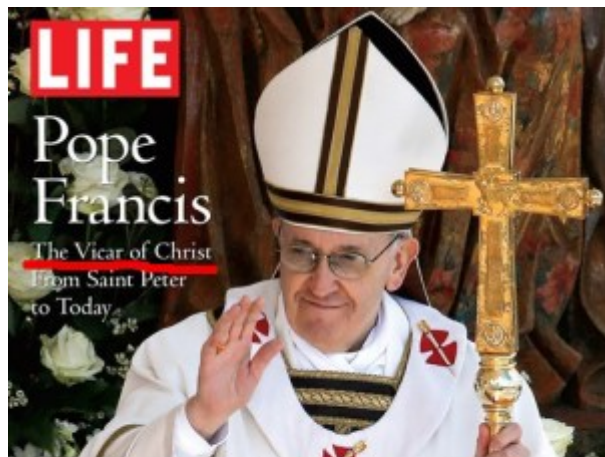


The Antichrist: His Portrait and History – Chapter I. Meaning of the Term



Vicar: (From Latin) vicarius, a *substitute*,
Anti: (From Greek) against, opposite, *instead of*,
Vicar of Christ = Anti Christ

Continued from [The Antichrist: His Portrait and History by Baron Porcelli](#)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Baron Alfred Porcelli, R. E., was born in Palermo, Italy, his father being Colonel Baron A. S. R. Porcelli di S. Andrea, supporter of Garibaldi, the Italian liberator. His mother was a Scottish lady; and, as a young man, Baron Porcelli became a naturalized British subject, and served Queen Victoria in the Royal Engineers. He died at Hove, November 4th, 1937, at the advanced age of eighty-eight years.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Owing to high cost of printing in England, the Protestant Truth Society, of London, has given up the publication of Porcelli's "ANTICHRIST." This, according to a letter to us dated April 14, 1971, from A. L. Kensit, Secretary.

As a consequence, and because of the increasing interest of the book, in U.S. A., Canada, and other parts, the undersigned proposes, by God's help, to continue this as a distinct service to Christ's Church and witness to the unbelieving world.

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PREFACE

THE Author, in compiling this essay, has rigidly eschewed flights of fancy and theories, and has sought to place before the Christian reader facts,

which require only to be duly weighed and compared with the prophetic Scriptures in order to produce conviction.

The condition of Christendom to-day is such as to cause serious alarm and distress to thoughtful minds, owing to the multiplicity of "isms," which very often read plausibly, but, *au fond*, (at its heart) are sadly erroneous, owing to lack of care in observation and study; and, not less often, owing to hasty acceptance of theories which have no basis in truth. "To the Law and the Testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no Light in them." – Isaiah 8:20.

May He, Who is Light, graciously grant light to all who peruse what is herein written, after a generation of careful study in many lands, and in many books. Britain's danger to-day is extreme, chiefly because of non-recognition of her great enemy.

ALFRED PORCELLI.

Revised 1927, 1929, and 1948.

THE ANTICHRIST: His PORTRAIT AND HISTORY. BARON PORCELLI.

The prevailing cry in these days is for "fundamentals," not fancies or theories, and there are many writers who deserve special commendation in their endeavors to cope with that demand. Baron Porcelli, in his book on "The Antichrist" has strenuously set himself out to provide us with facts, which, according to him, "require only to be duly weighed and compared with the prophetic Scriptures in order to produce conviction." He deplores the multiplicity of "isms," which lead to a hasty acceptance of theories which have no basis in truth. The author's first point is to make clear the real meaning of the term "Antichrist," and he puts forth arguments which the conscientious student cannot afford to ignore. The important points to note about the book, however, are:– It is written from the standpoint of the historical school of interpretation; is frankly anti-papal; and it gives supreme honour to the Bible. The book is interesting in these perplexing times, which, again to quote the author's own words, "cause serious alarm and distress to thoughtful minds."

