

The Papacy Is the Antichrist 1 of 3 (1888) - Part 3

by J.A. Wylie

The papacy is the Antichrist, claiming to be God and perverting truth, with an ultimate fate of destruction with the brightness of Christ's coming.

Duration: 28:44

Scripture: Revelation 18:9

Topics: "Papacy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the depiction of judgment and the destruction of Babylon in the book of Revelation. He emphasizes that this day of wrath will be one of the greatest days of vengeance in history. The preacher describes the vivid and horrifying picture of judgment in Revelation 18, with kings and people lamenting the destruction of Babylon. The form of the judgment is not specified, but it is clear that it will be swift and final, bringing holy vengeance. The preacher also highlights the importance of recognizing the formidable adversary in this system, which is the power of hell and the cunning of the devil. He encourages believers to put on the whole armor of God to withstand and overcome this spiritual wickedness.

Transcript

Welcome to Part 3 of the Papacy is the Antichrist by the Reverend Dr. J. A. Wiley, read by W. J. Mankaro, and produced by Stillwaters Revival Books, the home of the extensive Puritan and Reformation CD sets, Geneva Bibles, Rare Reformation, Classic Covenanter, and Calvinistic Books, Homeschooling Helps, and other Puritan and Presbyterian resources at great discounts and free by mail and the World Wide Web. Please visit our website at www.swrb.com and or sign up for our email super special discount mailings by emailing your address to add, that is add at swrb.com. If you would like more information on the topics addressed in this tape, please visit Stillwaters Revival Books at www.swrb.com. And now to the message of Part 3 from the Papacy is the Antichrist. We pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will greatly bless you as you listen.

Chapter 15. Antichrist exalts himself above God. To make earthly kings his vassals and earthly thrones his footstool came far short of the measure of the papal ambition.

The popes have planted their foot upon the throne of God himself. That the magistracy of Rome should give place to the vice Christ was but a small matter. The majesty of heaven must descend from his seat that the pope may mount into it.

He as God, says the apostle, sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God. The pope is claimed to be God, first in words, second in acts. Let us listen to the words the great mouth has spoken and also to some which his friends have spoken for him.

Let us mark first where Antichrist is said to sit. He sitteth in the temple of God. This temple cannot be that of the Jews of Mount Moriah, for the apostle is speaking of an act which was to be done by one who was not to appear till after the fall of the Roman Empire.

But long before the empire fell, the temple of the Jews was laid in ashes. In acts, the Jewish temple is spoken of twenty-five times. In all these passages, the word used is heron, never naos.

The term here used by the apostle is naos. The name temple is carried over to the Christian church and in places innumerable in the New Testament. It is used to denote sometimes an individual believer and sometimes the whole body of professing Christians.

Writing to the Corinthian Christians, Paul says, Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? And again, collectively, We conclude that the temple in which Antichrist is here seen to sit is the Christian church. This interpretation preserves the unity of Paul's prophecy. Antichrist, or man of sin, was to be the outcome and head of the apostasy.

But the apostasy was to spring up in the Christian church, for the falling away was to be, and only could be, a falling away from the Christian faith. Antichrist, therefore, could sit, that is, establish himself and exercise jurisdiction, nowhere but in the professedly Christian church. As a vice-Christ, it behooved all his visible characteristics and all his environments to be professedly Christian and ecclesiastical.

This effectively disposes of all those theories of Antichrist, which would find him in some powerful atheistic confederacy, or in some masterful political chief, or in some embodiment of monstrous iniquity and tyranny yet to rise, and which, during a brief but terrible career, should desolate the world. Such a power could in no sense be said to sit in the temple of God. It would be a power outside the temple.

