



Way of the Eagle

by Rhoda Collins

Antichrist and the “End Times”

Many of you have heard of the Left Behind movies based on the novels by Tim LaHaye of the dispensationalist interpretation of prophecies in Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Revelation. Telling the story of the end times, in which true believers in Christ are raptured prior to a seven year tribulation period, the temple in Jerusalem being rebuilt and one man (antichrist) that is possessed by the devil that rises on the world stage, promising to restore peace and stability to all nations which is the antichrist foretold in the Bible. Many Christians today, including Tim LaHaye, believe that this scenario is exactly what will happen. But is that what the Bible really says?

Antichrists

The Apostle John tells us in **1 John 2: 18** that there is not just one antichrist and that they were already present in the 1st century AD: “**Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour**”.

Verse 19 tells us where these antichrists come from: “**They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.**”

“**Us**” represents other Christians in the early church and “**they**” represents many antichrists in the 1st century of the early church. “**They went out from us**” means that they didn’t come from the outside of the church but they come from the inside of the body of Christ. They are not really following Jesus Christ.

1. So we learn that John says there are many antichrists in the early church.
2. Started in the 1st Century AD.
3. Antichrist comes from within the church.

Antichrist and the restrainer

The Bible mentions a restrainer of the antichrist. Who restrains the antichrist from being revealed?

2 Thessalonians 2 says that the antichrist must come first before Jesus comes to rapture the church. The antichrist is initially restrained from declaring itself as God claiming God’s authority.

“Do you not recollect that when I was still with you, I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining him (from being revealed at this time); it is so that he may be manifested (revealed) in his own (appointed) time. For the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority) is already at work in the world, (but it is) restrained only until he who restrains is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one (the antichrist) will be revealed and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by His appearing at His coming.”

4. Antichrist worked in the time of Paul and continues until the time when Jesus comes. And when He comes He will gather the church and then destroy the antichrist here now.
5. Antichrist was restrained from manifesting during John and Paul’s time.

The popular understanding among God’s people today is that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit inside of the Christian church that restrains antichrist. The theory is that the Holy Spirit is having a moral influence upon society and is restraining evil and ultimately restraining the antichrist. Jesus Christ will come in the clouds to rapture the living saints, the restrainer will be removed and then the seven year tribulation and the antichrist will come. This is what is being taught and believed everywhere in the Body of Christ, due in large part to Tim LaHaye’s novels and movies.

If this theory is true, the question is, how good of a job is the church doing restraining evil, as there is a lot of evil, sin and compromise in the church today?

In **2 Thessalonians 2** Paul teaches (as did John) that the antichrist is working even now, and that the restrainer of the revealing of antichrist must be removed and then the coming of the Lord gathers those to Him.

How can the church or the Holy Spirit be the restrainer? The Bible tells us that it's impossible for the true church to be the restrainer, because the church (believers) don't go up until after antichrist is revealed. The antichrist sits in the church now according to the Bible! The current theories in Christian circles don't fit. We need to examine Bible fact, not human theory. Tim LaHaye and other "end-time" teachers contradict what the Bible clearly says!

Who or what then is the restrainer?

The restrainer is referred to **Daniel 7** who describes 4 beasts. And when the 4th beast went down the little horn went up, (the antichrist came up). "The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all other kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, trample it and break it in pieces. The ten horns are ten kings who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different

from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. But the court shall be seated, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever." The 4 beasts represent not men or animals but the rise and fall of 4 kingdoms in ancient history: Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. The 4th beast is the Roman Empire. The 10 horns represent the dividing up of the Roman Empire when Rome fell in 476 AD. The antichrist(s) from the church rises up to become a system.



Daniel 7: 8 talks about the antichrist, "I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words".

In **verse 21** the antichrist made war against the saints: "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them". So to summarize we have:

6. A horn (system) that comes up from the end of the Roman Empire (occurred in 476 AD).
7. It has eyes and mouth like man that speaks pompous things.
8. Antichrist will make war against the saints of God.
9. Spirit of antichrist is a formal system or a kingdom (like the 4 beasts), not one man, rising from a fallen Roman empire.

So the restrainer is the Roman Empire restraining the church for a while until it was removed in 476 AD (5th Century) allowing the antichrist to be revealed or manifest. So what system in history rose from within the church to manifest after the fall of the Roman Empire (restrainer)?

Antichrist manifests in history!

Between the 5th and 15th centuries, known as the Dark Ages, the only universal institution or system in the known world was called the Roman Catholic "Church". Dr. Jack Arnold, author of "The Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages" says, "From 590 to 1517, the Roman Church dominated the western world. The Roman Catholic Church controlled religion, philosophy, morals, politics, art and education. This was the dark ages for true Christianity. The vital doctrines of Biblical Christianity had almost disappeared, and with the neglect of true doctrine came the passing of life and light that constitutes the worship of the One True God as declared in Christ. They taught the infallibility of the pope, salvation through the Roman Church only, salvation by works, worship of dead saints, exaltation of the clergy, immaculate conception of Mary, prayers for the dead, worship of the cross/images/relics, sale of indulgences, and add to these many others: monks, nuns, monasteries, convents, forty days lent, Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday, All Saints Day, Christmas, charms, novenas, and others." The Roman Catholic Church is credited with killing millions of those that opposed their system, including true Christians, fulfilling **Daniel 7:21**. This is the only system that falls into the Biblical description of antichrist by John, Paul and Daniel.

