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**A Comparative Study of the Views Concerning the Antichrist as
Held by Joseph A. Seiss, William E. Blackstone, and Arno C.
Gaebelein**

Arthur Cobb

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE VIEWS CONCERNING THE ANTICHRIST
AS HELD BY JOSEPH A. SEISS, WILLIAM E. BLACKSTONE,
AND ARNO C. GAEBELEIN

A Thesis
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Arthur Cobb
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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The world today has troubled visions of what tomorrow will bring in the realm of politics. The relations between a man and his fellow men, a nation and her sister nations, the world and its Ruler, occupy a large place in modern thought. This concern about the future, and what it will bring, has been the motivating force of this study of the doctrine of the Antichrist.

I. THE STUDY

The limits of the study. The vast amount of material which has been written about the doctrine of the Antichrist renders an exhaustive study of all the available material impossible. The present study, therefore, has been limited to the study and comparison of the views of Joseph A. Seiss, William E. Blackstone, and Arno C. Gaebelin upon this important and timely doctrine.

The purpose of the study. It has been the purpose of this study to review the writings of the above named men upon the subject of the Antichrist, and discover what each of them has taught. After this was done, an effort was made to compare and contrast these results, to find that truth

which will satisfactorily answer some of the questions within the minds and hearts of men today.

The method of procedure. The following questions were set up as the guide in the study.

1. Will the Antichrist be a personal being? If so:
2. What will be his origin?
3. What traits of character will he exhibit?
4. What powers will he possess?
5. When will he come?
6. Will he head a government? If so, what type?
7. How long will he remain on earth?
8. How will his career end?

The answers to the above questions, as found in the books of these three men, served as the material included within this work.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Satan. By this term is meant "the great adversary of man; the Devil, or Prince of Darkness; the archfiend".¹ He is that spirit of evil that opposes everything good and righteous. He is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience".²

¹ Webster's New international Dictionary of the English Language (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1911), p. 1882.

² Ephesians 2:2. A.V.

Dr. H. Orton Wiley says:

Man was tempted by a superhuman being, called in the Scriptures, the devil or Satan...Satan is not merely one among the many representatives of evil. He is evil in persona. He is not merely evil in this or that relation, but evil in and for itself.³

Antichrist. "One who denies or opposes Christ.

Specif: A great antagonist, expected to fill the world with wickedness but to be conquered forever by Christ at His second coming."⁴ The greater part of this study was given to a development and clarification of this concept.

Rapture. "The rapture is the catching away of the Lord's people to the meeting in the air."⁵ The Apostle Paul had reference to this event when he said

Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.⁶

The rapture is also described by the following statement:

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For

³ H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1947), Vol. II, p. 74.

⁴ Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, op. cit., p. 96.

⁵ Wiley, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 307.

⁶ I Corinthians 15:51-53 A.V.

the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.⁷

Tribulation. The tribulation is that period of sorrow and catastrophe which precedes the second advent of Christ. Jesus said concerning it:

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...Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.⁸

This great tribulation period is distinctly separated from all other periods of tribulation which have come to the world. It is the final and the worst tribulation that the world will experience.

Second coming of Christ. The Scriptures teach that Christ came into the world once to redeem sinners, and that he will come again to receive them unto himself. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that

⁷ I Thessalonians 4:15-17 A.V.

⁸ Matthew 24:21-22, 29-30 A.V.

look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."⁹

This Second Coming will be personal, visible and glorious. Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, amen (Rev. 1:7). It is evident from this that the appearance of Jesus will not be merely to the eye of faith, but in the sight of heaven and earth--the terror of His foes, and the consolation of His people.¹⁰

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINING MATERIAL.

Chapter II contains a statement of the teaching of Joseph A. Seiss concerning the Antichrist; Chapter III contains the teaching of William E. Blackstone concerning the Antichrist; and Chapter IV contains the teaching of Arno C. Gaebelin concerning the Antichrist. Chapter V is the comparisons and contrasts of the views of these three men, followed by the conclusions drawn from this study.

⁹ Hebrews 9:28 A.V.

¹⁰ Wiley, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 246.

CHAPTER II

THE TEACHING OF JOSEPH A. SEISS CONCERNING THE ANTICHRIST

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph Augustus Seiss was born near Graceham, Md. March 18, 1823, and died at Philadelphia, June 21, 1904. He studied at Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, from 1839 to 1841 without graduating. His theological study was mostly private. He held various pastorates in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. He was an eloquent preacher whose style was clear and forceful. His parents were Moravian, but he was a Lutheran. He was one of the founders of the General council, and on the committee which made its church book. He was the editor of Prophetic Times, a monthly, from 1863 to 1875. He was joint editor of The Lutheran and Missionary (1861-1873), and editor of the latter from 1873 to 1879. He published several books of an expository and prophetic nature, the most famous of which was Lectures on the Apocalypse. The sixth edition of this three volume set was published in 1900.

II. PERSONAL ANTICHRIST

Mr. Seiss recognized the fact that the spirit of

Antichrist is in the world now, and has been since the days of Adam and Eve, but has not yet come to its full and complete development and revelation. He stated in his exposition of the prophecy of Daniel:

Antichrist indeed exists in all time, but only as a working spirit which has not yet come to its final development and concentrated embodiment. Hence John said that in his day already there were "many antichrists;" and hence Paul said that when he wrote "the mystery of iniquity" did already work. And so it has been working in all ages in false doctrines and in the varied opposition to Jehovah's rule, kingdom, people, and word.¹

Speaking about Rev. 13:1-10 he said:

Even the light of the first promise of a coming deliverer, had with it the dark adumeration of an antagonizing power to bruise His heel, and of a serpent brood to mass its strength against the mother's seed. And through all the ages of our world, there has been a Cain for every Abel, a Jannes and Jambres for every Moses and Aaron, a Babylon for every Jerusalem, a Herod for every John the Baptist, and a Nero for every going forth of God's consecrated apostles,--all the types and precursors of the ultimate heading up of all evil in one final foe, which is the Antichrist.²

This spirit of Antichrist or Satan which is in the world must, for his full effectiveness and consummation, embody himself in earthly organisms; he cannot operate in the affairs of the world except through the minds, passions, and activities of men. The supreme final agent which is used in this way is the Antichrist.

¹ Joseph A. Seiss, Voices From Babylon (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1879), p. 288.

² Joseph A. Seiss, The Apocalypse (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1900), Vol. II, p. 388.

Mr. Seiss definitely taught that the Antichrist will be an individual man and was careful to give his reasoning on that point. He said:

My third remark is that this Beast is an individual administration, embodied in one particular man...There can be no kingdom without a king, and no empire without an emperor; neither can there be a king in fact without a kingdom. We cannot consistently speak of imperial power and dominion apart from a personal head which represents and embodies that power.³

He went on to state that the worship of kings had been common in the world's history but in each case an individual had been worshiped. He further stated that the beast has a proper name; that he is identical with "that wicked", "that man of sin" described by Paul in Thessalonians. This beast is identical with the willful king of Daniel, who is treated as an individual. This beast goes into perdition where he continues to exist and suffer. "We would therefore greatly err from the Scriptures, as well as from the unanimous conviction and teaching of the early church, were we to fail to recognize in this Beast a real person."⁴

Mr. Seiss arrived at the same conclusion in his book on the prophecy of Daniel where he wrote:

So and so again,...., he is an individual person, the same as Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius Hystaspes, Xerxes or Alexander; for his is designated in precisely the same

³ Ibid., pp. 393,394.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 395,396.

way, by the same angel, in the same continuous narrative. Also, in the previous visions he is spoken of with reference to personal features and qualities which must pertain to an individual man, and cannot be fairly interpreted of a continuous succession of monarchs or operators...Nor can anyone read the account of him given in the text, or in other passages descriptive of the same potency, without receiving the impression that he is some one remarkable individual personage. And the terms in which the duration of his power is expressed, which no solid exegesis can extend over seven years, make it quite certain that it is one man--not a succession of men--who is the subject of this prophecy. (Daniel 11:36-45)⁵

III. THE ORIGIN OF THE ANTICHRIST

Mr. Seiss in his book Voices from Babylon seemed quite uncertain regarding the origin of the Antichrist. He gave only the various ideas upon the subject and concluded: "It is impossible to decide between these opinions. It may turn out that all of them are founded in truth."⁶

However, in The Apocalypse, a later volume, he was more positive, stating:

...but as a person his origin is peculiar. He is repeatedly described as "the Beast that cometh up out of the abyss." "The abyss" cannot mean less than the under-world, the world of lost spirits, the receptacle and abode of demons; otherwise called hell. Ordinary men do not come from thence. One who hails from that place must be either a dead man brought up again from the dead, or some evil spirit which takes possession of a living man.⁷

s. Voices from Babylon, op. cit., pp. 287, 288.

