rome, or the Gospel [Partly verified]

Date and language: 4th c. onward · Greek and Latin.

The ancient and Byzantine commentators did not agree on the restrainer. A scholarly survey names the Roman Empire (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Chrysostom, and the Pseudo-Methodius Latin text) and the preaching of the Gospel with Paul himself (Theodoret and others). Modern Orthodox monarchists, e.g. a popular Substack essay, defend the Roman-Empire reading and extend it to Orthodox emperors and tsars, citing Chrysostom and Theophan the Recluse, but that essay is not scholarship. Wikipedia notes Orthodox and Catholic readers also treat the katechon as a future Orthodox emperor, and that Russian thinkers such as Dugin make Russia the katechon.

^A Tertullian (Apol. 32) and Hippolytus are cited for Rome as restrainer; Chrysostom is cited for the same and for Nero as type of the 'mystery of lawlessness' (Domínguez & Ellis).

^A Pseudo-Methodius (Latin) quotes 2 Thess and treats the Roman Empire as the restraining power until it is removed (Colavito's translation of Sackur's edition).

^A Theodoret is grouped with the 'Gospel/Paul' reading (same article).

^A A Substack essay by Michael Stefan cites Chrysostom (Hom. 4 on 2 Thess), Jerome, Augustine, Adso and Theophan the Recluse for a monarchist katechon.

^A Wikipedia says some readers treat the katechon as 'a new Orthodox Emperor', and tags the Dugin claim 'citation needed'.

Caution. The Substack and Wikipedia statements are weak. The compiler did not open Theophan the Recluse's own words. The 'Church as restrainer' / 'Eucharist as restrainer' angle is a modern popular idea. The compiler could not verify in any Orthodox source.

Read for this item: Domínguez & Ellis 2023; Colavito, Pseudo-Methodius (Latin, Sackur); Michael Stefan, 'The Katechon Argument' (Substack, not scholarly); Wikipedia: Katechon.

John of Damascus on the Antichrist (Exact Exposition IV.26) [Partly verified]

Date and language: 8th century · Greek (Palestinian monk).

OrthodoxWiki's whole entry 'Antichrist' is built on John's chapter in the Exact Exposition. He distinguishes every denier of Christ's incarnation as 'an antichrist' in a loose sense from the one Antichrist who comes at the con-

summation. The Gospel must first be preached to all nations; the Antichrist is received by the Jews instead of Christ, feigns holiness, becomes a tyrant, persecutes the Church and deceives with false wonders; Enoch and Elijah are sent before him; the Lord then destroys him with the breath of his mouth. The summary is one of the best known standard Orthodox statements.

^ATwo senses: every denier of the incarnation is ‘an antichrist’; the end-time figure is the Antichrist ‘in a peculiar and special sense’ (OrthodoxWiki summary).

^AThe Gospel is preached to all nations before the Antichrist appears.

^AEnoch and Elijah are sent before him; the Lord returns from heaven and destroys him.

^AOrthodoxWiki also lists Molchanoff (1976), Rassophore-monk Vsevolod (1998) and Mileant (2002) as modern sources.

Caution. The compiler read only OrthodoxWiki’s rendering, not the CCEL/Schaff text. The site may already host John of Damascus; use the hosted text for any quotation.

Read for this item: OrthodoxWiki: Antichrist (John of Damascus).

Life of St Andrew the Fool (Salos) and 'The Revelations of Andrew' [Partly verified]

Date and language: set in 5th c.; Greek vita 9th-10th c. · Greek, Constantinople; Slavonic.

The popular Greek *Life of Andrew the Fool-for-Christ* contains an apocalyptic dialogue in which his disciple Epiphanius asks when and how the world will end. According to OrthodoxWiki, the answer ties the end to the fall of Constantinople (‘shortly’ afterward, perhaps 100 to 1,000 years) and says Hagia Sophia will be only partly spared. The same OrthodoxWiki page does not mention the Antichrist. The *Life* was translated into Old Russian by the late 11th or early 12th century and survives in over 200 copies. Dating is disputed.

^AWikipedia: the vita is set under Leo I (457–474) but some historians date it to the 9th–10th c.; over 110 Greek manuscripts; earliest a 10th-c. fragment.

^AOrthodoxWiki: Andrew answers Epiphanius’s question about the end; the end follows soon after the fall of Constantinople.

^AWikipedia: first Old Russian translation late 11th/early 12th c., over 200 copies.

^AVelimirovic’s Prologue entry (via Sanidopoulos) gives Andrew’s death as 911, OrthodoxWiki gives 936.

Caution. Antichrist is not mentioned in any of the pages the compiler opened. The full Revelations section (Rydén's edition) may mention him; The compiler could not check. Dates disagree across sources.

Read for this item: OrthodoxWiki: Andrew the Fool-for-Christ; Wikipedia: Andrew the Fool; Velimirovic Prologue entry on Andrew (Sanidopoulos).

The Greek Apocalypse of Daniel [Partly verified]

Date and language: c. early 9th c. · Greek (Byzantine).

A pseudonymous Greek text of about the early ninth century, surviving in 15th-century manuscripts and not part of any canon. Chapters 1-7 are a prophecy-after-the-event covering the eighth-century Arab wars and Charlemagne's enthronement. Chapters 8-14 describe the Antichrist's origin and traits and place him before the Day of Judgement. The compiler verified only the outline given by Wikipedia, which relies on Zervos' translation in Charlesworth; the Antichrist chapters are the part most relevant here.

^A Greek text of c. early 9th century; three surviving 15th-century manuscripts.

^A Chapters 1-7 retell 8th-century Byzantine-Arab war and Charlemagne's enthronement as prophecy.

^A Chapters 8-14 describe the Antichrist's origin and characteristics.

^A Zervos translated it in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1 (1983).

Caution. Encyclopedia-level source only. Its popular label 'Apocalypse of Daniel' is shared by other texts.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Greek Apocalypse of Daniel.

The Tiburtine Sibyl [Partly verified]

Date and language: earliest version perhaps c. 380; Latin form 10th-11th c. · Latin (Sibylline tradition).

A prophecy of a final 'king of the Greeks' who conquers Christianity's enemies and defeats Gog and Magog, then goes to Jerusalem and gives up his crown. After the Roman Empire ends the Antichrist arises from the tribe of Dan, deceives with magic and sits in the Lord's house in Jerusalem; the two witnesses (Elijah and Enoch) oppose him and are killed, and Michael slays him on the Mount of Olives. Wikipedia says the surviving form (early 11th c.)

shows the influence of Pseudo-Methodius; the Last Emperor legend came to the West through such texts.

^AWikipedia: first Latin version 10th century; the surviving form was written early in the 11th century.

^AThe final emperor lays down crown and robes in Jerusalem.

^AThe Antichrist is from Dan; the two witnesses are identified with Elijah and Enoch; Michael slays him on the Mount of Olives.

^AWikipedia notes the influence of Pseudo-Methodius and cites Bonura (2016) on the relationship.

Caution. A Latin text; included because Wikipedia ties it to Pseudo-Methodius and the Last Emperor tradition that also reached the East. The compiler did not verify a Greek original.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Tiburtine Sibyl.

Gregory Palamas, homily on the Second Coming (Matthew 25) [Partly verified]

Date and language: 14th century · Greek (Athonite hesychast, Thessalonica).

Palamas's homily for the Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare), as posted by Sanidopoulos, says the Antichrist will come first, opposing and threatening the faith, and that the days of that trial will be shortened. People will worship and obey him and God's judgment will fall on his followers. Christ then returns in glory with the angels and judges all nations by works of mercy. This is a short, verified Palamite mention, and it links the Antichrist directly to the liturgical Gospel of the day.

^AThe homily is for the Sunday after the Prodigal Son, on Matthew 25 (Last Judgment).

^AIt says the Antichrist comes first and opposes the faith.

^AIt says the days of the trial will be shortened.

^AIt states that those who worship and obey him will meet God's judgment.

^AElijah and Enoch are not mentioned in that homily (per the page).

Caution. The compiler read the web version through a summarizer, not the print translation; the homily number was not given. Symeon the New Theologian: The compiler found nothing and made no claim.

Read for this item: Sanidopoulos: Homily on Christ's Second Coming (Palamas); Sanidopoulos: Palamas on the Ascension of Enoch and Elijah.

SYRIAC APOCALYPSES AND THE LAST EMPEROR

Texts written under the pressure of the Arab conquests, in which a Roman emperor stands between the faithful and the end.

Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (the Last Roman Emperor) [Well sourced]

Date and language: late 7th c. · Syriac (Miaphysite), then Greek, Latin, Slavonic.

Written in Syriac in northern Syria in the wake of the Arab conquests, and falsely ascribed to the martyr Methodius, it reads history from Adam to the end. Muslims, the ‘sons of Ishmael’, scourge Christians for their sins. A last Roman emperor then defeats them, goes to Jerusalem and lays his crown on the cross. Gog and Magog break out and the Antichrist appears. A Latin excerpt quotes 2 Thess 2 and treats the Roman Empire as the force that holds back the lawless one. It was translated into Greek, Latin (by Petrus Monachus, earliest codex 727) and Slavonic.

^AOriginal Syriac, late 7th century; Wikipedia says most likely after 692, OrthodoxWiki says recent historians place it 644-691 (so the date is disputed).

^AThe author is anonymous and the work is pseudepigraphic (attributed to Methodius of Olympus/Patara).

^AThe Last Emperor is the main innovation: he defeats the Ishmaelites then lays his crown on the cross.

^AA Latin excerpt identifies the restrainer of 2 Thess 2 as the Roman Empire (Colavito’s translation of Sackur 1898).

^AOver 100 Greek and about 220 Latin manuscripts survive; the earliest Slavonic manuscript is 12th c.

Caution. Date and the author’s church (Miaphysite per Wikipedia) are scholarly judgments. The compiler did not open the Garstad/Alexander translations (PDFs came through as binary).

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius; OrthodoxWiki: Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius; Colavito: Latin excerpt (Sackur).

Pseudo-Ephrem, On the End of the World (De fine mundi, Latin) and the Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephrem [Partly verified]

Date and language: 6th-7th c. (disputed) · Latin sermon (origin disputed: Syriac, Greek or Latin); a separate Syriac poem also exists.

Two works circulate under Ephrem's name: a 560-line Syriac verse Apocalypse and the Latin sermon *De fine mundi*. The Latin says the saints and elect are 'gathered' and 'taken' before the coming tribulation, and some pre-tribulation writers cite this. Roger Pearse shows the sentence came into *De fine mundi* from another Latin text, *De beatitudine animae*, whose Greek source speaks only of 'gathering'. Textual variants (adsumuntur / a Domino / ad Dominum) complicate the reading. Scholars date the text variously from the 4th century to after 640; others argue the Latin and Syriac are unrelated.

^AThe Latin text survives in five medieval manuscripts (P, A, B, G, K); Caspari (1896) and Verhelst (1983) edited it with slight differences at the key sentence.

^APearse argues the sentence was copied from the Latin *De beatitudine animae*, which adds 'assumuntur'; the Greek source (*Beatitudines aliae*) says only 'gathered'.

^ADating: Caspari and P. Alexander: late 6th/early 7th c., before about 630; Reinink: 640-680; Bousset: 4th c.; Pearse suggests a Latin speaker in Constantinople c. 450.