THE ANTICHRIST

HIS PORTRAIT AND HISTORY

CHAPTER I.

MEANING OF THE TERM.

In order to ascertain the nature of "The Antichrist," it is essential to be cautious in our dealings with Scripture phraseology, and to remember that, whereas we are accustomed to Western modes of thought, the Bible writers

were not so. They were all Orientals, and the languages employed by them—viz., Hebrew and Greek— did not, and still do not, lend themselves completely to modern Western terminology.

The very word “Antichrist” is a manufactured one, unknown to Hebrew usage, and has no corresponding equivalent in the Anglo- Saxon dialect. It is wrong, therefore, to jump to the conclusion that the mere sound of the word denotes its meaning. That is by no means the case. The true sense has to be discovered by careful study of (a) the context in which it is used; (B) the parallel passages —if any—in corresponding predictions; (c) similar Oriental terms in classical and Biblical writings.

A.—The Context.

Now, the word “Antichrist” occurs only in the Epistles of John, and, as there used by him, is applied to many persons existing in the first century. It is not confined to one particular individual, still to appear in subsequent days—“ It is tthe last time, and as ye have heard that the Antichrist (Ho Antichristos) cometh (erchetai), even now many Antichrists . . went out from us... Who is a liar but he that denieth, that Jesus is the Christ? He is the Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son.” – 1 John 2:18-22 “Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come (eleeluthota, already come) in the flesh, is not of God; and this is that spirit of the Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already it is in the world.”-1 John 4:3

“Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is coming (erchomenon, still to come) in the flesh, This is a deceiver and an Antichrist.” – 2 John 7

Observe the difference in the tenses, “is come” and “ is coming,” and the description of “the Antichrist” as a “liar” and “deceiver.” The spirit of Antichrist was already in the world in apostolic days. It is therefore wrong and mistaken to look for, or to suspect, some fresh spirit, some *fin de siecle* (French term meaning “end of century”) manifestation, and to dub *that* “The Antichrist.” We tread on safer ground when we combine John’s words, and read them thus: “The spirit of Antichrist ‘denies’ the true humanity of Jesus Christ, for it confesses not that He is come already in the flesh, and is coming again in the flesh. So doing, men are liars and deceivers and Antichrists. There were many such in John’s days.”

The context, moreover, does not support the idea either of one unique personality to appear in the “last days,” or of a blatant Atheist. On the contrary, John says of the Antichrists of his day: “They went out from us”—that is, they were Christian apostates, who held false views of our Lord’s humanity. These false views are explained by John: “Whosoever goes onward, and abides not in the teaching of Christ, has not God. He that abides in the teaching of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 2 John 9 To go beyond the limits of Christ’s teaching in regard to Himself is a denial of God, whereas to abide by it is to possess the Father and Son. As Christ repeatedly taught that He is “Son of Man,” as well as “Son of God,” and that, as “Son of Man,” He will once again revisit this earth, *in propria*

persona, (in one's own person, Matt, xxv. 13, xx. 18, xvi. 27; John iii. 13, vi. 62, v. 25.) any man who propounds views opposed to the obvious meaning of that teaching is a liar, a deceiver and an Antichrist. Compare the teaching in Canons I., II., VI., Session XIII, and Canons I., II., Session XXII., Council of Trent.

Now, the obvious meaning of that teaching is that Jesus Christ was a real man of proper humanity, who really died, really rose again, really ascended to Heaven, and will really return from Heaven in his Human body of glorified, but real, flesh. He who "denies," or does not "confess," by his teaching, this essential truth," (1 John ii. 22.) "denies" the Father and the Son—in the sense of the word "deny" in Scripture, of course: "But ye denied the Holy One," for example. (Acts iii. 13, 14, 23.) The Jews "denied" by ignoring the Lord's identity, not by declaring He did not exist. They were the reverse of Atheists, being Deists of a particularly fanatical type. Still, their rejection was a "denial." Just so is any teaching that ignores or invalidates the real humanity of the Lord a "denial" of His identity with the promised Messiah or Christ of God; and, therefore, John denounces teachers of that sort as "Antichrists." He does not label them Atheists, or infidels, or unbelievers, however, but "liars" and "deceivers."