⁵ Seiss

⁶ Ibid., pp. 289, 290.

⁷ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 397-8.

He followed this statement with a discussion of the belief of the early Christians that Nero would be the Antichrist; that he was not really dead but kept somewhere to be revealed at the proper time. Mr. Seiss did not hold to this particular theory however for he interpreted John's words, "having been slain to death," and the sword wound, the "stroke of his death," as indicating a man who has literally and really undergone physical death. Mr. Seiss could not tell whether this man comes up in a literal bodily resurrection or only by means of an obsession of some living man. By whatever means he comes, the death wound has been effectually concealed and he enters upon all the activities of life as though he had never died. Mr. Seiss concluded:

Be the explanation what it may, the implication strongly is, that this Beast is a man who once was living, who was fatally wounded, whose place was in the abyss of lost souls, who somehow comes forth from thence in convincing evidences of his real identity, and who, having been slain, returns again to take the lead in the activities and administrations upon earth, to the great wonder and astonishment of the whole world.⁸

IV. CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRIST

Attraction of the Antichrist. People are ever attracted to the great and powerful in the eyes of this world, and this will be exemplified when the Antichrist

⁸ Ibid., p. 400.

is revealed. Mr. Seiss described this quality of the Antichrist as follows:

My fifth remark is, that this "Man of Sin" will be an attractive, fascinating, and bewitching personage. He draws upon himself the intensest admiration and homage of the world. John beheld, and "all the world wondered after the Beast." Mankind are represented as so struck, captivated, and entranced by the contemplation of his wonderful qualities and powers, that they even render willing homage to the one who could give them so glorious a leader, and join in honoring and glorifying him as a very god of wisdom, power, daring, and ability...It cannot be otherwise than that this man is supreme in whatever is admirable to the taste, judgment, and imagination of the world.⁹

The Antichrist will appear to be a peace loving man and to bring great blessing to the earth. He will also appear to be the champion of human interest. Men will not flee from him but turn to him and give him glory as the greatest hero of all time.

Willfulness of the Antichrist. "Willfulness is the essence and soul of sin. Willfulness was its characteristic from the beginning."¹⁰ Willfulness was the sin of fallen angels and of Adam, and its fullest development and maturity cannot exceed this doing according to ones own will. "It is given here as the fundamental element in the character of the Man of Sin."¹¹ At the present time God holds the

⁹ Ibid., pp. 401-402.

¹⁰ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 291.

¹¹ Loc. cit.

full expression of self-will in check, but when the Antichrist comes he will have full freedom to exercise this hell-inspired self-will.

Self-exaltation of the Antichrist. Mr. Seiss, speaking about the Antichrist in his exposition of the prophecy of Daniel said:

the angel says of this king, "he shall magnify himself," not only above every man, but "above every god." "Even the God of gods," the great Jehovah himself is singled out for special blasphemy and defiance.¹²

The Antichrist is not so much a denier of God's existence, as he is a rival of God's authority. He sets himself up as a greater god, the real god of nature's forces. The God of his fathers, Christ Jesus, nor anything truly divine can command any respect or consideration from him. He will magnify himself above all; none will be superior in his estimation; all will be beneath his position. The willfulness of the Antichrist will lead him to these great lengths of self-exaltation.

The Antichrist is the consummate opponent of God. In close connection to the self-will and self-exaltation of the Antichrist is his complete and utter opposition to God and all things divine. Mr. Seiss, in his exposition of Revelation 13:1-10, stated:

¹² Ibid., p. 293.

...this Beast is the consummate antagonist and supplanter of everything Divine. He is exhibited in the vision as having "on his heads names of blasphemy". To the same effect it is added, that "a mouth was given him speaking great and blasphemous things,"---that "he opened his mouth for blasphemies towards God to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, they which tabernacle in the heaven" ...Paul says: "He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." (2 Thess. 2:4) He is at once Anti-God, Anti-Christ, and Anti-Spirit, antagonizing each particular Person of the adorable Trinity, trampling on their claims, usurping their honors, putting himself into their place, and abolishing all worship and recognition of either.¹³

In connection with this great opposition to God, the Antichrist is the great persecutor. "The Apostle in vision saw it "given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them."¹⁴ Those who refuse to yield to his demands for worship are slain, and those without his mark are refused opportunity to buy or sell. In all his blasphemy the Antichrist is conscious of the glorified ones above, and they are a special object of his ridicule and blasphemy.

Mr. Seiss believed that the Antichrist is in some sense an incarnation of the Devil,¹⁵ and, even if this is somewhat obscured at first by his pleasing words and flattering tongue, his true character cannot be other than that which hell produces and inspires, evil, wicked, and sinful

¹³ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 405-6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 407.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 401.

to the very core, with nothing of righteousness or godliness to recommend it.

V. POWER OF THE ANTICHRIST

Miracle working power of the Antichrist. When the Antichrist comes he will come with power to work great miracles in the sight of the people. Mr. Seiss said of this miracle-working-power:

"Lying wonders" does not mean unreal wonders, mere trick, jugglery, and legerdemain; but wonders wrought for the support of lies, that is, devil miracles. Mere pretended miracles have nothing of miraculous power; but in this case the worker comes "with all power". There is no emptiness or unreality about them. They are genuine miracles, wrought in the interests of Hell's falsehoods.¹⁶

Mr. Seiss noted as an instance of this miracle-working-power of Satan's instruments the making of fire to come down out of heaven. This he believed to be no trick but a genuine miracle wrought in the sight of men to compete with the fire of the two Witnesses and illustrate the willingness of evil men to believe devil miracles in place of divine miracles.

Source of Antichrist's power. The Devil is the source of all this miracle-working-power of the Antichrist.

His power, his seat and his great authority, it is specifically stated, are given him by the dragon (Rev.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 444.

xii.9;xiii.2), just as the angel said to Daniel, "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power."¹⁷

It is thus clearly indicated that the Antichrist is dependent upon Satan for all he receives of the world's power and authority.

VI. WHEN WILL THE ANTICHRIST COME?

Mr. Seiss did not set a date for the revelation of the Antichrist. He did however indicate that he felt that the time is very near when the great judgment period will begin. He indicated only that the Antichrist will come "at the end of the time" at "the end of the days", at the time when prophecy shall be exhausted by fulfillment.¹⁸

Antichrist is preceded by Apostasy. The Antichrist shall not come "except there come a falling away first."¹⁹ There is to come a time of general turning away from the true faith, a time when human wisdom and science will be accepted, while the Revelation of God will be rejected. This will be a time when men will not endure sound doctrine but will turn from the truth to fables and rejoice in false ideas. The result of this will be a weakened social order; a disturbed and restless condition of political affairs;

¹⁷ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 290.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 286.