^APre-trib readers (Grant Jeffrey, 1995) cite it; Gundry and Frazier dispute the reading, and Wikipedia notes other passages assume Christians endure the tribulation.

^APearse concludes two words in one sentence cannot prove a belief in a rapture.

Caution. Do not present as Ephrem the Syrian. The 'Antichrist of the tribe of Dan, Elijah and Enoch killed and raised' details come from Watson, an advocate, not from the text itself. The Wikipedia summary the compiler read did not describe Antichrist content, while Watson says the Latin text has a full Antichrist narrative; check the Latin (Caspari/Verhelst) or Cameron Rhoades' translation.

Read for this item: Roger Pearse: Did pseudo-Ephraim believe in the Rapture? (manuscripts, passage, Greek...; Wikipedia: Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephraem; Watson (pre-trib) summary of Pseudo-Ephrem's Antichrist.

Syriac Alexander Legend (Gates of Alexander, Gog and Magog) [Partly verified]

Date and language: early/mid 6th c. (older view: 629-630) · Syriac.

The first narrative to combine Alexander's iron-and-bronze gate against the northern tribes with the biblical Gog and Magog. It says the Huns will break through the gate to start the apocalypse and that the Romans will win

a world war. Wikipedia says it influenced both Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Ephraem, which in turn shaped the later Last Emperor and Gog-Magog traditions in Greek, Latin and Slavonic. Dating moved from c. 629-630 to an early-to-mid sixth century original with a later addition. It does not mention the Antichrist by name in the article the compiler read.

^A Dating: Nöldeke's 629-630 versus recent scholarship preferring the early-to-mid 6th century.

^A It is the first text to give Gog and Magog an apocalyptic role (Wikipedia).

^A Named as an influence on Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Ephraem.

^A Key scholarship cited: Tesei (OUP 2023), Van Donzel & Schmidt (Brill 2010), Debié (2024).

Caution. Encyclopedia source only; no Antichrist content here. Use as background for Gog and Magog.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Syriac Alexander Legend.

DOGMA AND TRADITION

What the Church has defined about the return of Christ, and what it has left open.

The Creed: the Second Coming is dogma; the Antichrist is not an article [Well sourced]

Date and language: 325/381 · Orthodox (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol of Faith).

The Orthodox Church's defined faith on the end is carried by the Creed: Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his Kingdom 'shall have no end', with the hope of the resurrection and the life of the world to come. OCA says Nicea (325) produced the statement and Constantinople (381) added the section on the Holy Spirit and the last articles. The Antichrist, the order of the end-time events and the identity of the witnesses are not articles of the Creed; the Church's concern is that the Lord will come, not when (see the St John parish article).

^A OCA's text: Christ comes again with glory to judge the living and the dead; 'whose Kingdom shall have no end'.

^A OCA: the Creed ends with the hope of 'the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come'.

^A The Creed is used at baptism and in the Divine Liturgy (OCA).

^A A parish article stresses that the Church emphasizes that He will come, not when, and leaves timing open.

^A The Creed does not mention the Antichrist (the text quoted contains no reference).

Caution. OCA says the Symbol came from Nicea and Constantinople; The compiler did not verify which clause was added where (the OCA text lumps 'whose Kingdom shall have no end' under the Nicene portion). Check a patristic or conciliar source for the precise history.

Read for this item: OCA: The Nicene Creed (Orthodox Faith); Saint John Church (Beaver Falls): The Second Coming of Our Lord.

No 'rapture': the Orthodox position on 1 Thess 4 and the tribulation [Partly verified]

Date and language: 19th-21st c. (modern debate) · Orthodox popular and pastoral writers.

Orthodox writers in print and online say the Church does not teach a separate pre-tribulation rapture. Fr Peter Preble says the doctrine is not taught before the 1830s, that Orthodox look for one Second Coming, judgment and eternal life, and that the faithful will pass through the tribulation (Matt 24:9). A parish comment says 1 Thess 4 concerns the resurrection and the Second Coming. A Greek Orthodox article (Kalomiris) argues from Scripture that the rapture and the Parousia are one event and that 2 Thess 2 puts the Day after the Antichrist is revealed. None of these is an official statement.

^A Preble: rapture not taught before the 1830s (he cites Margaret MacDonald and Darby).

^A Preble: the faithful will go through the tribulation; he cites Matt 24:9 and OCA material.

^A Parish comment (Saint John Church): the Church does not teach a separate secret pre-tribulation rapture; the pre-trib view is a modern development.

^A Kalomiris (Explorer of the Truth no. 24): 2 Thess 2 puts the Lord's day after the apostasy and the revelation of Antichrist; Rev 3:10 and John 17:15 speak of protection within the world.

^A None cites an individual Father; none is presented as an official statement.

Caution. No official Orthodox statement or conciliar text on the rapture was opened; these are individual authors. Preble's dates and claims about

MacDonald come from his own page and Wikipedia. Say ‘Orthodox writers say’, not ‘the Orthodox Church has declared’.

Read for this item: Fr Peter Preble: Orthodoxy and the Rapture; Saint John Church: The Second Coming of Our Lord; Kalomiris, Explorer of the Truth (OODEGR): the rapture.

Dogma versus tradition on the end-time details [Partly verified]

Date and language: n/a · Orthodox.

What is defined: Christ will come again to judge, the dead will rise, and His kingdom has no end (Creed). What is received tradition but not defined: an individual Antichrist who comes at the end (John of Damascus, Cyril of Jerusalem), the return of Elijah and Enoch, the tribe of Dan, the 3.5 years. What is contested or left open: the identity of the restrainer, the meaning of ‘many antichrists’, the sealing of the 144,000, and the timing, which Hierotheos and a parish article both say should not be fixed. Revelation itself has an unsettled liturgical and canonical history in the East.

^AThe Creed’s second-coming articles are the settled core (OCA).

^AHierotheos: an end-time Antichrist exists but ‘many antichrists’ are at work now; he criticizes date-setting.

^AA parish article: the Church leaves the timing open and warns against speculation.

^AOCA and De Young: Revelation is not read in the lectionary and its canonical standing is not simple.

^AThe restrainer has been read as Rome (Chrysostom), or the Gospel/Paul (Theodoret), per Domínguez & Ellis.

Caution. This classification is the compiler’s own synthesis of the sources named; no Orthodox source the compiler opened lists ‘dogma vs tradition’ for the Antichrist explicitly. Phrase as ‘the Church has defined X; the rest is tradition and opinion’.

Read for this item: OCA: The Nicene Creed; Hierotheos, ‘The Antichrist and Chrismation’; Saint John Church: The Second Coming; De Young: Is Revelation canonical in Orthodoxy?; Domínguez & Ellis 2023.

Chiliasm (a literal earthly millennium) rejected [Partly verified]

Date and language: 4th c. onward · Orthodox dogmatic theology.

Orthodox writers say the clause ‘whose kingdom shall have no end’ excluded a temporary thousand-year earthly kingdom and that premillennial-

ism is a heresy. Fr John Whiteford, quoting Fr Michael Pomazansky's Orthodox Dogmatic Theology, says the Second Ecumenical Council condemned Apollinarius' teaching of a thousand-year reign and added the clause. Reading Rev 20 as a future event after the Second Coming would conflict with Matt 25 and 1 Thess 4, he argues. Andrew of Caesarea is cited for an indefinite thousand years between the two comings. On this reading there is no earthly 'kingdom age' after the Antichrist.

^A Pomazansky (quoted in the OrthoChristian 'Error of Chiliasm'): the Council of 381 condemned Apollinarius' thousand-year reign and added 'And His Kingdom will have no end'.

^A Whiteford: Revelation 20 read as after the Second Coming would delay the general resurrection and leave room for rebellion.

^A Whiteford: Andrew reads the thousand years as indefinite.

^A Whiteford cites Montanism and modern groups as fruits of premillennialism, which is polemical language.

^A The article cites Augustine's City of God XX.7-9 and Scripture.

Caution. Historians often connect the clause 'whose kingdom shall have no end' with the debate over Marcellus of Ancyra rather than with chiliasm, and the compiler did not verify this in a source the compiler opened. Treat the Pomazansky and Whiteford statement as an Orthodox dogmatic reading and check before calling it historical.

Read for this item: Fr Michael Pomazansky, The Error of Chiliasm (OrthoChristian); Fr John Whiteford, If Satan is Alive, Why Not Millennialism?.

IN THE LITURGY AND THE CALENDAR

Where the Antichrist and his opponents show up in worship: the feast of Elijah, Holy Week, the Sunday of the Last Judgment, baptism.

Feast of the Prophet Elijah (20 July): troparion and the Antichrist in the Life [Well sourced]

Date and language: annual, 20 July · Orthodox Menaion.

The OCA life for 20 July says that according to Holy Church's Tradition Elijah will be 'slain by the Antichrist', a sign of the end of the world, and calls him the Forerunner of the Dread Second Coming. The OCA troparion (Tone 4) names him 'the second forerunner of the coming of Christ', though neither it nor the kontakion (Tone 2) names the Antichrist. Velimirovic's Prologue for the day says Elias will appear again at the end of the

world ‘to break the power of the antichrist’ (Rev 11). So the Antichrist is present in the day’s synaxarion-style material, not in the hymns the compiler could verify.

^AOCA life: Elijah will be ‘slain by the Antichrist’ as a sign of the end.

^A OCA troparion, Tone 4: ‘the second forerunner of the coming of Christ’.

^AOCA kontakion, Tone 2, is about the drought; it does not mention the Second Coming or Antichrist.

^APrologue of Ohrid (Velimirovic, Lazarica 1986, bk 3 pp. 86-87): Elias returns at the end to break the antichrist’s power.

^ANeither the OCA life nor greekcitytimes mentions Enoch.

Caution. The compiler did not see the full Menaion Vespers/Matins texts (stichera, canons), which could contain more. The Prologue text is a web reprint. Enoch’s place in the Church’s liturgical material is not verified.

Read for this item: OCA: Lives of saints, 20 July (Prophet Elijah); OCA: troparia and kontakia, 20 July; Greek City Times: Feast Day of Glorious Prophet Elias; OrthoChristian: Prologue from Ohrid, The Holy Prophet Elias.

Elijah and Enoch as the two witnesses; where did they go? [Partly verified]

Date and language: patristic to modern · Orthodox tradition.

Orthodox writers widely identify the two witnesses of Rev 11 as Elijah and Enoch, who were taken up alive and come back to preach against the Antichrist. Archbishop Averky (Taushev), writing in ROCOR, says they will prophesy in his reign and be killed and revived after three and a half days. Arethas (per Froom) admits Enoch’s coming has no scriptural proof, only tradition. Gregory Palamas teaches that neither Elijah nor Enoch was taken to heaven but to a place on earth, and Metropolitan Hierotheos infers Elijah’s translation was a kind of death, which affects the ‘they will return to die’ picture.

^A Averky (OrthoChristian reprint): Elijah, ‘the second forerunner’, and Enoch will prophesy as God’s witnesses and be killed by the Antichrist.

^AOrthodoxWiki’s rendering of John of Damascus: Enoch and Elijah are sent before the Antichrist.

^APalamas (via Sanidopoulos): Elijah did not leave the earth’s atmosphere; Enoch was taken to a place on earth.

^A Hierotheos (via Sanidopoulos' Spanish summary): this implies Elijah's translation was in a way a kind of death.