And so far from aspiring to office and dignity in the temple, that is, in the church, such a power must needs, from its instincts and character, make war on the church, under the banner of open hostility, and with a cry of, Raise it! Raise it! That's R-A-Z-E, by the way. Moreover, no one man Antichrist, or Antichrist whose reign is to last for only three and a half years, can fulfill the conditions of Paul's prophecy. How could he spring into being, climb to a height which mortal had never reached before, exhibit his lying wonders, deceive the whole world, compel all its nations and kings to serve him, make war with the saints, and overcome them, all in the brief period of three and a half years? Though the anti-Christian host had issued from the pit, fully armed and mustered for battle, and had spread themselves on dragon's wings to the four corners of the earth, they could hardly accomplish such a feat.

The awful visitation would have been overpassed before men had well known that it had befallen them, and where would have been the need for the faith and patience of the saints, or for the cry of, How long? Antichrist could not make his first appearance full-grown. This would have been fatal to his pretensions as vice-Christ. The first appearance of the true Christ was as an infant in a manger, wrapped in swaddling

clothes.

Not unsimilar must be the beginnings of Antichrist. He was working in Paul's day. He grew up and developed stage by stage.

And in process of time reached his full stature. He was not to be destroyed till a far future epoch of the glorious coming of Christ. The years of his life were to be counted in centuries.

They were far to exceed the days of the life of man. They were to fulfill the period between the time when Paul wrote and the appearance of Christ at the millennium. The system was to be presided over, and necessarily so, by a race of rulers who were to take their place in succession at its head.

But inasmuch as there was to be identity in the system from first to last, and it was to grow as man grows by regulated stages, and inasmuch as its chiefs were to be linked together by oneness of spirit and aim, Antichrist is spoken of as a corporate individuality. The conditions of the prophecy, we repeat, could be fulfilled by no one man, however superhuman his power, however stupendous his wickedness, whose rise, reign, and ruin were to be acted on and over in the short space of three and a half years. We return to the majestic counterfeit, so loftily enthroned, whom the blinded nations mistake for God, and are seen bowing in worship before it.

He is God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. The Pope is claimed to be God, first in words, and second in acts. Let us listen to some of the words which have come from the great mouth itself, and next to some utterances to the same effect which have fallen from some of Antichrist's friends.

Sitting in the temple of God, that is, speaking ex cathedra as vice Christ, the Pope has, in the most unequivocal manner, claimed to be God. To this daring pitch of ambition and blasphemy has he carried the parallelism or imitation. The true Christ is God, therefore the vice Christ must claim to be God also.

In canon law, the Pope is called God. Again he is called Lord and God. And again, Innocent says, in the Decretials, speaking of the Pope, God, because he is God's victor.

The canon law and the Decretials are called by Romanist writers the Pope's Oracle. They are a true expression of the pontifical mind. To the same effect, the Papal Cajuists say, as Christ was God, he too was to be looked on as God.

The Sacrum Ceremoniae has the phrase, the apostolic chair is the seat of God. The Roman Pontiff says the Decretium of Gregory, not as mere man, but as true God, reigns in the earth. Not to multiply instances in which the Pope calls himself God, or accepts the title from others, we close by referring to a recent illustration.

Sir Culling E. Smith, in a tour in Italy, found a book published 1794 with the title, History of the Ancient Republic of Amalfi, dedicated to the vice-God, Benedict XIII, with permission of superiors. So does the Pope bear testimony to himself. A greater than he said, if I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

He has sought to support his claim to this great title by great deeds. Whatever God does, the Pope professes to do also. Does God require that to him every knee shall bow? So too the Pope.

He requires to be worshipped with prostration and kissing. Does God reveal himself as the only holy? So too the Pope. He claims to be siled his holiness.

Is God the only wise? So too is the Pope. He claims to be inerrable. Did God plant his throne on the summit of Sinai, and thence promulgate those Ten Commandments, which are the world's law? So too the Pope.

He has planted seat on the seven hills, in the character of the world's supreme lawgiver and judge, and he claims an equal authority and infallibility for all that he is pleased to promulgate ex cathedra, as Jehovah claims for the precepts of the Decalogue. Is it God's prerogative to pardon sin? The Pope assumes the same great prerogative. He pardons the sins of the living and the dead.