¹⁹ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 439.

a revolt from the old established principles of law; and a general state of confusion from which there is no return. The only prospect will be worse disaster ahead.²⁰

Antichrist preceded by the rapture. Mr. Seiss assigned the Antichrist to the last times, the period of great judgment upon the world. The event which will signal the beginning of this period of the world's history is the rapture of the church. He said in this regard:

And this assumption of the saints to immortality, which may occur any of these passing days or nights, and certainly is to be devoutly awaited as very near, is the first signal act by which the great period of the consummation is to be introduced.²¹

When that which now hinders shall be taken out of the way, when the true and waiting people of God have been caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, then shall be the apocalypse of that Wicked One whose coming is after the working of Satan...²²

This same thought is expressed in other writings where Mr. Seiss said that the Hinderer, The Holy Spirit, is removed at the time of the rapture and that the Antichrist cannot come until this event takes place.²³

Antichrist to appear late in the judgment period.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 440

²¹ Ibid., Vol. I, p. 302.

²² Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 221.

²³ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 440, Vol. III, p. 162.

Mr. Seiss believed that the "Day of the Lord," the great judgment period, will most likely be seventy years in length. He says: "The length of time covered by this period is at least forty years, most likely seventy years, if not more."²⁴ The Antichrist does not appear, is not mentioned in the book of Revelation until after the seven seals have been opened, followed by six of the trumpets.

How many years those seals and the six trumpets may consume we are not informed, but we have every reason to believe that they may be counted by tens, if not by scores, subsequent to the opening of the door in the heaven and the taking up of the saints, which is the first act in the great drama. The space occupied in narrating what occurs under the seals, and trumpets would indicate this.²⁵

The exact portion of the great judgment period during which the Antichrist will be on the earth is discussed in section VII of this chapter.

VII. GOVERNMENT UNDER THE ANTICHRIST

The Antichrist a king. Satan proposed to give to Jesus Christ all the kingdoms of this world and their glory if Christ would worship him. Jesus refused; but Satan will eventually find someone who will accept his offer on the prescribed conditions. That person is the Antichrist. Mr. Seiss, speaking of "the king" of Daniel 11:36-45 said:

²⁵ Ibid., p. 162.

The implication is not only that he is to bear rule as an earthly monarch, but that he is so peculiarly and pre-eminently the wielder of all earthly dominion as to be the one consummate sovereign of all time, whose distinction from all other kings is so great and marked that there is no danger of confounding him with them. He is the king who stands as the main figure of all earthly potencies, and fills out to its final fullness the entire prophetic picture of this world's sovereignty.²⁶

This great exaltation and worldly power is given by Satan to his man, the Antichrist. How this power and place is secured remains to be seen.

Mr. Seiss believed that the "great Roman beast" must somehow be put forth in ten kingdoms which will cover the territory of the ancient empire, if not the whole world. In the time of these ten kingdoms or "horns" there is to come up another horn which is small at first but will grow in power and arrogance until in some sense, it uproots three of these kingdoms.²⁷ This little horn, the Antichrist, is "upheld by ten kings or governments" who "unite in making the Beast the one sole arch-regent of their time."²⁸ Mr. Seiss indicated the completeness of the power and dominion of the Antichrist when he said:

The Beast is said to possess power, a throne, and great authority. He makes war. He exercises dominion over tribes, and peoples, and tongues, and nations. He has

²⁶ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 291.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 195.

²⁸ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 393.

control of buying and selling, and fixes the conditions on which they are carried on. He furnishes the power to slay every one who will not come under his regulations. All of which proves political sovereignty and imperial earthly dominion.²⁹

The part of the false prophet. Associated with the Antichrist is a miracle-working, hell-inspired false prophet. The Antichrist recognizes the deep inward desire of man for a religion of some kind. Therefore, to meet this need he sets himself up as God and the false prophet as the great prophet of this religion. This false prophet is a real man with inspiration and ability to lead men to worship the Satanic power from which he receives his authority. He causes the people who dwell upon the earth to worship the Antichrist. He does great miracles in the presence of the Antichrist, he calls down fire from heaven, he secures the building of a great image of the Antichrist, and causes people to worship the image. He gives the image power to speak and the image demands that all who refuse to worship it shall be killed. Finally, the false prophet causes all to receive a mark on their right hand or forehead, without which a person can neither buy nor sell.³⁰ This then is the part of the false prophet in the religious life of the Antichrist's kingdom; he leads men in the worship of the

²⁹ Ibid., p. 391.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 413-60.

Antichrist and the devil.

Political conditions under the Antichrist. Mr. Seiss described the political conditions under the Antichrist as follows:

And along with the impieties and blasphemies of this man, the angel also speaks of injustice, misrule, persecution and a devilish generosity. Honoring his infernal god with gold and silver and precious stones and pleasant things, he shall do his will with the strongholds, helped by the power of Satan, and give glory, riches, and dominion to those who acknowledge and confess his deity. No one shall be of account in his day but those who worship the devil-power. The lands shall be seized and divided to them, and they shall have the rule, the honor and the offices as the rewards of their horrible devotions..., driving peace and order from the earth, and rendering it impossible to live in his dominions without accepting and abetting his awful abominations.³¹

People are slow to recognize the fact that when right religion is put out and despised all kinds of disorder and violence come in. If the rule of Heaven is put out, the confusion of hell comes in. The Antichrist will turn over the foundations upon which the social economy of the world rests and bring about a condition of trouble which will be the worst the world will experience.

Wars, outrages and bloody confusion shall mark the days as they pass. From the south and from the north nation shall be dashed against nation and power fight with power, and country after country sink beneath the overwhelming flood of violence and desolation.³²

³¹ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 295.

³² Loc. cit.,

Relation of Jews to the Antichrist. Jesus said to the Jews of his day, "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."³³ This prophecy will be fulfilled when the Antichrist comes because his term of office begins with the conclusion of a solemn compact between many of the Jews and the Antichrist. Under this pledge of protection and friendship the Jews will return to Palestine, rebuild the temple, and restore the old worship. Great improvements in the land of Palestine will take place with a rapidity unknown before. This peace and prosperity will last for a short time only. At the end of three and one-half years the Antichrist will break the covenant, cause the temple worship to cease, and seize the temple for the worship of his own image.

Those who were deceived into the acceptance of him as their Savior, at the end of the first three and a half years will find themselves in covenant with hell and death,...., compelled to become undisguised and openly-branded worshipers of the devil, or lose every foot of ground they own, every office of authority they hold, every means of livelihood, every protection in all that is dear in life, every possession on which the hand of willful power can be laid, and life itself, except as it shall be secreted in the desolate places of the mountains and wilderness, not daring to let itself be seen by any of the minions of the devilish power which then shall reign.³⁴

This time of trouble will not be for a day or month only,

³³ John 5:43, A.V.

³⁴ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., pp. 309-10.

but for a full three and a half years. The Jews who refuse to worship the Antichrist and fall in line with his hell inspired methods will suffer a time of terrible persecution.

VIII. THE LENGTH OF ANTICHRIST'S RULE

In dealing with the time of the Antichrist, the exact portion of the great judgment period which he is to occupy was not given. Mr. Seiss gave this time as the last seven years of human government upon earth. The Antichrist is to continue to rule up to the consummation, to the time when transgressors are come to the full. "He must therefore be the very last of this world's powers."³⁵

The Antichrist will rule for seven years, which is divided into two periods of three and one half years each.³⁶ For the first period he will be the friend and protector of the Jews, deceiving the nations and gaining power by his lies and devil miracles. During the last three and a half years his true character will be revealed "and bring about a series of abominations, hardships, and desolating impieties, as if hell itself had been let loose upon the world."³⁷

³⁵ Ibid., p. 287.

³⁶ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 161.

³⁷ Seiss, Voices from Babylon, op. cit., p. 255.