^A Romanian popular belief also develops the motif (see Agignoaei).

Caution. The Palamas excerpts were read through summaries. The Hierotheos inference appeared in a Spanish-language rendering. The Averky piece cites no specific Fathers by name.

Read for this item: Archbishop Averky, On Prophet Elijah and the Antichrist (OrthoChristian); OrthodoxWiki: Antichrist (John of Damascus); Sanidopoulos: Palamas on Enoch and Elijah; Sanidopoulos: Palamas on the translocation of Elijah (Hierotheos).

Great (Holy) Monday and Tuesday: Matthew 24 at the Presanctified Liturgy [Well sourced]

Date and language: Holy Week · Orthodox Triodion/Lectionary.

The Bridegroom services of Holy Week begin with the Gospel of the end. At the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Great Monday the Gospel is Matthew 24:3-35, the first half of the Olivet discourse (the signs, 'false christs', 'abomination of desolation'), and on Great Tuesday Matthew 24:36-26:2, ending with the call to be ready. The Matins troparion calls the faithful to watch for the Bridegroom. OCA, St Jonah and Saint Sophia DC agree on Monday 24:3-35; one cantor-institute page gives a different Monday range.

^A OCA: Monday Presanctified Gospel is Matthew 24:3-35, 'the great eschatological discourse'.

^A OCA: Tuesday Presanctified Gospel is Matthew 24:36-26:2, which closes with the Last Judgment parables (10 virgins, talents).

^A Matins troparion of the first three days: 'Behold, the bridegroom comes in the middle of the night'.

^A Monday Matins Gospel: Matthew 21:18-43; Tuesday Matins: Matthew 22:15-46 and 23:1-39.

^A No page the compiler opened links these readings to the Antichrist by name.

Caution. The reading sets out Christ's own teaching about the end; it is not an Antichrist doctrine as such. Monday's range differs on the Cantor Institute page, probably a local practice; the OCA is the safer authority.

Read for this item: OCA: Great and Holy Monday; OCA: Great and Holy Tuesday; St Jonah: Presanctified Liturgy for Great Monday; Saint Sophia DC:

Great Monday Bridegroom services; OCA: Holy Week (Bridegroom services); Cantor Institute: Great Monday (differs: gives Mt 24:36-26:2).

Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare Sunday) [Well sourced]

Date and language: third Sunday of the Triodion · Orthodox Triodion.

The third Sunday before Great Lent has the Gospel of Matthew 25:31-46, the parable of the sheep and the goats, and a Tone 1 kontakion that addresses Christ coming in glory to judge, with the books opened. OrthodoxWiki's page contains no mention of the Antichrist. The Antichrist is connected to this Sunday through the homiletic tradition: Palamas's homily for the day says the Antichrist comes first and his trial will be shortened, and Brianchaninov's Meatfare sermon 'On the Second Coming' is the only end-times item in his sermon collection *The Harvest*.

^A Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46; Kontakion Tone 1 on Christ's coming in glory (OrthodoxWiki).

^A Third Sunday of the Triodion, after the Prodigal Son and before Forgiveness Sunday.

^A Palamas's homily for this Sunday (Sanidopoulos) mentions the Antichrist and shortened days.

^A The Harvest (Holy Trinity Publications) lists Brianchaninov's sermon 7 'On the Second Coming of Christ' on Meatfare Sunday.

^A The OrthodoxWiki page does not mention the Antichrist.

Caution. The compiler verified readings and the kontakion, not the full Triodion service texts (stichera), which The compiler could not open. The St John Maximovitch homily on this Sunday is a secondary web reprint (see its own item).

Read for this item: OrthodoxWiki: Sunday of the Last Judgment; Sanidopoulos: Palamas, homily on Christ's Second Coming; Holy Trinity Publications: Brianchaninov, *The Harvest*; Orthodox Ethos: Maximovitch on the Sunday of the Dread Judgment (1956).

The baptismal renunciation of Satan (and the Antichrist question) [Well sourced]

Date and language: ancient rite, in use today · Orthodox Euchologion.

Before the font the candidate (or godparent) faces west, the place of darkness, and is asked three times to renounce Satan 'and all his works, all his worship, all his angels and all his pomp', then turns east, joins Christ and confesses the Creed. Kogarah Greek Orthodox's page says the godparent is

also asked to ‘blow down on Satan’ and that facing west signifies ‘natural darkness’, and the OMS GSA parish summary renders the last item as ‘pride’. The rite does not mention the Antichrist; the connection, drawn by Hierotheos, is that baptism and chrismation are the seal against the beast’s mark.

^AA parish baptism booklet asks, three times, ‘Do you renounce Satan, and all of his works’ and continues with his worship, angels and pomp.

^AKogarah Greek Orthodox: after exorcisms the godparent faces west, renounces Satan three times and is asked to ‘blow down on Satan’.

^AAnother parish (OMS GSA) renders the last item as ‘pride’ rather than ‘pomp’.

^AHierotheos reads the seal of Rev 7/14 as the Spirit’s anointing in chrismation.

^ANeither booklet nor the Kogarah page mentions Antichrist.

Caution. Wording differs by jurisdiction and translation; The compiler did not read a standard Euchologion. The OMS GSA page did not give the full wording. The link to the Antichrist is interpretive.

Read for this item: St Paul’s Irvine: baptism service booklet; Kogarah Greek Orthodox: Ceremony of baptism; OMS GSA: Baptism; Metropolitan Hierotheos, ‘The Antichrist and Chrismation’.

Revelation is not in the Orthodox daily lectionary [Well sourced]

Date and language: canon history, 4th-8th c. · Orthodox lectionary.

The OCA says Revelation is the only New Testament book not read in the Orthodox liturgical cycle ‘because of its apocalyptic character’. Fr Stephen In a comment De Young adds that a continuous reading from the Sabbaite typikon (the ‘Great Reading’ at all-night vigils) does include it, but that this is not the lectionary proper and comes centuries after Andrew of Caesarea. He also says Athanasius includes Revelation in 367 while Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory the Theologian and Chrysostom omit it, and that Maximus the Confessor in the late 7th century still doubted its canon. His conclusion is that its standing is not a simple yes or no.

^AOCA: Revelation is the only NT book not read liturgically.

^ADe Young: acceptance took about two centuries after Andrew popularized and revised Oecumenius’s commentary.

^ADe Young: Athanasius’s Paschal Letter (367) includes it; Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory Nazianzen and Chrysostom omit it.

^ADe Young: Orthodox commentaries on Revelation are essentially commentaries on Andrew.

^ADe Young (comment): the ‘Great Reading’ at some all-night vigils, from the Sabbaitic Typikon, does include Revelation.

Caution. De Young is a respected Orthodox priest-scholar writing for a blog; the claims about Maximus and about the ‘Great Reading’ come from him and his comment. Check the Typikon before saying anything detailed about vigils.

Read for this item: OCA: The Epistle (Divine Liturgy); Fr Stephen De Young, Is the Book of Revelation Canonical in the Orthodox Church?.

THE ASCETIC AND SACRAMENTAL READING

The Antichrist as delusion in the soul, and the seal and anointing that answer it.

Prelest (spiritual delusion) and the counterfeit of grace [Partly verified]

Date and language: 4th-19th c. ascetic literature · Orthodox ascetic (Brianchaninov, Climacus, Isaac).

Orthodox ascetic writers treat deception as the central danger of the spiritual life. Brianchaninov defines prelest as ‘wounding of human nature with falsehood’, accepting falsehood as truth, and teaches two kinds, imagination and self-conceit. Demons use pride to offer false gifts: visions, healings, clairvoyance. OrthodoxWiki ties this to the end: the Antichrist will come with false signs, appearing loving and merciful while excusing the passions. For Orthodox writers the Antichrist is therefore met first as a method of deception that must be resisted now through humility and discernment.

^A OrthodoxWiki: Brianchaninov’s definition is ‘wounding of human nature with falsehood’; two kinds, imagination and self-conceit.

^ADemons exploit pride with false gifts such as visions, healing, clairvoyance and prophecy (OrthodoxWiki summary).

^AThe article cites Matt 7:21-23 and Matt 24 on false miracles and false prophets, and 2 Cor 11:13-15 on false visions.

^ACiting Fr Nikita Grigoriev, it says the Antichrist will appear loving, but his ‘love’ will condone passions rather than call to repentance.

^A Brianchaninov’s Ascetical Experiments vol. 1 contains ‘On the Jesus Prayer, Part II: On Prelest’ (chapter 27 in Azbyka’s list).

Caution. The compiler read OrthodoxWiki through a summarizer and did not open Brianchaninov's chapter. OrthodoxWiki cites 'Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava', not Theophan the Recluse; do not conflate. It also reports a priest's claim that St Francis of Assisi showed traits of Antichrist; The compiler did not use that.

Read for this item: OrthodoxWiki: Prelest; Azbyka: contents of Ascetical Experiments, vol. 1.

Metropolitan Hierotheos (Vlachos): 'The Antichrist and Chrismation' [Well sourced]
Date and language: 2006 · Greek Orthodox, hesychast pastoral reading (citing Nikodemos the Hagiorite).

A contemporary Greek metropolitan, in articles of June and August 2006, argues that Antichrist is both the figure of the end and a spirit already at work. Citing 1 John 2:18 and Nikodemos the Hagiorite, 'many antichrists' in every age are forerunners and heralds, including heretics and Christians who live in passion without inner prayer. Christians distinguish Christ from Antichrist through the 'anointing' of chrismation, not books. He reads the sealed servants of Rev 7 and 14 as those sealed with the Spirit and the 'new song' as noetic prayer of the heart, and criticizes date-setting. Pastoral care is hesychasm.

^AThe Antichrist comes near the end, but 'many antichrists' and forerunners already act in every age (1 John 2:18, Nikodemos).

^AChristians discern Christ from Antichrist by the anointing of chrismation, not by reading books.

^AThe seal of Rev 7:2-4 and 14:1 is linked to chrismation, and the 'new song' to noetic prayer of the heart; those so sealed escape the Beast's seal.

^AThe article criticizes those who try to fix a date for the Antichrist's arrival.

^AMartyrdom is described as the activation of chrismation.

Caution. Contemporary bishop's pastoral reading, not a conciliar text. Originals: Ekklesiastiki Paremvasi no. 122 (June 2006) and Orthodoxos Typos no. 1654 (4 Aug 2006). Nikodemos's own work was not named in the article.

Read for this item: Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos, 'Prophecy and Revelation? or oracle-mongering and....

St Ignatius Brianchaninov: last times, sermon on the Second Coming, and the 'essay on the Antichrist' [Partly verified]

Date and language: 1807-1867 · Russian Orthodox bishop, ascetic writer; glorified 1988.

Brianchaninov (1807-1867), Bishop of the Caucasus and Black Sea, is the leading 19th-century Russian writer on delusion and prayer, glorified in 1988. A chapter from his work, as described on roca.org, is titled 'Troubles are the Special Lot of the Monks of the Last Times'; he warns that apostates who call themselves Christians can persecute true ones. Holy Trinity Publications lists a Meatfare sermon 'On the Second Coming of Christ'. The compiler could not find any essay of his titled or devoted to the Antichrist: the Azbyka work list and volume 1 contents show none, so The compiler cannot confirm that such a work exists.