B.—PARALLEL PASSAGES.

He adds that those to whom he wrote had heard that such persons would appear on earth. (1 John ii. 18.) Probably he alluded to some of the apostolic Epistles, for Peter had said: "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even *denying* the Lord that bought them," (2 Pet. ii. 1) and Paul had amplified this by saying that in later times "some shall depart (or fall away) from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies," (1 Tim, iv. 1) and he warned his readers to "take heed to the teaching; continue in them" (1 Tim. iv. 16) —i.e., do not go beyond the revealed Faith, and do not depart from it: Paul also couples "seducers" from the Faith with deceivers," (2 Tim. iii. 13) just as John brackets deceivers with liars and Antichrists. Whence it is clear that, to the Apostles, any addition to or departure from the primitive Faith taught by themselves, and involving "denial" of the Lord Jesus, is falsehood, deceit, and anti-Christianity. John singles out, as pre-eminently anti-Christian, any form of teaching that transgresses the basic fact of our Lord's real humanity—which teaching involves rejection by God the Father and God the Son—for on that fact depends the entire fabric of man's salvation and of God's redemptive scheme, as worked out through Jesus the Christ, Who was born of a woman, and was "God manifest in *the flesh*." (1 Tim. iii. 16)

The word "deny" (Bishop Latimer (Works, Vol. I., p. 521) said: "Another denying of Christ is this Massmongering. For all those that be Massmongers be deniers of Christ...") used by John (Ho arnoumenos, "the one refusing ") in no way implies Atheism or the denial of the existence of God. (Josh. xxiv. 27; Matt. x. 33; Titus i, 16; 1 Tim. v. 5; 2 Tim. iii. 5) It simply signifies *heretical departure from the truth*, and is so used constantly in the New Testament, and in the Septuagint. John particularly had in view his Gospel—written long before—in which he had laid down the basic truth that

"the Word became *flesh* and tabernacled among us." (John i. 14) Men who, in any way, "deny" that basic truth are liars, deceivers, Antichrist, and, evidently, the "spirit of Antichrist" is that which fosters teaching opposed to that basic truth. It is the spirit of falsehood and deceit, -of departure from Christian truth, of apostasy, not of Athe-ism. It is enough to abide not in the teaching of Christ, to be without God. (2 John 9) It is enough to confess not the real humanity of Christ, to be without God. (1 John iv. 3) It is enough to confess not that Jesus the Christ is coming once again in the flesh, to be the Antichrist. (2 John 7)

There is no need to be an Atheist, therefore, to produce this effect. There is neither subtlety nor mystery in Atheism. It is mere materialism; whereas the "mystery of iniquity" has behind it all the subtlety of Satan. For Paul says, of "the Man of the Sin" (or great Apostasy), that his "coming (Parousia) is according to the energy of Satan," (2 Thess. ii. 9) who, in this dispensation, poses as "an angel of light," and utilises "false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ" and "ministers of righteousness." (2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15) As "god of this age," Satan "blinds the mind," (2 Cor. iv. 4) and causes men to "walk in craftiness" and to "handle the Word of God deceitfully," (2 Cor. iv. 2) and so hides the real Gospel of Christ, which alone is the Power of God unto salvation to those who credit it. (Rom. i. 16) We have in the New Testament no apostolic warrant for any other form of Antichrist than that sketched by John, by Peter and Paul, which is the reverse of atheistic, and is plainly crafty, pseudo-Christian, apostate, lying, deceitful, endued with satanic power, and handling the Word of God deceitfully—especially in regard to the basic truth of Christ's proper humanity. Such is "The Antichrist" whose portrait is limned (described) , by John, by Peter, and by Paul in their Epistles.