IX. THE END OF THE ANTICHRIST

It has been noted above that the Antichrist is to rule during the last years of government by men. This end is reached when the Lord Jesus Christ returns to earth to take his rightful place as Lord and Ruler of the world. The "man of sin is to continue in existence until Christ's second coming, and is to be consumed and utterly destroyed only by the personal advent and appearance of the Son of God himself."³⁸ This scene of final destruction is the one which Daniel saw when the blasphemous monster was given to the devouring flames; the one Paul referred to in the fiery destruction of the Wicked One; that which John described when the Beast and false prophet were both cast alive into the lake of fire; that to which the Psalmist alluded in the second Psalm.³⁹ Mr. Seiss described this final scene as follows:

The demonstrations of these confederates with the Beast are tremendous. The whole world moves with one heart, with one aim, with all its genius and power concentrated on one end, and with all the potencies of hell to nerve and help guide it. Never before was there such a combination of forces, natural and supernatural, directed with such skill, or animated with so daring and resolved a spirit...The rebels are confident. They believe their leader invincible...They have no question about about being able to cope with mortals or immortals, with men or gods...They deem themselves ready and equal

³⁹ Seiss, Voices From Babylon, op. cit., p. 197.

for any emergency of battle even with him who calls himself Almighty...

The Great Conqueror bows the heavens and comes down... He moves amid storms and darkness, from which the lightnings hurl their bolts, and hailstorms mingle with fire. He roars out of Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, till the heavens and the earth shake. He dashes forth in the fury of his incensed greatness amid clouds, and fire, and pillars of smoke...

And the Beast was taken...No sword smites him. He does not die...he is simply "taken"...dragged away from the field as a helpless prisoner...all the resistance he makes is the same as if it were not. He cannot help himself and all his armies cannot help him...And into the lake of fire he sinks to rise no more.

And with him the False Prophet...He is not slain; he does not die; he seems like the Antichrist incapable of death. But he is "taken",..., made a captive, and hurried away to the same seething prison...

The two great leaders gone, short work is made with their followers. A few awful words tell the story... In terrible brevity, the Seer records what came to pass. "And the rest were slain with the sword of the Sitter on the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; AND THE FOWLS WERE FILLED FROM THEIR FLESH."⁴⁰

It is to this great destruction that the nations, under the delusion and leadership of the False Prophet, are to be gathered together to make war with the Christ of God. It is thus that the Antichrist and False Prophet, whose origin, inspiration and power are derived from hell and the devil, sink to their end in the lake that burns with unquenchable fire.

⁴⁰ Seiss, The Apocalypse, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 256-260.

CHAPTER III

THE TEACHING OF WILLIAM E. BLACKSTONE
CONCERNING THE ANTICHRIST

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The present writer found it exceedingly difficult to locate biographical material concerning William E. Blackstone.

Mr. Blackstone was born in 1841, and was alive in 1916, but the exact date of his death is not available. He was a member of the Methodist Episcopal church for sixty-three years, and an active minister for much of that time. He personally supervised the distribution of the Bible and other devotional literature in China and other lands. The first edition of Jesus is Coming was published in 1878, and by 1916 numerous editions totaling over three hundred and fifty thousand copies had been published. It was translated into twenty-five different languages.

II. PERSONAL ANTICHRIST

Mr. Blackstone recognized the fact that the spirit of Antichrist is already in the world, and that there are

many Antichrists in the world already.¹ This spirit of Antichrist is "denying the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, either in the past or in the future."² This spirit of Antichrist does not have its final fulfillment in "a mere influence," or "a succession of popes nor a system."³

This spirit of Antichrist, now possessed by many, will culminate in one person, the Antichrist, who will deny both the Father and the Son.

That he is a single individual is plainly taught in 2 Thes. 2, where he is called "that man of sin"... "the son of perdition"--"that wicked," or properly, "the lawless one."⁴

Mr. Blackstone believed that the personality of the Antichrist is as clearly revealed in Scripture as is the personality of Christ;⁵ that the Antichrist will be a real physical man, the final revelation and culmination of the spirit of Antichrist which is already in the world.

III. ORIGIN OF THE ANTICHRIST

The "Antichrist is Satan's counterfeit of Christ."⁶

¹ William E. Blackstone, Satan, His Kingdom and its Overthrow (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1900), p. 39.

² William E. Blackstone, Jesus is Coming (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1908), p. 107.

³ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., pp. 39-40.

⁴ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 107.

⁵ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 40.

⁶ Ibid., p. 38.

Mr. Blackstone said:

As Jesus Christ was a Jew, so, counterfeiting as far as possible, Satan may use an apostate Jew for his Antichrist. This seems probable from the expression in Dan. 11:37, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers."⁷

This statement indicates that he taught that the Antichrist will be a Jew who will turn away from the traditional belief of his people and become the Antichrist.

Mr. Blackstone continued:

He may not yet have been born, but it would be all the more marvelous,...., if he be a man who has come in contact with Christ at his first coming.

There is a suggestion in certain passages of Scripture that Judas may be the Antichrist.⁸

The above quotation is all that Mr. Blackstone gave in the text of his books on the possibility of Judas returning as the Antichrist, yet he followed this statement with a footnote of some two pages in length which indicated that, though some believe Nero will be Antichrist and others consider Napoleon to be the proper person, he personally favored the belief that Judas will return as the Antichrist.⁹ However he was not dogmatic in this belief.

We must not forget that there is great "mystery" (2 Thes. 2:7) connected with Antichrist and special wisdom is enjoined (Rev. 13:18 and 17:9) in discerning his identity.

⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

⁸ Loc. cit.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 46-7.

Unquestionably, as we approach the time of his manifestation, the "wise" (Dan. 12:8-10) shall understand who he is, before he is revealed (2 Thes. 2:8) to the world.¹⁰

Thus Mr. Blackstone taught that the Antichrist will be a Jew, possibly Judas, under the influence of Satan; and that the "wise" Christian will recognize him before his identity is made known to the world.

IV. CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRIST

Mr. Blackstone taught that just "as Christ is the express image of God...Antichrist is the culminating manifestation of Satan."¹¹ He further taught that the Antichrist will "be an absolute Atheist, and in perfect accord with Satan's plan, he will seek to overthrow all worship of God by setting himself up to be worshipped in place of God."¹² "And Antichrist will exalt himself above all that is called God...he is the king...who shall do according to his own will and magnify himself above every god."¹³

In these brief statements Mr. Blackstone indicated that Antichrist will be in perfect accord with the character of Satan. He will exalt himself above all others and shall

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 47-8.

¹¹ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 107.

¹² Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 39.

¹³ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 109.

do according to his own will. Further illumination is cast upon the character of the Antichrist by the names given to him in scripture. Mr. Blackstone listed these as follows:

Ps. 8:2-----Enemy, avenger.
 Ps. 10:18-----"Man of the Earth."
 Isa. 14:4,12---King of Babylon; Lucifer, Son of the Morning.
 Dan. 7:8-----Little horn.
 Dan. 8:23-----King of fierce countenance.
 Dan. 9:26-----Prince that shall come.
 Dan. 11:36-----Willful King.
 John 5:43-----Another, in his own name.
 2 Thes. 2:3-----Man of sin; Son of Perdition; Deceiver.
 2 Thes. 2:8-----Wicked; (R.V.) Lawless One.
 I John 2:18,22-Antichrist.
 Rev. 13:18-----Beast, whose number is the number of a man.¹⁴

Mr. Blackstone also gave a chart contrasting Christ and Antichrist which is both interesting and helpful.

CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST CONTRASTED

CHRIST	ANTICHRIST
Jno. 8:23 Is from above	Rev. 13:11 Is from beneath
John 5:43 In the Father's name.	John 5:43 In his own name
Phil. 2:8 Humbles himself	2 Thes. 2:4 Exalts himself
Isa. 53:3) Despised by the	Rom. 13:3,4 Admired by world
Luke 17:25) world	
Acts 2:22 Christ is approved by God, by miracles	2 Thes. 2:9,10 Working of Satan power, signs, lying, wonders
Jno. 10:14 The good shepherd	Zech. 11:17 Idle shepherd

¹⁴ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 39.