^A Born 15 Feb 1807, monk 1831, bishop 1857, retired 1861, died 30 April 1867; glorified by the 1988 Local Council (Wikipedia).

^A roca.org: his chapter 'Troubles are the Special Lot of the Monks of the Last Times' warns of weakened instruction and apostates who call themselves Christians.

^A Holy Trinity Publications' The Harvest includes sermon 7, 'On the Second Coming of Christ'.

^A Azbyka's list of his works and volume 1 contents contain no title on the Antichrist.

^A An unsigned web article (ecerkva) attributes to him a paraphrased claim that the Antichrist deceives through apparent goodness; it gives no citation.

Caution. The brief's 'Brianchaninov essay on the Antichrist' is NOT verified. The roca.org chapter is described in a web summary; The compiler does not know which of his books it is from. Check the Russian Complete Works (vols. 4-5) before attributing any Antichrist teaching.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Ignatius Brianchaninov; roca.org: on Bishop Ignatius and the last times; Holy Trinity Publications: The Harvest; Azbyka: Ignatius Brianchaninov author page; Azbyka: Ascetical Experiments vol. 1 contents; ecerkva.com: Is Putin the Antichrist? (unsigned; weak).

Popular 'prophecies of Elder Paisios' [Partly verified]

Date and language: 20th-21st c. · Athonite, Greek.

Many end-time 'prophecies' circulate online in the name of Elder Paisios of Mount Athos. Monk Moses the Athonite, writing for the Orthodox press,

calls recent claims that Paisios appeared and told people to hoard food baseless, ‘fantasies of the naive’, warns against people with a taste for ‘fearful eschatology’, and says the Elder’s words were often for one person and should not be generalized. His main counsel is that the present situation can only be met spiritually. The list is not verified; none are used in this study.

^A Monk Moses calls the claims about Paisios appearing and telling people to gather food baseless.

^A He warns against those inclined to fanaticism and ‘fearful eschatology’.

^A Some of Paisios’s words were meant only for the person he was addressing; generalizing them is wrong.

^A The page links to a separate piece titled ‘Holy Community of Mount Athos responds’; The compiler did not open that statement.

Caution. Any specific ‘Paisios prophecy’ (Turkey, Russia, the Antichrist, the Third World War) should be treated as unverified rumour unless it appears in a printed, authorized source.

Read for this item: Monk Moses the Athonite on Elder Paisios’s prophecies (Sanidopoulos).

RUSSIA AND THE SLAVIC WORLD

The same material in a different history, including the Old Believers, who took the Antichrist to be already reigning.

Slavonic reception of Greek apocalyptic texts [Partly verified]

Date and language: 11th–14th c. · Church Slavonic, Rus’ and South Slavic.

Eastern Christian apocalypses reached Orthodox Slavs in translation. Pseudo-Methodius exists in three Slavonic recensions (earliest manuscript 12th c.) and Russian Christians invoked it in the 13th-century Mongol invasions; the Life of Andrew the Fool was first translated into Old Russian by the late 11th or early 12th century (200+ copies) with a South Slavic version by the 14th; Andrew of Caesarea’s Apocalypse commentary was translated into Church Slavonic. The compiler could not verify the ‘Slavonic Tale of Antichrist’ you mentioned, nor any copy-by-copy list of Slavic Antichrist tales.

^A Pseudo-Methodius: three Slavonic recensions (S1–S3), earliest manuscript 12th century; invoked in the 13th-century Mongol invasions (Wikipedia).

^A Life of Andrew the Fool: first Old Russian translation c. late 11th/early 12th century; South Slavic (likely Serbian) by the 14th.

^A Andrew of Caesarea: translated into Armenian, Georgian and Church Slavonic.

Caution. Transmission facts only. The compiler found no source the compiler could open on a distinct Slavonic ‘Tale of Antichrist’.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius; Wikipedia: Andrew the Fool; Wikipedia: Andrew of Caesarea.

Romanian popular eschatology of Elijah and the Antichrist [Partly verified]

Date and language: medieval to modern · Romanian Orthodox folk religion.

A Romanian doctoral article (Agignoei, 2020) compares the ‘doctrinal’ scenario of Revelation 11 (Elijah and Enoch confront the Antichrist, are killed and raised) with the Romanian popular version. Folk belief expands the biblical motif with vivid details not found in Scripture, many traced to apocryphal apocalypses that circulated in medieval Romania. Elijah is also a weather and crop patron celebrated on 20 July. It is a good illustration of the gap between formal doctrine and village apocalyptic.

^A Elijah and Enoch confront the Antichrist, are killed by him and raised by God (Rev 11), according to the abstract.

^A Romanian folk tradition expands the motif with many details absent from Scripture.

^A The author traces many details to apocryphal apocalypses circulating in medieval Romania.

^A Elijah is celebrated on 20 July and is patron of weather, crops and bee-keepers in folk belief.

Caution. Abstract only (partly cut off). The article is in Romanian.

Read for this item: Agignoei, STODN 3.1 (2020) abstract.

Old Believers: Nikon's reforms and the reign of Antichrist [Partly verified]

Date and language: 1650s-18th c. · Russian Church schism.

Patriarch Nikon’s liturgical reforms (from 1652) were rejected by Old Believers, who held that the changes were a diabolical plot heralding the Last Judgment and that Antichrist already ruled church and state. Ukrainian apocalyptic miscellanies after the 1596 Union of Brest pointed to 1666 and the number of the beast; Avraami later recalculated to 1691. The 1666-67 Moscow Council anathematized resisters. Mass self-immolation was treated as martyrdom, with Wikipedia citing perhaps 20,000 deaths in the next gener-

ation. The Old Believer church's own site says some first named Nikon himself as Antichrist because of the titles 'Great Sovereign' and 'New Jerusalem'.

^AOld Believers saw the reforms as a diabolical plan and the church/state as under Antichrist (Wikipedia: Old Believers).

^ABritannica: they refused the liturgical reforms of Patriarch Nikon (1652-58).

^AChurchmotherofgod.org history: the belief that 'the reign of Antichrist had begun in the official Church' followed the 1666 schism.

^AThe Old Believer Moscow Metropolitanate: some named Nikon as Antichrist because he took 'Great Sovereign' and named a monastery 'New Jerusalem'; that view faded when he fell.

^AWikipedia: self-immolation as martyrdom; perhaps 20,000 died; Efrosin's 1691 treatise argued against it.

Caution. Wikipedia's 20,000 figure is an estimate. The churchmotherofgod page is an Orthodox history of uncertain scholarly standard and does not itself name Nikon or Peter as Antichrist.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Old Believers; Wikipedia: Avvakum (1666-67 Council); Britannica: Old Believers (summary); History of the Russian Church (p. 7), churchmotherofgod.org; Russian Orthodox Old Believer Church (Moscow Metropolitanate): Divisions among Old....

Old Believers: 'sensual' versus 'spiritual' Antichrist; priestless groups [Partly verified]

Date and language: late 17th-19th c. · Russian Old Believers.

Old Believers split over what 'Antichrist already reigns' means. The 'material' (sensual) view expects one person with scriptural marks at a set time, so ordinary life and priests could continue. The 'spiritual' view treats Antichrist as an evil power already pervading the world, which led the priestless (bezpopovtsy) to judge the official church graceless, reject its priests and sacraments, and in extreme cases (Runners/Beguny) avoid money and papers bearing his seal. The Old Believer Church site says the spiritual doctrine arose among persecuted believers and caused a split dialogue might have prevented.

^AWikipedia: material vs spiritual Antichrist; the spiritual doctrine was held by radical, priestless groups and had no time limit.

^APriestless groups regarded the official church as corrupted by Antichrist and without grace; the Beguny refused to touch money bearing the 'seal'.

^AThe priested (popovtsy) were generally more moderate in applying the Antichrist doctrine to the present.

^A The rpsc.ru page: bezpopovtsi rebaptized converts and relied on lay teachers; Pomortsy and Chasovennie are the largest groups today.

^A Crummey's book *The Old Believers and the World of Antichrist* (1970), on the Vyg community, is the standard English study of this.

Caution. The compiler did not open Crummey's book itself. The Slavic Review notice only supplies the title, year (1970) and a one-line characterization.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Old Believers; rpsc.ru: Divisions among Old Believers; Slavic Review memorial notice (confirming the title and its 'institutional and political'....

Archpriest Avvakum (c. 1620-1682) [Partly verified]

Date and language: c. 1620/21 - 14 April 1682 · Russian Old Believer leader.

Avvakum, archpriest of the Kazan Cathedral on Red Square, led resistance to Nikon's reforms (two fingers to three, revised books, Greek-style vestments). He read the fall of Constantinople to the Turks as a judgment on Greek 'heresy'. Exiled to Siberia in 1653, he was condemned at the 1666-67 Council, held in an earthen pit at Pustozorsk from 1670 and burned in a log house in 1682. Wikipedia says opponents' texts framed the schism as a cosmic contest with Nikon cast as Antichrist; his own *Life*, written 1669-75, is a classic of Russian literature.

^A He opposed Nikon's reforms from 1652; exiled to Tobolsk in 1653.

^A He argued Constantinople fell to the Turks because of Greek 'heretical' practices.

^A 1666-67: the Great Moscow Synod anathematized those who rejected Nikon's changes; 1667: sent to Pustozorsk.

^A He was burned alive on 14 April 1682.

^A The *Life of the Archpriest Avvakum, by Himself*, was drafted 1669-72 and first printed in 1861.

Caution. The Wikipedia page ties the Antichrist language to 'opponents' texts' and does not quote Avvakum himself. Use Brostrom's translation of the *Life* (Michigan Slavic Publications, 1979) or Michels (2000) for quotations.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Avvakum.

Peter I as Antichrist in popular and Old Believer belief [Partly verified]

Date and language: late 17th-18th c. · Russian.

Many Old Believers considered Tsar Peter the Antichrist. Michal Siažik (Religio, 2009) says the wandering Old Believers (stranniki) held a ‘divided Antichrist’ in which Peter is the first of a line of ruler-Antichrists who usurped regal, religious and divine authority, which justified rejecting his successors too. A Gateway to Russia popular article lists the reasons given: Western dress, shaving beards, tobacco, and abolishing the patriarchate for the Holy Synod in 1721. That article is not scholarly. The tsarist state meanwhile presented Peter as dynasty founder.

^A Siažik: wanderers saw Peter as the first ruler-Antichrist, usurping a threefold authority.

^A Wikipedia (Antichrist): many Old Believers considered Peter the Antichrist, for subordinating the church to the state and taxing clergy.

^A Gw2ru: beards, tobacco, Western clothes and the Synod (1721) are given as reasons.

^A The Old Believer picture is compared with tsarist propaganda in Siažik.

Caution. Siažik’s page was an abstract in Czech/English; the Gateway to Russia article (Egorov) is a state-funded popular piece without citations. This was an Old Believer and popular belief, never an Orthodox Church teaching.

Read for this item: Siažik, Starověrci-poutníci a Petr I. jako Antikrist (Religio 17.1, 2009); Wikipedia: Antichrist (Eastern Orthodox section); Gateway to Russia: Why was Peter the Great considered the Antichrist?.

MODERN ORTHODOX WRITERS (FOR CONTRAST)

Twentieth-century voices, placed last, so that the older witnesses come first and can be read on their own terms.