Martin Luther was the first to identify that the papacy fulfilled what the Bible writers said about the antichrist. All Protestant Reformers such as Wycliff, Knox, Wesley and John Huss and eighty other reformers also held the same belief as Luther about the Roman Catholic church as being the antichrist. This was the common view for all protestant churches. Luther proved by the revelations of Daniel and John, and the epistle of Jude that the reign of antichrist predicted and described in the Bible was the papacy. The main purpose of the Protestant Reformation 500 years ago was to point people away from the antichrist system (religious/political papacy kingdom), away from using false mediators (pope, priests, Mary, dead saints) to teach that each person can go direct to the throne by grace, through Jesus Christ as the only Mediator, not by works, not through a system, not by mass, not by payments (indulgences).

Also, research of writings by early Christians reveal that they prayed that the Roman Empire would continue, as they knew once the restrainer was removed, the antichrist would rise from the church to become a greater threat to the true church and to true Christians than the Roman Empire ever was.

If all the many dozens of made up antichrist diversions from Jesus Christ as the true Head of the Church wasn't enough, a main destructive teaching that came from the papacy is about Jesus' birth!

The main identification mark of the antichrist is found in **1 John 4: 3** "**By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.**"

Also it is mentioned in **2 John 7**: "**For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist**".

Even in the Roman Catholic church a person can believe that Jesus Christ was a real man, that He was born of a virgin, came into this world, died for our sins, rose from the dead and even that He will be coming back again and yet still this person can be anti-christ according to the Bible. So how can this be?

The spirit of antichrist is mentioned in **John 4:2-3** "**By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come *in* the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.**"

John again says the spirit of antichrist is already here (1st Century) and those who don't confess Jesus is come in the flesh, is not of God! What exactly does that mean, "come in the flesh" and how could Christians be deceived by this wording?

10. Antichrist doesn't confess that Jesus came in the flesh.

True Christians believe that the Word Who is God, came to earth, was born of a virgin, lived in the flesh just like we did, was tempted just like us and He overcome the flesh. Hebrews 4: 14-16, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need".

1 John 1:1 says "My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world".

You may say the papacy does believe in Jesus Christ. But they have taken away the truth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh? Doesn't the Church of Rome confess that? Have you heard of the doctrine of Immaculate Conception? The church of Rome believes that Jesus was born of an immaculate virgin (a woman without sin). The doctrine of Immaculate Conception is a doctrine about Mary, not the birth of Jesus.

This is a quote from the catechism of Rome, "The most blessed virgin was from her first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ saviour of the human race presumed immune of all stain from original sin".

Quote from the book "The Faith of Millions" by the Roman Catholic priest John O'Brian in 1955, "We affirm that when Jesus was born from his maternal womb a human nature with the same substance of her own (Mary's)."

The Roman Catholic Church states that Jesus did not take our nature but took Mary's nature. This is ultimately a denial that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, the same flesh that humans have. This is one of the reasons why Catholic doctrine teaches to worship Mary, whom they refer to as the queen of heaven.

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The antichrist is a spirit that corrupted the early 1st century church, was restrained by the Roman empire until the 5th century, antichrists in the church developed into the Roman Catholic Church religious/political system that suppressed, persecuted, tortured and murdered countless millions and is the only system that fulfills all the biblical prophecies of the little horn in [Daniel 7](#) and the beast of [Revelation 13](#).

So where did these false "end-time" theories come from that so many believe today? In 1590 the Roman Catholic Church brought in their counter-interpretation to combat the Reformation. "The result of this work was a twisting and maligning of prophetic truth" (Robert Caringola, *Seventy Weeks: The Historical Alternative*, p. 32). Protestants dismissed this made-up version for 300 years until into the 1800's when the Roman Catholic version of the "end-times" was circulated again and started being accepted by the Anglican Church in England, the Presbyterian Church and then spread to what many Christians believe now, which is contrary to Biblical facts as we've just very briefly studied!

P.S. A new temple being built in Israel, that many Christians pray to happen, is an abomination to God. Interpreting this from the Bible is false, as Christ's sacrifice was the last and only one anyone will ever need, including for the Jews and any person that prays for and looks forward to a rebuilding of a temple with sacrifices in Israel can't be Christian! The promises God made to Israel in the Old Testament apply to the New Testament spiritual Israel (the Christian) that believes in Jesus as Christ, not to the flesh/secular Israel. A Christian is Israel and their body is the temple of God.

Beware what you believe, what you profess and any false system that you follow!