If we turn to the Apocalypse, the portrait is amplified by the addition of particulars, such as that the Antichrist is an emanation from the abyss; (Rev. xi. 7, xiii, 7, xvii. 8) a foe to Christian witnesses, with whom it wars; and that it goes into "perdition"; thus identifying it with Paul's "Son of Perdition"; (2 Thess. ii. 3) which term must have been chosen for a special purpose, viz., the identification of the bearer of that name—as it obviously connects him with the false Apostle, Judas, who alone bore that designation, and alone was "lost." (John xvii. 12. 29) We shall be "wise" (Dan. xii. 3, 10) if we understand this hint, which plainly tells us that *Judas was a type of the Antichrist*; and that, therefore, we are to look for a False Apostle, and not for an Atheistic Prince, as is so unscripturally taught to-day. Can anything be less like the portrait of the Antichrist of John, Peter and Paul than the following: "A scholar, a statesman, a man of unflinching courage and irrepressible enterprise, full of resources and ready to look in the face a rival or a foe"? "a general and a diplomatist." (Quotes from *The Coming Prince*, by R. Anderson, p. 169 & p. 170.) Many of us wish we had a few such in our midst. It is unfortunate that the author of this imaginary sketch should have omitted: (a) to explain wherein lies the "sin" of such a one; and (b) to complete the category of his imaginary hero's enormities. For instance, why not add "an actor, an author, a sportsman, an artist, a musician, a philosopher, an astronomer, a scientist, a barrister-

at-law, and LL.D. and K.C.B.”? Why limit the accomplishments of such a prodigy?—a prodigy wholly unknown to Scripture, and savoring more of *Bombastes Furioso* than of Satanic mystery and energy and guile.

In Daniel (Dan. vii. 8, 11, 20, 22, xi. 36-39) and the Apocalypse (Rev. xiii. 3-8, 15-18) the Antichrist is portrayed as a “little horn” speaking “great words” and making “war with the saints,” with a “look more stout than his fellow horns,” and with a “mouth speaking blasphemies against God, His Name, His Tabernacle, and them that dwell in the Heaven”; a “little horn,” which is also a “king” that “exalts himself” (just as Paul’s “Son of Perdition” does) “above every god,” and magnifies himself “above all,” honouring in his seat the god of Force (Hercules), and using “gold, silver and precious stones and pleasant things” in honour of his God (just as in the Apocalypse (Rev. xvii. 4, xviii. 12) his Church is represented as doing). This “little horn” or “king” is a “head” (Rev. xiii. 3, xvii 9-11) of the well-known symbol of the Romano-Latin power, the fourth “wild beast” of prophecy; i.e., it is a Pagan Latin Form of Rule, for invariably in prophecy a wild beast denotes a Gentile Pagan power. (Dan. vii. 3-7, viii. 3-20; Zech, i. 18, 19; Isa. xxi. 8, 9, xxvii. 1; Nah. ii. 13)

Hence the Antichrist is the eighth or last “horn” or “king” or “head” of the Romano-Latin Pagan Power; i.e., it, in addition to its religious apostasy, wields Pagan rule of a monarchical type within the confines of the Latin race.

In Zechariah (Zech. xi. 16, 17) the Antichrist is described as a “shepherd” that “eats the flesh of the fat” and “tears their claws in pieces” instead of exercising pastoral care over the poor and needy. In other words, he is an ecclesiastical overseer (Dan. vii. 8, 20) of grasping and rapacious tendencies, an episkopos, as Daniel describes him. And this remarkable point of identification is mentioned, viz., that towards the end of his career “the sword shall be upon his arm and upon his right eye; his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened,” a description corresponding to that in Daniel vii. 26, 2 Thess. ii. 8, of the “consumption” of Antichrist’s power, preparatory to his destruction at the Lord’s appearing, and of the darkening of his kingdom in retributive judgment. (Rev. xvi, 10) It is plain that here is indicated deprivation of power by some signal act or process of judgment, contemporaneous, mental obliquity; a process or act of judgment, moreover, connected with “the sword,” i.e., war.