Orthodox America, 'The Last Chapter of Time and the Coming of Antichrist' [Partly verified]

Date and language: late 20th c. · ROCOR (Jordanville) devotional exposition.

An article in Orthodox America (vol. VI, no. 51, archived on roca.org) assembles a standard ROCOR picture of the Antichrist from John of Damascus, Ephrem the Syrian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Brianchaninov and ‘Blessed Theophilact’. It says most Fathers hold he will be Jewish of the tribe of Dan, comes in three periods (hidden youth, public rise as a solver of world problems, a final 3.5-year reign), deceives with false signs, and that Elijah and Enoch warn people and are killed. It cites as sources ‘Apostasy and Anti-

christ' (Jordanville 1978), Archpriest Boris Molchanoff and Hieromonk Alexis Rosentool (1982).

^A Cites John Damascene, Ephraim the Syrian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Brian-chaninov and Theophylact.

^A Says 'most Fathers' hold the Antichrist will be Jewish, of the tribe of Dan.

^A Three periods: hidden youth, public rise (one-world government, Temple), final 3.5-year reign.

^A Elijah and Enoch are sent, turn Jews to Christ and are killed.

^A Does not use the term 'restrainer'; the 'falling away' (2 Thess 2:3) is the condition.

Caution. A magazine article without individual authorship or footnotes in the version the compiler read; it reflects one strand (ROCOR). Not an official teaching.

Read for this item: Orthodox America (roca.org): The Last Chapter of Time and the Coming of Antichrist.

Fr Seraphim Rose, Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future (1975) [Partly verified]

Date and language: 1975; 2nd ed. 1979 · ROCOR (American convert), St Herman Brotherhood.

Eight chapters on the 'new religious consciousness': Eastern religions, ecumenism, the charismatic revival, UFO phenomena and the Jonestown tragedy. Per Wikipedia, Rose reads these as parts of a 'religion of the future' that is the religion of the Antichrist, driven by demonic influence, and offers Orthodox tradition as the frame to resist it. Internet Archive's description speaks of the 'coming time of antichrist'. Rose also wrote *The Apocalypse in the Teachings of Ancient Christianity* (1985), and wrote the introduction to Archbishop Averky's *Orthodox commentary on the Apocalypse* (1998). Critics call it polemical; Chapnin criticizes edition changes.

^A First published 1975; 2nd edition 31 Dec 1979 with an epilogue on new spiritual movements.

^A Wikipedia: Rose identifies the 'religion of the future' as the religion of the Antichrist.

^A Internet Archive description: addresses the 'coming time of antichrist' and the question of being caught up in the Apostasy.

^A Rose (1934-1982) was a ROCOR hieromonk; not glorified as of the OrthodoxWiki page.

^A Critics include Jakub Jurga; Chapnin criticizes ecclesiology changes between editions.

Caution. The compiler did not read the book. The Wikipedia note on reception is the editors' summary. Rose is a controversial popular author, not a Father or Council; his 'toll-house' teaching is disputed.

Read for this item: Wikipedia: Orthodoxy and the Religion of the Future; OrthodoxWiki: Seraphim (Rose); Internet Archive listing of the book.

Archbishop Averky (Taushev), Orthodox commentary on the Apocalypse and article on Elijah [Partly verified]

Date and language: 20th c. (ROCOR, Jordanville) · ROCOR.

Averky's *The Apocalypse of St John: An Orthodox Commentary* (introduced by Seraphim Rose, 1998 English) is a modern ROCOR Orthodox commentary. The OrthoChristian reprint of his short article on Elijah reads Elijah as 'the second forerunner' and, with Enoch, God's witnesses in Rev 11 killed by the Antichrist. It warns against compromise with the Antichrist's servants and against false shepherds who preach peace with everyone. It cites no named Church Father, only Scripture and 'the ancient Fathers'.

^AElijah is 'the second forerunner of the coming of Christ' (Mal 4:5).

^AElijah and Enoch will be God's two witnesses and be killed and revived after three and a half days (Rev 11).

^A The article treats the Antichrist's followers as already gathering and warns against compromise.

^A OrthodoxWiki lists the Rose introduction to Averky's commentary (1998).

^AThe article names no individual Father.

Caution. The compiler did not read the commentary itself. The article's 'followers are already gathering' point is a contemporary application.

Read for this item: OrthoChristian: On Prophet Elijah and the Antichrist (Averky); OrthodoxWiki: Seraphim (Rose) (lists the Averky commentary).

St Nikolai Velimirovic and the Prologue from Ohrid [Partly verified]

Date and language: 1881-1956 · Serbian Orthodox bishop.

The Prologue from Ohrid is Velimirovic's calendar of saints' lives, hymns and homilies for each day. Its entry for the Prophet Elias says that at the end of the world Elias will appear again 'to break the power of the antichrist' (Rev 11), so the Antichrist reaches Orthodox daily reading through

the Prologue. Wikipedia's biography does not mention any writing of his on the Antichrist, and it records serious controversies over his wartime and earlier statements. The compiler found no separate Antichrist essay or sermon by him that the compiler could open.

^A Prologue from Ohrid (1928): lives, hymns and reflections arranged by feast day (OrthodoxWiki).

^A The Prologue entry for 20 July: Elias will appear again 'to break the power of the antichrist' (reprint, Lazarica Press 1986).

^A He was glorified by the Serbian Church in 2003; died 18 March 1956.

^A Wikipedia records criticisms of antisemitic statements and wartime associations, with defenders disputing their weight.

Caution. Quote from a web reprint of the Prologue. Because of the controversy over his political writings, handle with an honest note if he is featured. The compiler found no other Antichrist writing by him.

Read for this item: OrthodoxWiki: Prologue from Ohrid; OrthoChristian: The Holy Prophet Elias (Prologue); Wikipedia: Nikolaj Velimirovic.

Patriarch Kirill on the Antichrist and the web (2019) [Partly verified]

Date and language: January 2019 · Russian Orthodox Church.

In an interview on Russian state television, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow warned that smartphone users should be careful with the worldwide web of gadgets, which gives the chance to gain global control over mankind, and said the Antichrist could end up leading it. He added that the Church opposes the system aimed at controlling a person's identity, not technology itself. Coda Story, relying on a BBC report, notes many Russian users mocked the remarks and some read them as lending divine authority to restrictions on the internet. Wikipedia gives the date as 2018; Coda gives January 2019.

^A January 2019 interview with Rossiya 1 (Coda Story, via BBC).

^A Kirill said the Antichrist could end up leading a global web of gadgets.

^A He said the Church opposes a system of controlling a person's identity, not technology itself.

^A Wikipedia dates the interview 2018; Coda dates it January 2019 (discrepancy).

Caution. Interview remarks, not a teaching of the Church; the political context is contested. Kirill's own words were not seen directly.

Read for this item: Coda Story: The Antichrist is coming through your smartphone; Wikipedia: Antichrist.

Eastern items printed: 36.

PART FOUR

The Voices and the Works

*Ninety-four writers in seven periods, and the works they are
quoted from.*

The Voices, Period by Period

SERMONINDEX

c. AD 50 – 1200

Who the writers were, in seven periods from the apostolic age to the Middle Ages, with what each period taught about the Antichrist.

THE APOSTOLIC AGE AND THE EARLIEST WRITINGS (TO ABOUT AD 160)

No one in this period writes a treatise on the Antichrist. What survives are short statements, each taking a different piece of the biblical picture. The *Didache* has a “world-deceiver” who appears as a son of God. Barnabas reads Daniel’s ten kingdoms and little horn as a warning about the last stumbling block. Polycarp uses John’s word for anyone who denies that Christ has come in the flesh. Hermas sees a beast and is told it pictures the coming tribulation. The *Ascension of Isaiah* and the *Sibylline Oracles* draw on Jewish language about Beliar and bring in a lawless king from Rome. Justin is the first to mention the “man of apostasy” by name and to say that false christs are the heretics of his own day.

Didache (c. AD 50–120 (debated))

Early church manual, author unknown. The oldest surviving Christian church order. Its closing chapter describes the “world-deceiver” who appears as a son of God, works wonders and commits lawlessness never seen before, and it calls believers to endure the fiery trial and keep watch. 3 quotations in this volume.

Epistle of Barnabas (c. AD 70–135 (debated))

Early Christian letter, traditionally ascribed to Barnabas. A letter from the age after the apostles that reads the Old Testament as a book about Christ. It cites Daniel’s ten kingdoms and the little king who subdues three, says the last stumbling block is near, and tells believers to resist it so that the Black One, the devil, finds no entry. 5 quotations in this volume.

Polycarp of Smyrna (c. AD 69–155)

Bishop of Smyrna and martyr. Irenaeus says Polycarp had been taught by the apostles and had known John. His one surviving letter takes John's own definition of an antichrist, the man who denies that Christ has come in the flesh, and sets against it the one remedy he knows, a return to the word handed down from the beginning. 2 quotations in this volume.

Shepherd of Hermas (c. AD 100–160)

Visionary book from Rome. A long book of visions and commands, widely read in the early church. Its fourth vision shows a great sea monster, which an angel explains as a picture of the coming tribulation, and the way of escape is repentance and a single heart. 5 quotations in this volume.

Ascension of Isaiah (1st–3rd century AD (composite))

Jewish-Christian apocalypse. A Jewish and Christian visionary text that was read in the early church. In it Beliar, the angel of lawlessness and ruler of this world, descends in the likeness of a lawless king, a matricide. He speaks like the Beloved, claims to be God, is worshipped, sets up his image in every city, and is dragged to Gehenna when the Lord comes. 8 quotations in this volume.

Sibylline Oracles (2nd century BC to 3rd century AD (layered))

Jewish and Christian oracles in Greek verse. A collection of prophecies in Greek hexameters, worked over by Jewish and Christian hands. The passages used here say that Beliar will arise from the Roman emperors, work signs and lead many astray, and that fire will burn him and all who trusted him. 4 quotations in this volume.

Justin Martyr (c. AD 100–165)

Philosopher, apologist and martyr at Rome. A Christian philosopher who taught at Rome and was beheaded under Marcus Aurelius. In the Dialogue with Trypho he speaks of the “man of apostasy” and Daniel's blasphemer who is “at the door”, reads Jesus' warning about false christs as aimed at the heretics of his own day, and holds that Elijah will come at Christ's glorious return. 7 quotations in this volume.

THE SECOND CENTURY (AD 160–200)

Irenaeus draws the first full portrait, in the fifth book of *Against Heresies*, and almost everything later writers say on the subject begins from his words.

He joins Daniel's little horn, Paul's man of sin and John's beast into one figure; he puts him among ten kings who divide the Roman empire; and he says the Antichrist will sit in the temple at Jerusalem, reign three and a half years and sum up all apostasy. He gives the tribe of Dan and the number 666, and he is cautious about both. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs supply the vocabulary of Beliar and Dan.

Tatian (c. AD 120–180)

Syrian pupil of Justin; harmonizer of the Gospels. Compiled the Diatessaron, one continuous Gospel narrative that was used in the Syriac churches for generations. The one passage here is its form of the Lord's warning about the abomination of desolation. 1 quotation in this volume.