Is God's prerogative to assign to men their eternal destiny? This too does the Pope. He pretends to hold the keys that open and shut purgatory, and while he reserves to his followers a sure passport to the realms of paradise, he consigns all outside his church to eternal woe. In fine does God sit between the cherubim and receive the homage of his people in his sanctuary? The Pope, seated on the high altar of St. Peter's while incense is burned before him and the knees bent to him, is invoked as the Lord our God.

Romanists are accustomed to call the altar the throne of God, inasmuch thereon they place the host. The Pope, the use the Pope finds for it on these occasions, is the not very dignified one of a footstool. He is God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Chapter 16 Man of Sin and Son of Perdition We've traced the parallel to its grand culmination and shown how close is the imitation in every stage of its course. The Apostle adds a few touches to complete the portrait of the Antichrist and in closing bestows a glance at the awful termination of his career. Let us rapidly survey what remains.

The Apostle styles him as the man of sin and son of perdition. Christ is the man of holiness, the only holy man the world ever saw. That holy thing, said the angel when he announced his birth, thy holy child Jesus, an apostle of him, while another wrote of him, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

He was typified in the Lamb of the Passover as without blemish. The Pope, or vice Christ, is the man of sin. He has invented sin.

He has taught sin. He has enacted sin. Established iniquity by a law, he has traded in sin.

He sells indulgences and pardons. He has grown rich through the sins of Christendom. Sin is his being, and sin is his work.

Popery is as purely an incarnation of sin as the gospel is of holiness. Everything that popery touches, it converts to sin. It possesses an accursed alchemy by which it transmutes what is good into evil.

It has taken all the commandments of the Decalogue and converted them into sin. It has taken all the doctrines of the gospel and converted them into sin. It has taken all the sacraments of the church and converted them into instruments of sin.

It has taken all the offices and officers of the church and made them agents of sin. It has taken all that is subtle in intellect, all that is brilliant in genius, and all that is noble in eloquence, and used them in the service of sin. The policy of popery is not to deny truth.

It ever acts as a vice-Christ, as a pretended friend. Its policy is to pervert truth, to metamorphose it, and to make it fight against itself. There is not a doctrine in the Bible which popery does not in appearance admit.

There is not a doctrine in the Bible which popery does not in reality deny, and the saving effects of which it does not make void. It takes what is wholesome, and by its infernal skill changes it into what is poisonous. The spiritual apparatus which God has set up for His own glory and man's salvation, popery is laid hold of and works for just the opposite ends even, God's dishonor and man's ruin.

It is a second and greater Jeroboam who has made Israel to sin. Verily it is the man of sin. Paul further styles him the son of perdition, a phrase of terrible significance.

It is used in Scripture only once before, and in a connection that imparts to the phrase an awfully tragic meaning. It is applied to Judas, after the devil had entered into him and so worked upon him that he resisted not till he betrayed his master. This first son of perdition went forth from the bosom of the infant church where he had just partaken of the Passover cup.

He rose up from the very presence of the God-man to enact his awful apostasy. The second and greater son of perdition, in like manner, arose in the bosom of the primitive church. Satan, having entered into him, his ambition began to burn, and he went forth to the princes of the world and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will betray Christianity unto you? Manifest ye are not able to overthrow it.

It has taken root and is filling the earth despite your armies and your edicts. The fires of ten persecutions have blazed around it, but all in vain. The bush has burned, yet it is not consumed.

You are laboring at a work beyond your power. If Christianity shall ever know extinction, its overthrow must come from within. It must come from myself and no other.

Give me my hire, give me the seat of Caesar, give me the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and I will go forth and show myself to man as the vice Christ, and the world will believe on me and follow me. Where your force has failed, my craft will triumph. The policy was astute as deep.