Jno. 15:1-2 True vine	Rev. 14:19 Vine of the earth
Isa. 9:6 Wonderful	Rev. 13:3-17:8 Wonder of the earth.
Phil. 2:9,10 Exalted by God-every knee bow	Rev. 13:2,8 Exalted by Satan
Rev. 14:1) Followers have	Rev. 13:1 Names of blasphemy
Rev. 22:4) name of Father in forehead	in forehead
Matt. 17:5) Son of God	2 Thes. 2:3 Son of perdition
Eph. 4:13)	
I John 5:7 Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost	Rev. 16:13 Trinity of Satan, Antichrist and False Prophet. ¹⁵

This chart indicates clearly that the character of the Antichrist is totally opposite to that of Jesus Christ.

V. POWER OF THE ANTICHRIST

The coming of the Antichrist:

is "after the working (energy, or inward working) of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and deceivableness of unrighteousness."

He will be a "strong (or inward working) delusion," to them who believe not the truth...He is seen as the beast described in Rev. 13:11-18...who performs "great wonders and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth," by means of his miracles, and has power to kill those who will not worship the image of the beast.¹⁶

The Antichrist will have power to call down fire from heaven and perform other miracles "that he may compel...all that dwell upon the earth to worship the beast."¹⁷ In these brief statements Mr. Blackstone taught that the Antichrist

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁶ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., pp. 107-9.

¹⁷ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 40.

will have power to perform miracles given to him by Satan; that he will be able to command the worship of all people; and that he will have power to kill those who refuse to worship the image which is set up.

VI. WHEN WILL THE ANTICHRIST COME?

Had it not been for a "mighty hinderer" Satan would have accomplished his purpose long ago.

The Holy Spirit, who came down from heaven on the day of Pentecost, will return at the Rapture...Then the world will be left without the present hindering power of the Holy Spirit, and Satan will be free to work out his mystery of iniquity and the world will be left to "believe a lie", "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved."¹⁸

Thus Mr. Blackstone placed the time of the Antichrist after the rapture of the church, and said: "Antichrist is still in the future."¹⁹ Yet he placed a latter limit upon the time for the Antichrist's coming when he said: "The Antichrist who is on all sides confessed to be pre-millennial..²⁰ Thus the Antichrist will come, according to Mr. Blackstone between the Rapture of the Church and the Millenial reign of Christ.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 38-9.

¹⁹ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 110.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

VII. GOVERNMENT UNDER THE ANTICHRIST

Political conditions. Mr. Blackstone interpreted the first wild beast raised up (Rev. 13:1-10) as "probably the final manifestation of the revived Roman Empire."²¹ The chief characteristics of the Empire are blasphemy against God, his tabernacle, and those that dwell in heaven. The multitudes then living upon the earth will worship this beast, with the exception of the tribulation saints and a small remnant of Israel.

The next step is to be the revelation of the second beast of Rev. 13:11-18. This is a man, Satan's masterpiece, the sovereign of the empire, the Antichrist.²² This Antichrist will make a covenant with the Jews for "one week," seven years.

God calls it a covenant with death and hell(sheol), and says it shall not stand. Isa. 28:14-18.

In the midst of the week Antichrist will break the covenant (Dan. 9:27) and turn upon Israel such persecutions as they have never known before. It is the time of trouble(...), world wide trouble, but especially "Jacob's trouble."²³

The "Antichrist," said Mr. Blackstone, "will seize the reins of commerce, and organize all capital and labor

²¹ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 37.

²² Ibid., pp. 37-8.

²³ Ibid., p. 42.

into one universal trust, one union."²⁴ Everyone will be compelled to receive a mark, or be denied the privilege of buying or selling. This great governmental, commercial system is to center around the rebuilt city of Babylon.²⁵

Religious conditions. Mr. Blackstone taught that following the rapture, satanic powers will cause all sects and denominations left on the earth to unite into one religion which all people and kings accept and support. This religion for a time holds a place of great authority, but becomes "drunken" and the hatred of the kings and the beast is turned upon it to destroy it. In order to satisfy the need for an object of worship an image of the Antichrist is to be set up and all peoples commanded to worship the image and the Antichrist. Thus the "man of sin" the "son of perdition" is set forth as the object of universal adoration.²⁶

And, although an angel shouts from heaven warning all of the awful penalty which shall come to those who worship the beast and his image (Rev. 14:9-11), yet Satan, it would seem, will have accomplished his purpose, viz.; he will have stamped out the worship of God and established the worship of himself.

Himself? Yes, for we believe that as God is worshipped in Christ, so Satan will be worshipped in Antichrist.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 43-4.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

The Antichrist will encounter one point of difficulty in the faithful Jews and a few others who refuse to worship him. No matter how far the Jews may go in rejecting Christ as their Messiah,

and however dark and damnable their covenant with Antichrist may be, all their past history shows that they will die before they will worship a man, at least some among them...will rebel and refuse to worship the Antichrist. Then will the monster gather all nations against Jerusalem to utterly destroy it...²⁸

Mr. Blackstone described the spiritual condition of this time during which the Antichrist is to rule as follows:

the very essence of the condition of the world at this time is that of darkness. Men have "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). They had pleasure in "unrighteousness", loved not the truth," and so God lets iniquity come to a head by sending "a strong delusion," and they "believe a lie" and the judgments of God come upon them (2 Thes. 2:10-12). The "vials of the wrath of God" are poured out upon the earth (Rev. 16:1) Men will be faithfully warned by the angel as to the consequences if they worship the beast and his image" (Rev. 14:9-10). Some will heed (the tribulation saints) and be delivered (Rev. 15:2-4), though it be through death (Rev. 20:4). But the mass "blaspheme the name of God" and "repent not" (Rev. 16:9). The kingdom of the beast becomes full of darkness (Rev. 16:10)....His abode is darkness itself, and with it he will cover the earth.²⁹

VIII. HOW LONG WILL THE ANTICHRIST BE ON THE EARTH

²⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 51-2.

Mr. Blackstone did not designate a definite length of time during which the Antichrist will be on the earth. He taught that the Antichrist is to be revealed during the tribulation period³⁰ and says of the tribulation period:

We believe that it will be comparatively a short season, ...Doubtless it embraces the last one of Daniel's seventy weeks, for the reason that then God begins to deal with Israel again, after He has taken the church away, and yet it is probable that it includes much more than the seven years of that week.³¹

The Antichrist will be on the earth at least seven years and possibly longer.

From Dan. 9:27, we learn that the Antichrist will make a covenant with Israel for one week-the last of seventy. This we know from the fulfillment of the sixty nine weeks will be the seven years.³²

IX. END OF THE ANTICHRIST

Mr. Blackstone said effectively, "But, though Antichrist shall so greatly exalt himself and rule over the world with such power, yet shall he come to his end, and none shall help him."³³ The demon spirits will go forth and, with miracles to aid them, gather the kings of the whole earth together to the battle of that great day.

³⁰ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 73.

³¹ Ibid., p. 98.

³² Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 42.

³³ Blackstone, Jesus is Coming, op. cit., p. 111.

The multitudes under the Antichrist-...-with the kings of the earth will array themselves against God's King-...

Then shall the Lord appear, clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, and His eyes like a flame of fire, with the armies of heaven arrayed in shining whiteness following Him. Under His brightness, Antichrist withers as though struck with a shock of paralysis (2 Thes. 2:8). He is utterly powerless, and with the false prophet he is taken and cast alive into the lake of fire. (Rev. 19).³⁴

Thus, under the Judgment of God, the Antichrist's destiny is the eternal lake of fire.

³⁴ Blackstone, Satan, op. cit., p. 53.

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF ARNO C. GAEBELEIN
CONCERNING THE ANTICHRIST

I. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Arno Clemens Gaebelein was born in Germany August 27, 1861, and died in the United States in 1945. He came to the United States in 1879, and was ordained an elder in the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1885. He held various pastorates in Baltimore, Md., New York City, and Hoboken, N.J. He was editor of "Our Hope" (Bible study and Biblical research magazine) since 1894. He delivered lectures on Biblical subjects in principle cities in the United States and Canada, and before seminaries and Bible institutes. He wrote a large number of books dealing with Bible study and prophecy, the best known of which is a nine volume set called The Annotated Bible.