Irenaeus of Lyons (c. AD 130–202)

Bishop of Lyons; pupil of Polycarp. Born in Asia Minor, where he heard Polycarp, and bishop in Gaul. In the last book of *Against Heresies* he gathers Daniel, Paul and Revelation into the first full account of the Antichrist in the church's writings: an apostate and robber who sums up all apostasy, arises among the ten kings of the divided Roman empire, sits in the temple at Jerusalem posing as Christ, reigns three and a half years, and is cast into the lake of fire at Christ's coming. He is also the earliest to say the number of the name may be a Greek word, and to warn against being too sure which. 44 quotations in this volume.

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (2nd century BC, with Christian additions)

Jewish testament-literature, reworked by Christians. The farewell speeches of Jacob's twelve sons. Beliar is the ruler of deceit, bound by the coming priest and cast into the fire for ever, and Dan's testament says that his tribe has Satan for its prince and will depart from the Lord in the last days. That passage lies behind the Danite tradition. 7 quotations in this volume.

THE THIRD CENTURY (AD 200–300)

The three great Western and Alexandrian voices disagree on emphasis and agree on the outline. Tertullian ties the Antichrist to the fall of the Roman empire, which for him still restrains the end. Hippolytus writes the first treatise devoted to the subject, and the first commentary on Daniel; he works out how the Antichrist copies Christ, point by point. Origen reads the Antichrist as the opposite extreme of Christ, a kind with many members, working among false teachers. Cyprian, who is facing persecution, writes of the

Antichrist as close at hand and as a spirit at work in the church's own divisions. Commodian puts the story into Latin verse with Nero as the returning tyrant.

Clement of Alexandria (c. AD 150–215)

Teacher at Alexandria. Head of the catechetical school at Alexandria. He takes John's "antichrist" to be the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ, and in the *Stromata* he reads Daniel's last week as already fulfilled, with Nero setting the abomination in Jerusalem and Vespasian destroying the city. He is a witness to a reading that did not look to the end for the abomination. 2 quotations in this volume.

Tertullian (c. AD 155–220)

Latin theologian of Carthage. The first great writer of Latin theology. He holds that the Roman state restrains the man of sin, so that Christians pray for the empire's continuance and its breakup into ten kingdoms will bring Antichrist in on its ruins. He expects Enoch and Elijah to be reserved for death at Antichrist's hands and says that heresy is a present antichrist. In his later years he joined the Montanists. 21 quotations in this volume.

Hippolytus of Rome (c. AD 170–235)

Presbyter and teacher at Rome. A pupil of Irenaeus who wrote in Greek at Rome and is said to have died in exile. His treatise *On Christ and Antichrist* is the fullest early portrait of the man, and his commentary on Daniel is the oldest surviving. He draws a close parallel between Christ and his counterfeit, reads the sacrifice that ceases as the prayers of the upright, argues that AD 70 did not fulfil the abomination of desolation, divides the last week between Elijah and Enoch and the Antichrist, and, in a passage worth reading with care, reckons the end at about five hundred years after Christ. 69 quotations in this volume.

Origen of Alexandria (c. AD 185–254)

Scholar and exegete of Alexandria and Caesarea. The most productive biblical scholar of the early church. He treats Antichrist as the opposite extreme of Christ, a kind with many species, and as whatever feigns the truth: false exposition of Scripture is itself Antichrist. His wonders are like those of the Egyptian magicians who copied Moses. 22 quotations in this volume.

Commodian (3rd century AD (date and place debated))

Latin poet and teacher. A Christian poet whose Instructions and Apologetic Song put the end-time story into verse. He expects Nero raised from hell, a seven-year period shared between Elijah and Nero, and a Latin conqueror who claims to be Christ and is cast alive into Gehenna with the false prophet. 14 quotations in this volume.

Gospel of Bartholomew (3rd–5th century AD)

Apocryphal gospel. In the Questions of Bartholomew, Satan tells how he refused to worship Adam and aimed to set his throne against God's and be as he is. 1 quotation in this volume.

Secundinus of Carpis (fl. AD 256)

African bishop at the Seventh Council of Carthage. One of the bishops who gave his opinion at Cyprian's council in 256 on baptism by heretics. He calls the heretics "the progeny of Antichrist". 1 quotation in this volume.

Cyprian of Carthage (c. AD 200–258)

Bishop of Carthage and martyr. A bishop in the middle of persecution who wrote often of the Antichrist as close at hand. He reads Antiochus as a type, calls those who leave the Church's unity antichrists, and in the Exhortation to Martyrdom says the hateful time of Antichrist is beginning to draw near. His comfort is that Christ follows to avenge and deliver. 28 quotations in this volume.

Dionysius of Alexandria (d. AD 264/5)

Bishop of Alexandria. A pupil of Origen. His letters oppose Nepos's reading of Revelation as promising a literal earthly kingdom, report that some thought Cerinthus wrote the book, and accept it as inspired while doubting it is by the apostle John. He also uses John's word for those who deny Christ's deity or real flesh. 4 quotations in this volume.

Acts of Archelaus (early 4th century AD)

Account of a debate with Mani. A dialogue, perhaps based on a real public debate, in which Archelaus refutes Mani. Archelaus calls Mani a base vessel of Antichrist, sent ahead to test the Church. 2 quotations in this volume.

THE AGE OF NICAEA (AD 300–380)

Constantine's peace changed the question. Lactantius, who had seen the Great Persecution, describes the final days with a Syrian king and a false

prophet, and then a thousand-year kingdom. Victorinus writes the first commentary on Revelation. Eusebius and Aphrahat read the prophecies more historically. But as the church fought Arianism, Athanasius, Hilary, Alexander of Alexandria and Basil began to use the Antichrist as the pattern of a power that attacks the faith from inside the church, flatters, and uses an emperor.

Victorinus of Pettau (d. c. AD 304)

Bishop of Pettau and martyr. The author of the oldest surviving commentary on Revelation, which Jerome later edited. He reads the book as a series of recapitulations, finds the wounded head in Nero raised up and received by the Jews as Christ, makes the witnesses' preaching and the Antichrist's kingdom each three and a half years, and reads the thousand years of Satan's binding as the present age. 27 quotations in this volume.

Methodius of Olympus (d. c. AD 311)

Bishop and martyr in Lycia. Author of the Banquet of the Ten Virgins. He reads Revelation's dragon as the devil, the woman as the Church preserved in the wilderness, and the fallen stars as heresies; he spiritualizes the 1,260 days, and in reading the ten virgins calls the midnight the kingdom of Antichrist. 6 quotations in this volume.

Eusebius of Caesarea (c. AD 260–339)

Bishop of Caesarea; first church historian. The historian of the Church's first three centuries. He reports that Judas dated Antichrist under Severus, and he warns against following any false appearing of Christ. He reads the abomination of desolation as begun at the Passion and the desolation of Jerusalem as final, with no restoration of the temple to look for. 11 quotations in this volume.

Pseudo-Clement (3rd–4th century AD)

Romance attributed to Clement of Rome. The Clementine Homilies and Recognitions are a long Jewish-Christian novel about Peter and Simon Magus. In the Homilies the false always comes before the true, a false prophet before the true prophet and Antichrist before the manifestation of Jesus as Christ; the Recognitions end their ten pairs with Antichrist and Christ. 2 quotations in this volume.

Lactantius (c. AD 250–325)

Christian rhetorician; tutor to Constantine's son. A Latin writer who saw the Great Persecution and lived to see Constantine. In the seventh book of the *Divine Institutes* he describes the last days with great vividness: ten kings, a powerful enemy from the north, a Syrian king born of an evil spirit who claims to be the Son of God, his mark and 42 months, and then Christ's thousand-year kingdom. He rejects the story that Nero will return. 14 quotations in this volume.

Alexander of Alexandria (d. AD 328)

Bishop of Alexandria. The bishop who first opposed Arius. His circular letter calls the Arian teaching an apostasy and a forerunner of Antichrist, and says the Arians have come nearer to Antichrist than any earlier heresy. Socrates, the history of Nicaea by the anonymous writer of Cyzicus, and Athanasius's collection all reproduce the letter, which is why it recurs here. 2 quotations in this volume.

Aphrahat (c. AD 270–345)

Syriac "Persian Sage". A monk-bishop in the Persian empire who wrote twenty-three *Demonstrations* in Syriac. He reads Daniel historically: the fourth beast is Esau's kingdom, Rome; the little horn is Antiochus, already past; and Rome holds the kingdom for its giver until he returns. He is the clearest early voice for a reading that does not look to the last days at all. 5 quotations in this volume.

Descent into Hell (Latin, first version) (4th–5th century AD)

Part of the Gospel of Nicodemus. A late-antique account of Christ's descent to the dead. It says Enoch and Elias are kept from death to fight Antichrist, be killed in Jerusalem and rise after three and a half days. 1 quotation in this volume.

History of Joseph the Carpenter (4th–7th century AD)

Coptic apocryphal story. An Egyptian tale of the death of Joseph, told by Christ. It names the four whom Antichrist will slay as Enoch, Elias, Schila and Tabitha. 2 quotations in this volume.

Pseudo-Hippolytus (c. 4th century AD (several later pieces))

Spurious works attributed to Hippolytus. A set of homilies and treatises that early copyists put under the name of Hippolytus. They tell the life of the An-

tichrist in more detail than any genuine early writer: born of the tribe of Dan to an impure woman posing as a virgin, gentle and pious at first, builder of the temple, counterfeiter of Christ's miracles, and giver of a mark that requires a formal denial. They also say that in his days the Eucharist and the public worship cease. 31 quotations in this volume.

Revelation of Esdras (apocryphal) (late antique (date uncertain))

Apocryphal apocalypse. A short Greek text in which Esdras sees a man bound in chains who claimed to be the Son of God and turned stones to bread and water to wine; his face bears the inscription Antichrist. 2 quotations in this volume.

Revelation of John (apocryphal) (late antique (date uncertain))

Apocryphal apocalypse. A different book from the canonical Revelation, which manuscripts give under John's name. It calls the future figure the denier called Antichrist, gives him a shortened three years, and has Enoch and Elias killed by him at the altar. 3 quotations in this volume.

Hilary of Poitiers (c. AD 310–367)

Bishop of Poitiers. A Latin bishop exiled for his stand against the Arians. He reads the abomination of desolation as Antichrist claiming God's honour in the holy place, the fig tree's branch as the Synagogue's branch, Antichrist, and the Arians as the Evil One's forerunners who prepare what the Antichrist will say himself. 14 quotations in this volume.

Athanasius of Alexandria (c. AD 296–373)

Bishop of Alexandria; defender of Nicaea. The champion of the Nicene faith, exiled five times. He calls Arianism the last heresy and the harbinger of Antichrist, argues that Constantius fits Daniel's portrait of the enemy, and makes the point, which is the centre of his teaching on this subject, that the devil in every heresy says in disguise: "I am Christ". 30 quotations in this volume.

Basil of Caesarea (c. AD 330–379)

Bishop of Caesarea; one of the Cappadocians. One of the three Cappadocian Fathers. In two letters written in time of trial he wonders whether the falling away has come and the lawless one is about to be revealed, but he uses the thought to urge endurance and patience rather than to announce the end. 2 quotations in this volume.