Need we say who was its prompter? The apostle makes the point clear. The coming of the man of sin, he had said, was to be after the working of Satan. The head of the apostasy was to be energized, prompted, sustained, and led on by Satan, the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil.

Popery is the son of perdition, the spawn, the offspring of Apollyon, the destroyer, and it must needs do its father's work. As it is God's work to create, so it is Satan's work to destroy. The fair fabric of nature he would, if he could, destroy.

The moral constitution of society he has so far destroyed. His name is Apollyon, the destroyer, and the work of popery is the same. The principles of morality and evangelical virtue in man it destroys.

The principles of renewing power in the gospel it perverts and destroys. Wherever it has found a seat in Europe, there is the blackness of perdition, ignorant men, moldering cities, and enslaved and demoralized nations. Apollyon, the destroyer, has passed this way, we exclaim.

Here are his footprints. All along his track is the blackness of physical, moral, and spiritual death. We think of the pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed him.

Chapter 17 Antichrist is doom. If a son, then an heir. And what is the inheritance of which he is the heir? It is perdition.

The kingdoms of the world and the glory of them first, perdition in the end. It was written of him before he arose, he goeth into perdition. Better to have had the bitter first than the sweet after.

But no, the day of his glory over and past, there comes the voice, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime had thy good things, and Lazarus, the church, his evil things, now thou art tormented. This inheritance is conveyed to the papacy in the same charter, and made sure to it under the same seal as the glory that goes before it. The king of heaven has made this decree and sealed it with his own signet, and the decree may no man change.

As sure as the papacy has had its glory, so surely shall its doom come. Paul, before closing his prophecy, pauses, and in solemn and awful words foretells the night of horrors in which its career is to end. That wicked, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.

2 Thessalonians 2.8 There is here a dual destruction suspended above Antichrist, a slow wasting first, for it may be centuries, and a sudden and utter extinction in the end. This duality in the doom of Antichrist has been noted in prophecy ever since its beginning. It is emphasized by Daniel, speaking of the little horn which had a mouth speaking great things, eyes like the eyes of a man, a look more stout than his fellows, and which made war with the saints, and was to have dominion over them, until a time, times, and the dividing of time.

That is 1260 years, the prophet says. The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it to the end. Daniel 7.26 Another proof, by the way, of identity between the little horn of Daniel and the Antichrist of John.

In the predicted doom of the papacy there are two well-marked stages. There is first a gradual consumption, and there is second a sudden and terrible destruction. The consumption, a slow and gradual process, is to be affected by the spirit of his mouth, by which we understand the preaching of the gospel.

This consumption has been going on ever since the Bible was translated and the gospel began to be preached at the Reformation. Men have begun to see the errors of popery, its political props have been weakened, and in some instances struck from under it, and its hold generally on the nations of Christendom has been loosened, and thus the way has been prepared for the final stroke that will consummate its ruin. Great systems like the papacy, with their roots far down and spread wide around, cannot be plucked up while in their vigor without dislocating human society.

They must be left to grow ripe and become rotten, and then the final stroke may be dealt them with safety to the church and the world. When that hour shall have come, then will the second part of the doom of the papacy overtake it. The Lord shall destroy it with the brightness of his coming.

The form of the judgment is left vague, but enough is said to warrant us to conclude that it will be swift and final. It will come with lightning flash, and its holy vengeance will be so manifest that, to use the figure in the prophecy, it will irradiate both heaven and earth with a moral splendor. Whether Christ shall then come as he came at the period of the flood, and as he came at the burning of Sodom, and again at the destruction of Jerusalem, when, himself remaining on the throne of heaven, he girded the ministers of his

wrath and sent them down to earth to execute his vengeance on the ungodly, or whether, leaving his seat in glory, he shall in very person descend and confront his vicar, whether he shall return to close the apocalypse and the divine magnificence in which he appeared to John and Patmos when he came to open it, it is not necessary that we should here decide.