II. PERSONAL ANTICHRIST

The preparation for the final Antichrist. Mr. Gaebelein stated that an apostasy has been in progress down through the years and that "the apostasy" will culminate in a great godless leader.

It is a fact verified by history that an apostasy

has been going on throughout this present age. The Lord taught that such would be the case in the parable of the enemy putting the evil seed into the same field in which the wheat had been sown. The wheat and the tares then grow together, the tares, as tares will do, crowding out the wheat. Already, as stated before, apostasy manifested itself in the beginning of the age..

In the passage we have quoted (II Thes. 2:1-10) we read of the apostasy; that is a different thing from an apostasy. It reveals the fact that the age ends with a complete turning away from revealed truth, with the denial of God and of Christ, that this great apostasy will finally head up in the manifestation of a great godless leader, called by the apostle the man of sin, the son of perdition. It is the final Antichrist whose person and work is more fully described in Daniel 11:36-38 and Revelation 13:11-18.¹

Mr. Gaebeline made reference to the Olivet discourse of Jesus to discover a significant sign of the ending of this age of apostasy. "The first sign of this ending age gives as the appearing of many who shall say 'I am Christ'."² He further indicated the forerunners of the Antichrist when he said:

In the first Epistle of John the one who comes in his own name, the man of sin and the son of perdition, is called the Antichrist. He has many forerunners but at last the personal Antichrist will be manifested.³

The apostasy, and many who come claiming to be Christ are the preparation for the final Antichrist.

The final Antichrist to be personal. In addition to

¹ Arno C. Gaebeline, The Conflict of the Ages (New York: Our Hope, 1933), p. 146.

² Arno C. Gaebeline, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907), p. 95.

³ Ibid., p. 97.

the above quotations, Mr. Gaebeline gave clear statements in other places which teach a personal final Antichrist.

He said:

Another person is the personal Antichrist...The Antichrist, he of whom we read in II Thessal. 2 is mentioned only once in the book of Daniel...He is the same whose coming our Lord predicted in John 5, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye received me not; if another come in his own name, him will ye receive."⁴

"The second beast is not an empire with a great leader, but a person...This second beast is the final, personal Antichrist."⁵ In all his writings Mr. Gaebeline intimated that the Antichrist is a personal being. This inference coupled with the above clear statements lead to only one conclusion: the Antichrist must be a real, personal man.

III. THE ORIGIN OF THE ANTICHRIST

Mr. Gaebeline, describing the Antichrist said:

Inasmuch as he comes out of the land he will arise from among the Jews. There are other reasons why this godless leader will be a Jew. His manifestation will be in Israel's land, as we will show later; he will take a prominent place in the temple, the place of worship. He will be the false Messiah and King. All this necessitates a Jewish origin.⁶

He stated in another place:

⁴ Arno C. Gaebeline, The Prophet Daniel (New York: Our Hope, 1911), p. 88.

⁵ Arno C. Gaebeline, The Revelation (New York: Our Hope, 1915), p. 82.

⁶ Gaebeline, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., p. 147.

The King, Antichrist, shall not regard the God of his fathers. Here his Jewish descent becomes evident. It is a Jewish phrase "the God of his fathers" and besides this, to establish his fraudulent claim to be the King Messiah, he must be a Jew. Else the Jews would not own him as such.⁷

Although he did not actually commit himself to the view, he suggested a more specific origin of the Antichrist by the statement:

Dan is not mentioned because that tribe seems to be identified with Satan's work during the tribulation (See Gen. xlix:17). It is said the Antichrist will be of the tribe of Dan.⁸

He at least committed himself to the belief that the Antichrist will be a member of the Jewish nation.

IV. THE CHARACTER OF THE ANTICHRIST

Sinfulness of the Antichrist. The most comprehensive statement of the character of Antichrist which Mr. Gaebelein gave is very short. He said: "...Unquestionably the most important as well as the most wicked, the very incarnation of Satan, is the personal Antichrist, the man of sin and son of perdition..."⁹ He applied the following passages from the Psalms to the Antichrist.

⁷ Gaebelein, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 188.

⁸ Gaebelein, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 58.

⁹ Gaebelein, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., p. 77.

His mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and oppression;
Under his tongue is mischief and iniquity. (Ps. 10:1-11)

Why boasteth thyself in evil, thou mighty man?
The loving kindness of God abideth continually.
Thy tongue deviseth mischievous things;
Like a sharp razor practicing deceit.
Thou hast loved evil rather than good,
Lying rather than to speak righteousness,
Thou hast loved all devouring words,
O deceitful tongue!
God shall likewise destroy thee for ever;
He shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy tent
And root thee out of the land of the living, Selah.
(Ps. 52:1-5)¹⁰

Surely one who shall be the very incarnation of Satan, and to whom these passages of scripture apply can be nothing else but a "man of sin...the son of perdition...the mystery of iniquity...that Wicked..."¹¹

Self-will of the Antichrist. The Antichrist will be a self-willed despot. Mr. Gaebelein based the following comment upon Daniel 11:36:

He is called the King who "shall do according to his own will." He will be self-willed, which means that in wilfulness he will go as the man of sin the full length of opposition against God and let sin work in him to the uttermost extent.¹²

Self-exaltation of the Antichrist. One of the most prominent features of the character of the Antichrist presented by Mr. Gaebelein was pride or self-exaltation.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 187.

¹¹ II Thessalonians 2:3,7,10. A.V.

¹² Gaebelein, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., pp. 186-7.

In I Tim. iii. 6 we read that the crime of the devil is pride. This wilful King is the devil's man and Satan's character is fully developed in him. His character will be self-exaltation. First in self-will he exalts himself and then against God himself. In this self-exaltation and exaltation above God, he will prosper till the indignation is accomplished...¹³

Mr. Gaebeline, in another of his books, pointed out this great pride of the Antichrist in the following quotation.

Edom, concerning which Obadiah had his vision, is a type of the Antichrist. It is he who is described and addressed in that prophet as a person: "The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; he that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith Jehovah" (verses 3-4).¹⁴

The unrestrained opposition to God which the Antichrist shall manifest is best seen in the following quotation

from Mr. Gaebeline's pen:

"...he shall exalt himself above every god, and speak marvelous things against the God of gods...Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers (his Jewish fathers) nor he shall magnify himself above all." (Daniel 11: 36-7) This fully harmonizes with the text of II Thessalonians ii.4 "Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or object of veneration; so that he himself sits down in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."¹⁵

Commenting upon the 28th chapter of Ezekiel, where

¹³ Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁴ Gaebeline, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., pp. 81-2.

¹⁵ Gaebeline, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., p.152.

the prophet records the word of Jehovah concerning the prince of Tyre, Mr. Gaebelinein remarked:

It is very striking that expressions which are used here by the Spirit of God concerning the prince of Tyre are repeated later by Him in the description of the Antichrist:

"Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the heart of the seas (and thou art a man and not God), and thou settest thy heart as the heart of God: Behold thou art wiser than Daniel! Nothing secret is hidden from thee; by thy wisdom and understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom thou hast by thy traffic increased thy riches. Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God, therefore behold, I will bring strangers upon thee (28:1...8)

The remarkable statements which we find in this passage and which are the signs and marks of the Antichrist are the following:

1. His heart is lifted up in pride.
2. He says, "I am God."
3. He takes his place in the seat of God.
4. He controls the sea and commerce.
5. He claims to be wiser than Daniel.
6. By his craftiness he gains riches.¹⁶

Thus, Mr. Gaebelinein clearly indicated the character of the Antichrist to be exceedingly sinful and self-willed. He showed that the Antichrist exalts himself until he reaches the peak of blasphemy in claiming to be God, and assuming the place of God in the temple.

V. THE POWER OF THE ANTICHRIST

¹⁶ Gaebelinein, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., p. 85-6.