Apostolic Constitutions (c. AD 375–380 (Syria))

Church order compiled from earlier sources. A long collection of church law and worship, which keeps much older material. It calls the heretics false christs and prophets, says they grow more numerous as the end nears, and speaks of the “deceiver of the world” who will be destroyed by the Lord’s mouth. 4 quotations in this volume.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE FATHERS (AD 380–451)

This is the period of the standard commentaries. Cyril of Jerusalem teaches the signs to baptismal candidates. Chrysostom’s homilies on 2 Thessalonians become the Greek church’s classic exposition. Jerome gathers the earlier opinions on Daniel. Ambrose and Augustine turn to the question of what “Antichrist” means: Ambrose names three, and Augustine makes the word “contrary to Christ” cover all who deny him in their lives, inside the Church as well as outside. The sack of Rome in 410 gives a new edge to the old question of who restrains the end, and Augustine admits that he does not know.

Ambrosiaster (fl. c. AD 366–384)

Anonymous Latin commentator at Rome. The unknown author of the oldest Latin commentary on all of Paul’s letters, long ascribed to Ambrose. Here he reads the Lord’s warning about flight in winter or on the Sabbath as about the final persecution from Antichrist. 1 quotation in this volume.

Cyril of Jerusalem (c. AD 313–386)

Bishop of Jerusalem. In the Catechetical Lectures, given to candidates for baptism, Cyril gives the clearest short description of the Antichrist in the Greek fathers: a sorcerer who seizes Roman power, comes as the eleventh king, feigns mildness, claims to be Christ, and persecutes for three and a half years. His wonders are illusions, the temple he profanes is the Jewish temple, and his aim for the catechumens is that they not die deceived. 19 quotations in this volume.

Gregory of Nazianzus (c. AD 329–390)

Bishop and theologian; Archbishop of Constantinople. One of the three Cappadocian Fathers, known as “the Theologian”. He calls the Arian intruder George of Alexandria a forerunner of Antichrist, reports that the Emperor Julian gave his satire a second title, Antichrist, and speaks of an “Anti-Christian Emperor”. 4 quotations in this volume.

Optatus of Milevis (fl. c. AD 366–385)

Catholic bishop in Africa. He wrote against the Donatists, whom he calls antichrists in John's sense because they left the Church's unity. A modern translator's note on Optatus records that the Church prayed for the Empire because its fall was commonly expected to coincide with the coming of Antichrist. 2 quotations in this volume.

Tyconius (d. c. AD 390)

Donatist lay theologian of Africa. His Commentary on Revelation survives only in what later writers, especially Bede, report of it. It reads the book as the story of two bodies, Christ's and the devil's, and takes the beast as the devil's whole body across the generations. 2 quotations in this volume.

Gregory of Nyssa (c. AD 335–395)

Bishop of Nyssa; one of the Cappadocians. A brother of Basil. In the second part of *Against Eunomius* he calls Eunomius's doctrine a rehearsal and prelude of Antichrist's coming. 1 quotation in this volume.

Ambrose of Milan (c. AD 339–397)

Bishop of Milan. The bishop who baptized Augustine. He names three antichrists: the final one who argues from Scripture that he is Christ, the devil who besieges the soul, and Arius and Sabellius and all who lead the faithful astray. 9 quotations in this volume.

Apocalypse of Thomas (late antique (date debated))

Apocryphal apocalypse. A short text that places great cosmic signs when Antichrist draws near, and a crafty king who commands a golden image to be worshipped in God's house. 2 quotations in this volume.

Pseudo-Ignatius (4th–5th century AD)

Spurious letters ascribed to Ignatius. Letters written in Ignatius's name long after his death. One says that whoever rejects the incarnation or is ashamed of the cross is called antichrist. 1 quotation in this volume.

Shenoute of Atripe (c. AD 348–466)

Abbot of the White Monastery in Upper Egypt. The great organizer of Coptic monasticism and the first major writer in Coptic. He says that the prophets and apostles cursed false prophets, deceiving priests, every antichrist and all false teachers. 1 quotation in this volume.

Macarius Magnes (fl. c. AD 400)

Christian apologist. In the *Apocriticus*, an answer to a pagan critic of the Gospels, he calls the devil “that Antichrist” and names Manes, Montanus, Marcion and others as the many antichrists of the Saviour’s warning. 2 quotations in this volume.

John Chrysostom (c. AD 347–407)

Archbishop of Constantinople; “golden-mouth”. The greatest preacher of the Greek church. His homilies on 2 Thessalonians are the standard Eastern commentary on Paul’s man of sin: he is a man, not Satan; he proclaims himself God; the restraining power is, in Chrysostom’s opinion, the Roman empire, with Nero as his type; and Elijah will come to strengthen the faithful. He also teaches that Antichrist follows Christ as the devil’s tares follow the true sowing. 35 quotations in this volume.

Rufinus of Aquileia (c. AD 345–411)

Priest and translator. The translator of Origen into Latin. In his *Commentary on the Apostles’ Creed* he explains the article on Christ’s return by saying that the enemy counterfeits the second advent with prodigies and lying signs; the delusion is foretold so that no one mistakes Antichrist’s coming for Christ’s. 2 quotations in this volume.

Jerome (c. AD 347–420)

Biblical scholar; translator of the Vulgate. The most learned Latin writer of his age. He counts every heresiarch an antichrist, reads “he that letteth” as taken out of the way in the barbarian invasions so that Antichrist is near, and records that the chronographer Judas had wrongly set the date about AD 202. He also reads the abomination of desolation as an idol, Hadrian’s statue, rather than as Antichrist, and he is the best example of a Father who gives more than one reading. 23 quotations in this volume.

Palladius of Galatia (c. AD 363–431)

Bishop and author of the *Lausiac History*. The historian of the desert monks. In his story of the monk Valens a demon disguised as the Saviour, with a host of lamp-bearing angels, deceives him into worshipping; and the elder Melania warns senators that “the days of antichrist might surprise them”. 5 quotations in this volume.

Sulpicius Severus (c. AD 363–425)

Gallic Christian writer; friend of Martin of Tours. He wrote the *Life of Martin* and a *Sacred History*. In the *Dialogues* he reports Martin's belief that Nero will rule the West and Antichrist seize the East, and he tells how Martin refused to believe a devil dressed as Christ because he lacked the wounds. 7 quotations in this volume.

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430)

Bishop of Hippo; the most influential Latin Father. In *City of God*, book 20, he sets out the Antichrist's place in the church's hope. He distinguishes three persecutions, the last by Antichrist, refuses to date the end, rebukes six-thousand-year computations, and teaches that the word means "contrary to Christ", so that antichrists are in the Church wherever there are members who deny Christ by their lives. 66 quotations in this volume.

John Cassian (c. AD 360–435)

Monk; founder of monasteries in Gaul. Brought the desert tradition to the West. He gives a double fulfilment for the abomination of desolation, Jupiter's idol in Jerusalem and again an idol in the Church through Antichrist, and in the Incarnation he applies John's "spirit of Antichrist" to the heretic who does not confess that Jesus is God. 3 quotations in this volume.

Socrates Scholasticus (c. AD 380–439)

Church historian at Constantinople. His *Ecclesiastical History* continues Eusebius. It reproduces Alexander of Alexandria's letter calling the Arian apostasy a forerunner of Antichrist. 2 quotations in this volume.

Cyril of Alexandria (c. AD 376–444)

Bishop of Alexandria. A great defender of the unity of Christ's person. He reads "another who shall come in his own name" and Zechariah's worthless shepherd as the Antichrist, and says that the unbelieving Jews will attach themselves to him. 3 quotations in this volume.

Apocalypse of Sedrach (c. 5th century AD (debated))

Apocryphal apocalypse. In this text the Lord tells Sedrach that sinners who do not repent will perish with Antichrist, and Sedrach pleads for mercy for them. 1 quotation in this volume.

Leo the Great (c. AD 400–461)

Bishop of Rome. Pope from 440 to 461. He takes John's "this is Antichrist" as the verdict on those who deny Christ's human nature: Eutyches in the Tome to Flavian, and the Manichaeans in a sermon. He calls the monks who rioted for Eutyches "soldiers of Antichrist". 6 quotations in this volume.

THE LATER FATHERS (AD 451–800)

The Roman empire in the West is gone, and the Antichrist is reshaped again. Leo and the Chalcedonian writers use the language of Antichrist against Eutyches. Gregory the Great gives the Western church its mature teaching: the Antichrist is a man of the last days, and also the head of a body whose members are all the wicked now. In Egypt and Syria, writers under Muslim rule compose apocalypses in which the last king is an Ishmaelite and the Antichrist follows a Byzantine king's victory. Bede carries the African tradition of Tyconius to the medieval West, and John of Damascus fixes the Eastern doctrine in the form it keeps to this day.

Testament of Our Lord (c. 5th century AD (debated))

Church order with an apocalypse. A Syriac church order that begins with a long apocalyptic speech of the risen Lord. The Son of Perdition boasts and works signs to deceive the whole earth; his power is blasphemy; before him a godless king rises in the West. 6 quotations in this volume.

Theodoret of Cyrus (c. AD 393–458)

Bishop of Cyrrhus in Syria. A Syrian bishop and the great exegete of the Antiochene school. In the Eranistes he cites John to show that those who deny Christ's flesh have the spirit of Anti-Christ, and a letter cites Paul's prediction that Antichrist will be consumed by the Lord's coming. 2 quotations in this volume.

Anonymous of Cyzicus (late 5th century AD)

Author of a history of the Council of Nicaea. His account of Nicaea reproduces Alexander of Alexandria's letter, in which Arianism is the forerunner of the Antichrist. 2 quotations in this volume.

Gennadius of Massilia (d. c. AD 496)

Priest of Marseilles. His *Lives of Illustrious Men* continues Jerome's catalogue. He says that the Chronicle of James of Nisibis, built only on Scripture,

silences those who guess idly about the coming of Antichrist or of the Lord. 1 quotation in this volume.

Pseudo-Linus (late antique (date uncertain))

Legendary acts of Linus. A late Latin account of Peter and Paul in Rome that calls Nero “the Antichrist Nero”. 1 quotation in this volume.

Syriac Miscellanies (5th–6th century AD)

Collection of Syriac texts. A Syriac letter in this collection defends the view that the world ends at 6,000 years by pointing out that Bardesan, Hippolytus and Mar Jacob held it too. 1 quotation in this volume.

Joshua the Stylite (fl. c. AD 507)

Syriac chronicler. The author of a chronicle of the Persian war of 502–506. In the midst of war, plague and invasion he argues from 2 Thessalonians that the end cannot come before the false Christ appears, and concludes that the disasters were God’s chastisement, not the end. 2 quotations in this volume.

Philoxenus of Mabbug (c. AD 440–523)

Syriac bishop and ascetic writer. A leader of the Miaphysite church. In his As-
cetic Discourses he reports the Jewish view that Jesus was a deceiver and that they await the “lying Christ”, Antichrist. 1 quotation in this volume.

Cave of Treasures (6th century AD (older material))

Syriac history of the world. A Syriac retelling of sacred history from Adam to Christ. The passages here are Budge’s summaries of the later Book of the Bee: the Danite Antichrist who works illusions and enthrones himself in the Jerusalem temple, Elijah’s coming from Paradise, the Greek king’s crown on Golgotha, and Gog and Magog’s breaking out. 4 quotations in this volume.

Cosmas Indicopleustes (fl. c. AD 550)

Alexandrian merchant-monk and geographer. The Christian Topography argues that the world is shaped like the tabernacle. He reports the ecclesiastical tradition that Enoch and Elias will withstand Antichrist and refute his error. 2 quotations in this volume.

Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene (c. AD 569)

Syriac chronicle. A Syriac church history, compiled from Greek sources. It reports that, in the Chalcedonian dispute, Leo of Rome called Timothy Aelurus “the Antichrist”. 1 quotation in this volume.

Gregory of Tours (AD 538–594)

Bishop of Tours; historian of the Franks. His *History of the Franks* tells of a man in Gaul who gave himself out as Christ and deceived thousands, and says he ought rather to be called anti-Christ. In his creed he states that Anti-christ will come first, claim to be Christ and propose circumcision, then set up his statue in the Jerusalem temple. 2 quotations in this volume.

Gregory the Great (c. AD 540–604)

Pope; Bishop of Rome. The great teacher of the medieval West. He treats Antichrist as the head of a body whose members are all the wicked, who now do what he will do when he is revealed. The devil will in the last times enter a vessel of perdition called Antichrist, and Elijah and Enoch will rebuke him. His remark that anyone who wants the title “universal bishop” is a precursor of Antichrist was aimed at the Patriarch of Constantinople. 41 quotations in this volume.

Coptic Martyrdoms and Lives (Coptic; 6th–10th century AD)

Saints’ lives in the dialect of Upper Egypt. Coptic stories of martyrs and saints, translated by E. A. Wallis Budge. They include Timothy’s discourse on Abbaton, in which Christ at the judgment binds Satan, the lying prophet and Antichrist in the lake of fire, and a saying that the end of the Roman Empire is the sign after which only Antichrist’s works remain. 3 quotations in this volume.

Coptic Texts from St. Macarius’ Monastery (Coptic; 6th–10th century AD)

Texts found in the Wadi Natrun. Coptic works from the monastery of Saint Macarius, translated by H. G. Evelyn White. An apocalyptic fragment here has the devil go up to Chorazin and Bethsaida, where the crowds acclaim him as God and Christ and Enoch denounces him as the Son of Iniquity. 4 quotations in this volume.

Miscellaneous Coptic Texts (Coptic; 6th–10th century AD)

Coptic homilies translated by Budge. A collection of Coptic discourses. One of them calls Julian the Apostate a horn of the Devil before Antichrist. 2 quotations in this volume.

Apocalypse of Samuel of Kalamoun (7th–8th century AD (debated))

Coptic apocalypse written under Muslim rule. Attributed to a Coptic abbot of the seventh century, it consoles the Egyptian church under the Arab con-

quest. A Byzantine king commissioned by Michael overthrows the Arabs, a time of peace follows, and the false Messiah appears after his reign; the last Ishmaelite king has an Ishmaelite father and a Frankish mother and a name that adds up to 666. Samuel also says that no one knows the dates. 15 quotations in this volume.

John of Nikiu (fl. c. AD 690–700)

Coptic bishop and chronicler. His Chronicle of world history survives only in an Ethiopic translation of an Arabic copy of the original. He reports that in Diocletian's persecution everyone thought him Antichrist come to destroy the world. 1 quotation in this volume.

Coptic Apocalypse of Daniel (8th century AD (debated))

Coptic apocalypse under Muslim rule. A reworking of Daniel in which the fourth beast is the kingdom of Ishmael, and a list of nineteen kings ends with a king of mixed parentage bearing the number 666, who kills Enoch and Elias and is slain by Christ. 13 quotations in this volume.

Bede (c. AD 673–735)

Monk of Jarrow; "the Venerable". The great scholar of Anglo-Saxon England. His commentaries pass on Tyconius to the medieval West, and the Catena Aurea of Aquinas draws on his Gospel commentaries. He is steady and balanced: the Antichrist is a man in whom Satan will dwell bodily and also a body of antichrists already in the Church; he gives Titan for 666; and he rejects those who calculate the year, day and hour. 55 quotations in this volume.

John of Damascus (c. AD 675–749)

Monk of Mar Saba; last of the Greek Fathers. The summarizer of the Greek tradition. In the Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, book 4, chapter 26, he states the doctrine in the form it has had in the Eastern church ever since: a general antichrist, anyone denying the incarnation, and a particular Antichrist at the end, a man born of fornication who receives Satan's energy, not an incarnation of the devil; the temple is the Jewish temple; Enoch and Elijah are sent to the synagogue; and Christ destroys him with the breath of his mouth. 9 quotations in this volume.

Paulician Church of Armenia (manual of uncertain date, 8th–9th century or later)

Dissenting church of Armenia. The Key of Truth is the service book of the Paulicians, whom the Church regarded as heretical. It calls Satan himself the “son of perdition” and lists twelve disguises of the Adversary that end in clerics, apostles, bishops and monks. 2 quotations in this volume.

Timothy I of Baghdad (AD 727–823)

Catholicos of the Church of the East. The Patriarch of the Church of the East, who wrote a defence of Christianity before the Caliph al-Mahdi. He tells the Caliph that Elijah will come to rebuke Antichrist and announce Christ’s second coming. 1 quotation in this volume.

THE MIDDLE AGES (AFTER AD 800)

By the Middle Ages the quotations are mainly those of compilers, and they are valuable as such, since they show what the church carried forward. The *Catena Aurea* gathers Alcuin, Rabanus, Remigius and Theophylact on the Gospels. Solomon of Basra’s *Book of the Bee* sets out the full Eastern story of the end. The *Kebra Nagast* gives it an Ethiopian setting. Neale and Littledale, in the 1860s, are the last stop: they were Anglican scholars who gathered the older commentary on the Psalms, and they are placed here because they speak for what the earlier tradition had handed down.

Alcuin (c. AD 735–804)

Scholar at Charlemagne’s court. The leading scholar of the Carolingian age. In the *Catena Aurea* he takes “another shall come in his own name” as Antichrist, and says it was a fitting punishment that the Jews who refused the Truth should receive a lie. 2 quotations in this volume.

Rabanus (c. AD 780–856)

Rabanus Maurus; Archbishop of Mainz. A pupil of Alcuin whose commentaries gathered the earlier Fathers. He applies the account to the last times of the Jewish Church, when many turn to Enoch and Elijah and the rest, filled with Antichrist’s spirit, fight the faith. 1 quotation in this volume.

Remigius (c. AD 841–908)

Remigius of Auxerre. A Carolingian teacher whose commentary on Matthew is cited in the *Catena Aurea*. He says that the false brethren Paul names are John’s antichrists, and that when the synagogue receives the preaching of Enoch and Elias the end is at hand. 3 quotations in this volume.

Severus of al-Ashmunein (fl. late 10th century AD)

Coptic bishop and historian. The author of an Arabic History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church. He reports Judas's computation of Antichrist's date in AD 202, and likens the caliph Omar II and two oppressive officials to Antichrist in their deeds. 3 quotations in this volume.

Theophylact (c. AD 1050–1107)

Archbishop of Ochrid in Bulgaria. The Byzantine commentator whose Gospel commentaries remain the standard Eastern gloss, gathering Chrysostom and the earlier Fathers. He reads Christ's "then" as leaping from Jerusalem's fall to the time of Antichrist, and warns that believers must not submit to the tyrant to save their lives. 7 quotations in this volume.

Anselm (c. AD 1100 (cited by Neale and Littledale))

Medieval commentator on the Psalms. Quoted by Neale and Littledale for the thought that Antichrist's persecution will be a trial when the persecutor glitters with miracles and the martyr performs none. 1 quotation in this volume.

Bruno (c. AD 1100 (cited by Neale and Littledale))

Medieval commentator on the Psalms. Quoted by Neale and Littledale, in a passage attributed to Bruno the Carthusian, for the doom of the impenitent who see Antichrist overthrown. 1 quotation in this volume.

Dionysius bar Salibi (d. AD 1171)

Syriac Orthodox Bishop of Amid. The great Syriac commentator on the Bible. The passage here is the editor Gwynn's summary of his Commentary on Revelation: three and a half years of persecution, the cessation of public prayer under Antichrist, and the little horn. 1 quotation in this volume.

Solomon of Basra (fl. c. AD 1222)

Metropolitan of Basra in the Church of the East. The author of the Book of the Bee, a Syriac handbook of sacred history. It sets out the whole Eastern story of the end: the Ishmaelites' rise in the last millennium, the Greek king's victory and last peace, Gog and Magog's release, the last emperor's crown laid down at Golgotha, and a Danite Antichrist, a devil-indwelling man, who sits in the temple as Christ until Elijah convicts him. 26 quotations in this volume.

Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225–1274)

Dominican theologian. The compiler of the *Catena Aurea*, which gathers the Fathers on the Gospels. Here he appears as the collector of older, mostly anonymous comments, and as the attributed author of an argument on Psalm 9. 3 quotations in this volume.

Durandus (c. AD 1230–1296)

William Durand, Bishop of Mende. A liturgist of the thirteenth century, quoted by Neale and Littledale for the point that believing Gentiles and repentant Jews will be one in faith before the Antichrist's tribulation. 1 quotation in this volume.

Kebra Nagast (14th century AD (older material))

Ethiopian national epic. The "Glory of the Kings" of Ethiopia, which tells of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. In its end-time passages a future Roman king perverts the apostolic faith, Ethiopia stands firm against the False Christ, and Enoch and Elijah come to testify against the Jews. 5 quotations in this volume.

Neale and Littledale (compilers) (J. M. Neale 1818–1866; R. F. Littledale 1833–1890)

Anglican compilers of the *Commentary on the Psalms*. Their *Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers* (1860–74) gathers the patristic and medieval comments on each verse. It is a secondary source: the compilers' own sentences summarize older writers, and we quote them as the compilers, not as the Fathers themselves. 33 quotations in this volume.

Works Cited

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The writers and works quoted in this volume.

WORKS CITED

The works from which the quotations in this volume are taken, by writer. The number in brackets is how many quotations come from that work.

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The Acts of the Disputation with the Heresiarch Manes (2).

Alcuin

Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. John, part 1 (chapters 1–10) (2).

Alexander of Alexandria

Epistles on the Arian Heresy (2).

Ambrose of Milan

Catena Aurea: Commentary on St. Luke, part 2 (chapters 11–24) (6); Exposition of the Christian Faith (1); On the Holy Spirit (2).

Ambrosiaster

Questions on the Old and New Testaments (part 2 of 2) (1).

Anonymous of Cyzicus

Ecclesiastical History of the Council of Nicaea (2).

Anselm

A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers, volume 1 (Psalms 1–38) (part 1 of 2) (1).

Aphrahat

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Apocalypse of Sedrach

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Apocalypse of Thomas

The Apocalypse of Thomas, the Apocalypse of the Virgin and the Revelation of Stephen (James translation) (2).

Apostolic Constitutions

Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Book 6 (2); Constitutions of the Holy Apostles Book 7 (2).

Ascension of Isaiah

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Athanasius of Alexandria

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Augustine of Hippo

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Bede

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Bruno

A Commentary on the Psalms from Primitive and Mediaeval Writers, volume 3 (Psalms 81–118) (part 1 of 2) (1).

Cave of Treasures

The Book of the Cave of Treasures (Budge translation) (4).

Clement of Alexandria

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Dionysius bar Salibi

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Dionysius of Alexandria

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Gennadius of Massilia

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Gospel of Bartholomew

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Gregory of Nyssa

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Gregory of Tours

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