C.—CLASSICAL AND BIBLICAL USAGE.

The name *ho antichristos*, the Antichrist, is thus described by the learned Elliott (Hore, Vol. I., pp. 67, 68): “A name very notable. For it was not a pseudo-Christ, as of those self-styled Christs (in professed exclusion and denial of *Jesus Christ* that the Lord declared would appear in Judea before the destruction of Jerusalem, (Matt. xxiv. 24. Mark xiii) and who did, in fact, appear there and then; but was a name of new formation, expressly compounded, it might seem, by the Divine Spirit for the occasion, and as if to express some idea, through its etymological force, which no older word could so well express, Antichrist; even as if the would appear some way as a Vice-Christ, in the mystic Temple or professing Church; and in that character

act the usurper and adversary against Christ's true Church and Christ Himself. Nor did it fail to strengthen this anticipation that the Gnostic heresiarchs, and others, did in a subordinate sense act that very part already; by setting Christ practically aside, while in mouth confessing Him, and pro-fessing (Acts. viii. 9. See also Irenzus, i. 20; Jerome, Tome IV., i. 114; Irenaeus, i. 24; Epiphanius i. 20, etc.) themselves in His place the power, wisdom and salvation of God."

Elliott thus explains the Greek word Antichristos: "When anti is compounded with a noun signifying an agent of any kind, or functionary, the compound word either signifies a vice-functionary, or a functionary of the same kind opposing, or sometimes both.

In the New Testament the only compounds of the kind are used in the sense of the *first* class of words; as anthupatos –Pro-consul–Acts xiii. 7, 8, 12; xix. 38; and both on that account, and yet more because the old word, *pseudo-Christ*, would almost have expressed the idea of a *counter-Christ*, I conclude that *this* must be St. John's intended sense of Anti-christ." "I must particularly beg the reader to bear in mind that the word cannot with etymological propriety mean simply a person opposed to Christ; but either a vice-Christ, or counter-Christ, or both."

"The name—the then new and very singular name that John gave it, under divine inspiration, of Antichrist, while admitting the secondary senses of an adversary of Christ, did yet primarily, indeed necessarily, indicate (according to the etymological formation of the word) that he would be so through his being in some manner a Vice-Christ, or one professedly assuming the character, occupying the place, and fulfilling the functions, of Christ. An excellent comment on its force and significance is furnished by the Romanists' appellative of Anti-Pope (Greek, antipapa), an appellation given in the sense *not simply of an enemy to the Pope*, but of a *hostile self-substituted, usurping Pope*, one occupying the proper Pope's place, receiving his honours and exercising his functions."

Such was the view generally adopted by the Fathers; Whether in reference to the prophecies of Daniel, St. Paul, or St. John, they speak of the grand enemy, therein alike prefigured, not as an Atheist so much, but rather as a *usurper of Christ's place before the world*. So the Greek Fathers generally, e.g., Irenaeus, v.25 Hippolytus, Cyril, Chrysostom, Theodoret. The *Latin* Fathers did not enter into the proper force of the Greek compound, and thus expounded it as 'an adversary of the Lord,' so Cyprian; or 'opposed to Christ,' so Augustine. Justin Martyr and Chrysostom use antitheos, not as a professed rebel against God, but a usurper of His place, by blasphemously proclaiming himself equal to God."