The Satanic origin of the Antichrist's power. In his exposition of Revelation 13:11-18, Mr. Gaebelin clearly stated that the beast out of the land, the Antichrist, is to be endowed with Satanic power.¹⁷ In The Conflict of the Ages he spoke of the Antichrist as Satan's masterpiece who sits in the temple, endowed with all Satan's powers.¹⁸ The Antichrist, as the incarnation of Satan (see footnote 9 above) would logically receive his power from the devil.

Miracles of the Antichrist.

"And 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 which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, which had the wound by the sword and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (Rev. xiii:13-15)¹⁹

Here are recorded "great wonders," "fire from heaven," and the image given power to speak. By means of these miracles the Antichrist is able to deceive the people of the earth, and conceal his true character.

Antichrist's power secures his acceptance upon earth.

The miracles discussed above are used to deceive both the

¹⁷ Gaebelin, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 82.

¹⁸ Gaebelin, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., p. 152.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 153.

apostate Jews and others who dwell on the earth. This will be possible because:

A strong delusion has come and those who did not receive the love of the truth for their salvation will readily accept the final lie of the serpent. Infidel Jews and apostate christians are included for Satan's strong delusion will then be heralded all over the world.²⁰

The Antichrist will come with a flattering tongue speaking great things and the Jews will hail him as their long looked for deliverer and allow him to establish himself as king in their midst. But his sphere of influence is to reach out to the whole world because apostate christendom will accept him as Christ.²¹ Yet, "he is a counterfeit lamb and his two horns are an imitation of the priestly and kingly authority of Christ."²²

VI. THE TIME OF THE ANTICHRIST

The question "When shall these things be?"²³ originated long ago. Mr. Gaebelin, at no place in his books, attempted to give a definity date for the coming of the Antichrist, and exposed the error of attempting to do so.²⁴

²⁰ Loc. cit.

²¹ Gaebelin, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., pp. 88-9.

²² Gaebelin, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 83.

²³ Matthew 24:3 A.V.

²⁴ Gaebelin, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 207.

Yet he felt that his coming was very near. He felt that the shadows of the Antichrist were already present when he wrote The Prophet Daniel in 1911, and pointed to many indications of the nearness of the end times.²⁵

The order of events in the last seven years. (1) The first is to be the Rapture of the church. This great event, the removal of the saints, both living and dead, from the earth is pictured in Revelation 4:1-3. Here the open door is seen and John is called to "come up hither."²⁶ 27 (2) At that time the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth and sin is allowed to run its course, unchecked by the witness of the true church or the power of God.²⁸ (3) The leader of the Revived Roman Empire, which is discussed more fully later, is revealed in Rev. 6:1-2.²⁹ (4) Mr. Gaebelin cautiously suggested that the Antichrist might be revealed in Rev. 8:10-11.³⁰ (5) Satan will be

²⁵ Ibid., p. 190-1. (See also Gaebelin, World Prospects, op. cit., p. 167.

²⁶ Gaebelin, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 44.

²⁷ Gaebelin, World Prospects, op. cit., p. 167.

²⁸ Gaebelin, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., pp. 153-6.

²⁹ Gaebelin, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 51.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 61.

cast out of heaven by Michael and his angels, Rev. 12:7-12.³¹ (The present writer found it difficult to harmonize the following statements: "When the Saints come into the heavenly possession Satan's dominion there is at an end."³² "The casting out of Satan takes place in the middle of the seven years....³³ Mr. Gaebeline indicated in his writings that the rapture of the church takes place at the beginning of the seven year period.^{26 34 35}) (6) The great tribulation upon the earth, the last three and one half years, is a period of indescribable suffering upon the earth.^{36 37} (7) The last event of the last seven years is the glorious, visible, personal return of the Lord. He will destroy the satanic forces upon earth, and have complete rule over the earth.³⁸

³¹ Ibid., p. 76.

³² Loc. cit.

³³ Gaebeline, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 85.

³⁴ Arno C. Gaebeline, The Hope of the Ages (New York: Our Hope, 1938), p. 186.

³⁵ Gaebeline, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., p. 98.

³⁶ Gaebeline, The Hope of the Ages, op. cit., p. 183.

³⁷ Gaebeline, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 85.

³⁸ Gaebeline, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., p. 158.

This, briefly, is the order of events that was given by Mr. Gaebeline, which takes place during the last seven years of the Gentile rule of the earth. A chart of the events was given by Mr. Gaebeline in his exposition of the book of Daniel.³⁹

VII. THE RELATION OF THE ANTICHRIST TO GOVERNMENT

Satan's three major tools at the time of the end.

The political power of the end time, the seven last years, will be centered in three powerful leaders. The first of these leaders is the political head of the Revived Roman Empire, the beast of Revelation 17:8 "Which was, and is not and yet is," the little horn of Dan. 7:24. The second of these leaders is the Antichrist, the most important and most wicked of the three. His description was recorded in the preceding pages of this chapter. The third of these leaders is the King of the North spoken of under the type of a little horn in Daniel 8:9. "All three are moved by the same power, Satan, have the same purposes, despising God and His people Israel."⁴⁰

The head of the Revived Roman Empire. The Roman

³⁹ Gaebeline, The Conflict of the Ages, op. cit., p.158.

⁴⁰ Gaebeline, The Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., p. 78.

Empire has passed out of existence:

Yet both the prophecy of Daniel and the book of Revelation show conclusively that it will be revived. Its revival will consist of ten kingdoms joined in a mighty western European confederacy.⁴¹

This great empire is seen in the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image and the ten horns on the fourth beast of Daniel VII. These ten kingdoms will be united into one great world power, an undivided empire.

Mr. Gaebelein, after quoting Revelation 13:1-7 commented:

First the Roman Empire will be revived politically in the beginning of these last seven years. This revival is stated in the vision of John when he saw the beast rising out of the sea. But it will also descend out of the bottomless pit, the dragon will give him power and his seat and great authority. This is the Satanic occupation of the empire; it will be energized by Satan himself. This awful phase will be reached in the middle of the seven years. For three years and a half...Satan's power will be manifested in this revived Roman Empire...It will center in a person and that person is identical with the "little horn" Daniel saw coming up between the ten horns. After the Roman Empire has been reconstituted and divided into ten kingdoms, a person will come upon the scene who will be the head, and that head will be endued with supernatural, satanic power, so that all the world will wonder after this beast.⁴²

Mr. Gaebelein gave the following five statements in regard to the work of this Satan energized head of the Roman Empire. (1) He will do away with three of the ten

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 88.

⁴² Gaebelein, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 84-5.

kingdoms, leaving only seven. (2) He will speak great blasphemous words against God. (3) He will persecute and prevail against the Saints of God. (4) He will "wear out" the saints of God, especially the Jews. (5) The times and laws are to be given into his hands and he will change them.⁴³

The Antichrist and Jerusalem. The Antichrist, as has been shown above, is a Jew who claims to be Christ. The Jews accept him as such and "he reigns as the false king in Jerusalem and sits as god in the temple. He is to be the religious head of apostate Judaism and apostate christendom."⁴⁴ As such his influence will reach out to the whole world.

This false Messiah will imitate the true king in matters of rewards for his followers. "Those who Acknowledge him and are true to the dreadful being, he will give them earthly glory and dominion and divide the land for reward."⁴⁵

The head of the Roman Empire is to make a covenant with many of the Jewish people at the beginning of the last seven years, probably to allow them to go back to Palestine and build a temple and establish the ancient worship. He

⁴³ Ibid., p. 90.

⁴⁴ Gaebelstein, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 83.