Enough that this day of wrath will be unspeakably great, and will rank as one of the greatest days of vengeance that have been on the earth since the foundation of the world. Paul dispatches it in a single sentence. John expands it into a whole chapter.

And in what other chapter of the Bible or of human history is there such another spectacle of judgment, such another picture of blended horrors, of awestruck consternation, of loud and bitter wailings and cries of woe as in the eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse. The kings of the earth shall bewail her and lament for her when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, for in one hour is she made desolate. But this dark scene has one relieving feature.

It is a scene that will not need to be repeated, for it will close earth's evil days and begin the hallelujahs of the nations. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all. These quotations were from Revelation 18, verses 9 through 19 and verse 21.

Chapter 18 Does not the likeness fit? Let the reader remember that the portraiture he has been studying is not ours, but Paul's. And when he lifts his eyes from the picture, let him cast them around and try, if he can, to discover the original of this likeness. The features are so vividly depicted, so sharply cut, that surely there can be no difficulty in detecting him whose image they present.

Paul did not paint at random. His is no vague sketch which may fit loosely any or most of the systems of error which have arisen in the course of the ages. When we read his prophecy, we have the overwhelming impression that Paul has in his eye some one, grand, sharply featured, long-lived, daringly wicked, and fearfully blasphemous confederacy which, under the mask of friendliness, was to wage undying war against the gospel.

We are blind indeed if we cannot find the original of Paul's portraiture. Here is one who has erected his throne in the Christian temple, who has usurped all the titles and functions of Christ, who has professed to mediate between God and man, to hold the keys of heaven and hell, to do great wonders and make fire come down from heaven, who has changed laws, spoken great words, forbidden to marry, commanded to abstain from meats, has clothed his priests in purple and scarlet and fine linen decked with gold and precious stones, one who has made war with the saints and been drunk with the blood of martyrs, who has put his foot on the neck of kings, nay, has clothed himself with the robe of the Eternal King, infallibility even, in fine one who has said, I am vice Christ, I am vice God. We go up to this man and we say to him, Thou art the Antichrist.

Let who will cringe and bow before thee? Let who will patch anew thy visor which begins to wax threadbare and to remit the horrid features that lurk beneath it to shine through? Let who will palliate thy crimes and deny that ever thou didst persecute and those simulating the meekness and innocence of the Lamb art a ravaging wolf? Let who will befriend thee in the arrogant and blasphemous claims thou art still putting forth? We say of thee, Thou art he of whom Paul in old time, writing by the Holy Ghost, spake, Hear what he called thee. He named thee the man of sin and son of perdition. Ah, you readjust your mask

and double the folds of your mantle and looking down on the kings of earth once more at your feet you say, Am I not God? We know thee who thou art.

Thou art the fallen apostle, the minister of Lucifer. Thou camest from the abyss and to the abyss shalt thou return. We do not hesitate to say that we have nearly as full and convincing evidence that the Roman papacy is the Antichrist as we have that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.

In conclusion, let us note that Christianity stands alone in having its Antichrist or counterfeit. Mohammedanism has no such counterfeit. Buddhism has no such counterfeit.

There is not power or truth enough in these systems to call into existence a great opposing counterfeit system. Without the Son, there can be no shadows. The Son of Christianity has been accompanied all down the ages by this shadow.

So far, Antichrist does homage to the divinity of the gospel. Unless Christ had gone before, Antichrist could not have come after. Let the reader seriously ponder that this is the divine testimony regarding potpourri.

As portrayed by a divinely guided hand, whose are its liniments, its spirit, and principles? They are those of Satan, the archenemy of God and His church. This monstrous shape is the wicked one. Let us think what a formidable antagonist we have in this system.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, against the power and cunning of man. We have to encounter the power of hell, the cunning of the devil. Ephesians 6, verses 12-17 says, For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This ends The Papacy is the Antichrist by the Rev. Dr. J. A. Wiley, read by W. J. Mankaro, and produced by Stillwater's Revival Books. Thank you for listening.

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