The learned Rev. M. W. Foye says: "Most English scholars are liable much to mistake the etymological and true meaning of the word Antichrist. After a due examination of the Greek prefix, anti, when compounded with a noun personal, I feel assured that the following may be laid down as a safe general—I would say, all but universal—rule, viz., the Greek *anti* prefixed to a personal noun; signifying a public ministerial functionary; or a ministerial official agent of any sort, public or private, signifies *Pro, in the stead of,*

substitute, vice, vicar; prefixed to other personal nouns wt signifies emulation, rivalry, hostility."

These three lists contain all the personal nouns that are found with anti prefixed to them except Christos. The following brief passage from Dion Cassius will put the rule beyond question, so, at least, as regards its first and second branches. "He retained in Italy the names both of imperator and of consul, but as to those rulers who, out of Italy, were governors in the stead of them (anti ekeinon), all these he entitled antistrategous and anthupatous."

The learned Dr. Wordsworth says: "The person in whom this system is embodied is described as antikeimenos (2 Thess. ii. 4), i.e., literally, one setting himself in opposition, and particularly as a rival foundation, in the place of or against another foundation. Now, be it remembered . . . 'Other foundation can no one lay than that which already laid (keitoi, remark the word), which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. iii. 11). May not he who calls *himself the Rock of the Church* be rightly called ho antikeimenos?"

"Here is an Antichrist sitting in the Church and teaching errors disguised as Truth; an Antichrist speaking in the name of Christ. Here is a strong delusion, one that may ensnare the world." (Union With Rome, page 23)

The learned Dr. Wylie says: "John looks for him in the guise of a Deceiver. 'Little children,' says John (First Epistle, ii. 19), "it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists." Antichrist, says John, is to be a liar (ii. 22). But if he comes boldly and truthfully avowing himself the enemy of Christ, how is he a liar? If he avows, without concealment, his impious design of overthrowing Christ, with what truth can he be spoken of as a deceiver? But such is the character plainly ascribed to him by John (2nd Epistle, verse 7). 'This is a deceiver and an Antichrist.' He who. does not confess when he is called to do so, denies. Such is the use of the word in these applications all through the New Testament. Such is the use John makes of it in this very passage: 'For many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.' It is clear that Antichrist, as depicted by our Lord and by His Apostle John, is to wear a mask, and to profess one thing, and act another. He is to enter the Church as Judas entered the garden—professedly to kiss his Master, but in reality to betray Him. *He is to be a counterfeit Christ*. If Antichrist must necessarily be a deceiver—a false Christ—then no Atheist, or body of Atheists, can be Antichrist. No Pantheist, or body of Pantheists, can be Antichrist. They are not deceivers; they are open enemies. And not less does this mark shut us up to the rejection of the theory that Antichrist is a political character, or potentate, some frightfully tyrannical and portentously wicked king, who is to arise, and for a short space devastate the world by arms. This is an altogether different Antichrist from that Antichrist which prophecy foreshadows. Prophecy absolutely refuses to see in either of these theories the altogether unique and over-topping system of hypocrisy, blasphemy and tyranny, which it has foretold. When we are able to put aside some of the false Antichrists, we come more within sight of the true one. We turn now to the prophecy of Paul, and we shall be blind indeed, if, after the study of it, we shall be in any doubt as to whose

likeness it is that looks forth upon us from this remarkable prediction." "No one-man Antichrist, or Antichrist whose reign is to last for only three years and a half, can fulfill the conditions of Paul's prophecy."

The "Chronicles of Zachariah of Mytilene" (6th century) Ch. I., par. 1 (Burry's Byzantine Texts), says: "King Justin made his sister's son, who was General, Anti-Caesar, and Justinian became Anti-Caesar on the 5th day of the week in the last week of the fast."

Hales' Chronology, Vol. II., Part I., p. 550, says: "The Vice-gerent of Jesus Christ, which, by a singular concurrence, meant the same as the obnoxious Antichristus—Antichrist—originally signifying a pro-Christ or deputy-Christ, or a false Christ who assumed his authority and acted in his stead."

Continued in [Chapter II. True Meaning Of The Term.](#)

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