⁴⁵ Gaebelstein, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 189.

will also promise to protect them against outside foes. The Roman Emperor, in league with the Antichrist is to break this covenant at the end of three and one half years, however, and all the temple ceremonies will have to stop. It is at this time that Israel accepts the Antichrist as their Messiah and the events of the great tribulation, the last three and one half years, begins.⁴⁶ The Antichrist will have a great image of the Roman made and give it power to speak. All people are to be commanded to worship this image, and those who refuse will be killed.⁴⁷

Mr. Gaebelin believed that this person, the Antichrist, is the one to whom the title of the false prophet is given.⁴⁸

The King of the North. The third great leader during the end days is described in Daniel 8:23-25 as the "King of fierce countenance." He is to arise out of the kingdoms into which the Grecian empire was divided. He is spoken of in Isaiah, chapter 8 and 10 as the Assyrian, used by God to punish the people of Israel. He is spoken of in chapter 10 of Daniel as the King of the North.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 147.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 188.

⁴⁸ Gaebelin, The Revelation, op. cit., p. 83.

⁴⁹ Gaebelin, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., pp. 107-9.

This king is to come into Israel's land as the great external enemy whom God uses to punish Israel because the greater part of the nation follow the Beast.

And who will he be? From where will he rise?...

The prophecy in the chapter before us (Daniel 8:23-26) makes it plain that this desolator will arise from one of the divisions of the Grecian empire...When the time of the end comes the greatest upheavals will take place both in Asia Minor and in the surrounding countries. What changes will then take place, whether a great Russian Czar or some other one will accomplish the great Eastern confederacy remains as a secret with God. But it seems clear that the King with the fierce countenance will act under the instructions of a superior for we read "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power."⁵⁰

Relations between these three leaders. The head of the Revived Roman Empire and the Antichrist will work in close harmony. Mr. Gaebelein, speaking of the Antichrist said: "He is in close alliance with the head of the Roman Empire, only that the Antichrist assumes the place of the leader of the ecclesiastical side of things."⁵¹ The Assyrian, the third great leader of the end times, is to be opposed to these two; he is to be the enemy of the Roman and the hater of the Jews. Stirred up by what the Antichrist will do in the land of Palestine, he is to come like a whirlwind,

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 117-18

⁵¹ Gaebelein, Harmony of the Prophetic Word, op. cit., pp. 77-8.

with a large well equipped and trained army, as the desolator against Jerusalem.⁵²

VIII. HOW LONG WILL ANTICHRIST BE UPON EARTH?

According to the chart of The Seventy Prophetic Year Weeks of Daniel's Prophecy,⁵³ the sixty nine weeks ended with the death of Christ. This is followed by an unreckoned period of time, of indefinite length, which ends with the rapture of the church. Then follows the final seven years of the age, during which these wicked rulers have their way on the earth. Mr. Gaebelin believed, as has been noted before, that the Antichrist will arise from among the Jews. This would necessitate his presence upon the earth before these final seven years. He is not to be received as the Antichrist until the middle of the tribulation period, however. That is the time when the covenant between the Roman and the Jews is broken and also coincides with the casting out of Satan from heavenly places.⁵⁴

The final three and one half years was listed on the chart referred to above as "The Great Tribulation" period which is brought to a close by the glorious appearance

⁵² Gaebelin, The Prophet Daniel, op. cit., p. 193.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 150-1.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 147.

of Christ to deliver his people.

IX. THE END OF THE ANTICHRIST

What then is the end to which this man of sin, the instrument of Satan, shall come? Mr. Gaebelein gave the following answer:

And down on earth there is the greatest gathering of armies the world has ever seen. The Beast, the head of the revived Roman empire, is the commander-in-chief. The kings of the earth are with him. Vast army camps on all sides. The great valley on the plains of Esdraelon is filled with soldiers. The hills and mountains swarm with armed men. Satan's power has gathered and blinded this vast multitude to the uttermost. The unclean spirits, the demons working miracles, have brought them together to the battle of that day. And the hordes from the North, under the Prince of Rosh are coming later...While the vast armies are covering valleys and hills, the objective will be Jerusalem. All nations are gathered against her... Jerusalem's distress is the greatest of her history... The Beast, the Emperor...and the second Beast, the Antichrist, called also the false Prophet, act together in this final drama...and now as these armies are massed together the great battle of Armageddon takes place...The battle does not consume much time...One mighty blow from above, one flash of glory and all their strength and power is gone. The stone has fallen (Dan. ii). With one blow the dominion and misrule of the Gentiles is at an end...And while the armies perish as to the body and God's wrath sweeps the earth clean of the mass of apostates...the Beast (the head of the empire) and the false prophet..., that is the false Messiah, the Antichrist, are cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. They were not annihilated, for a thousand years later we still find them there...⁵⁵

It is to this utter, complete, and final defeat that

⁵⁵ Gaebelein, The Revelation, op. cit., pp. 126-30.

the Antichrist and those associated with him shall come.

The forces of righteousness will triumph over evil.

Judgment will be pronounced upon the head of the Roman Empire, the Antichrist, and the King of the North.

CHAPTER V

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

I. COMPARISONS

Personal Antichrist. The three men included in this study agreed that the spirit of Antichrist is present in the world now, but that the final manifestation of this spirit will be a real physical man who had not been revealed at the time they wrote.

Origin of the Antichrist. Mr. Seiss taught that the Antichrist is a man who once was living and was killed, whose place is in the abyss of lost souls, and somehow returns from the abyss to take his place as the Antichrist.

Mr. Blackstone taught that the Antichrist is an apostate Jew, possible Judas returned from the dead; who will be under the influence of Satan.

Mr. Gaebelein taught that the Antichrist will be a Jew, possibly from the tribe of Dan.

Character of the Antichrist. These men agreed that the character of Antichrist will be like that of Satan, sinful, self-willed, and self-exalting to the greatest possible degree. Mr. Seiss and Mr. Gaebelein believed that he is an incarnation of Satan. Yet, in spite of this, he will have great charm and fascination in the eyes of the

world.

Power of the Antichrist. All three agreed that the Antichrist is to have power to work great miracles which, in a large measure, secure his acceptance upon the earth. This power will be given by Satan.

When will the Antichrist come? None of the men studied gave a date for the Antichrist. They did teach however that the Rapture of the church must take place before the Antichrist comes and that he will be on earth during the tribulation period.

Government under the Antichrist. All three agreed that the Roman empire will be revived. Mr. Seiss and Mr. Blackstone taught that the Antichrist will be at the head of this empire; Mr. Gaebelein placed another wicked leader at its head, and the Antichrist as the king over the Jews only.

Mr. Seiss and Mr. Blackstone associated with the Antichrist a miracle-working false prophet; Mr. Gaebelein made the Antichrist and false prophet the same person.

All three taught that the Jews are to make a covenant with the Antichrist which is to be broken at the end of three and one-half years by the Antichrist who becomes their bitter persecutor.

Mr. Gaebelein spoke of a third wicked leader of the

last times, a King of the North who is not mentioned by Mr. Seiss or Mr. Blackstone.

Length of the Antichrist's rule. Mr. Seiss taught that the Antichrist will rule during the last seven years of human government. Mr. Blackstone indicated that the Antichrist will rule at least the last seven years, possibly longer. Mr. Gaebelin taught that the Antichrist will be on the earth before the Rapture but his true character of Antichrist will not be revealed until the final three and one half years before Christ comes.

The end of the Antichrist. With one accord these men taught that the Antichrist will be taken out of the midst of his armies. Powerless to resist, he shall be cast alive into the lake of fire by Jesus Christ when, accompanied by the Saints and Angels of God, he returns to the earth with power and great glory.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The present writer recognized the limitations of this study, yet, on the basis of it, the following conclusions concerning the Antichrist are offered.

1. The Antichrist has not yet been revealed.
2. When God allows him to be revealed, he will have great power which has its source in Satan, and will use

that power in exceedingly sinful ways.

3. He will have a controlling influence in the government of the world.

4. The Jews are to accept him as their Messiah and make a covenant with him, which he will violate at the end of three and one-half years.

5. He will demand that all people worship his image and receive his mark. Those who refuse are to be killed or driven into seclusion.

6. Jesus Christ is to cast him alive into the lake of fire, where he shall suffer eternal judgment.

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