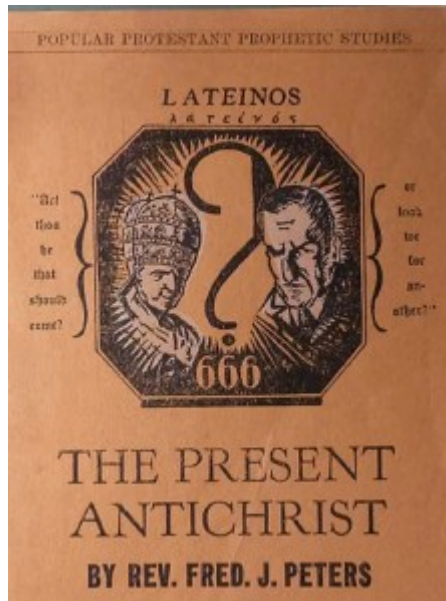


The Present Antichrist By Rev. Fred J. Peters



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If you like technical things, you can read [how I converted a paperback book into html text.](#)



THE ANTICHRIST—VICARIUS FILII DEI

**The only man that wears a triple crown.
POPULAR PROTESTANT PROPHETIC STUDIES**

The Present Antichrist

By Rev. Fred J. Peters

By Rev. Fred J. Peters Author of "The Problem of Antichrist" Companion book
to this

Eighth Edition, March, 1956 Revised and Enlarged

FOREWORD

One of the crying needs of today is to popularize the prophetic teaching of our Great Reformers. The growth of Roman Catholicism in Protestant lands by immigration, and its bid for popular leadership, and the audacious canvass of Protestants all over our land by the priests, for money to build their churches and schools and sustain their propaganda, causes us to ask why Protestants have lost their Protest. For Rome is **semper idem** (a Latin phrase

that means "always the same") and has never changed. We are convinced that the reason is—the loss of the knowledge of the Papacy in Prophecy, which was the mighty tonic that nerved the Reformers to fight and die. No man can dally with Rome who sees her as God sees her.

We herewith make an attempt to supply this lack to the general public, in as reduced a form as the subject will allow, trusting and praying that God will use it to awaken many dormant Christians to the peril of Antichrist's domination.

What we have given in this tract is but a brief introduction to a vast subject, and it is our earnest hope that it will be the means of so awakening interest in the readers, that they will be led to search the larger standard works written upon it.

If that be the result, we shall count it the highest kind of success.

THE PRESENT ANTICHRIST

How John Knew Christ

"Art thou he that should come or look we for another?" —Luke 7:19-22.

John the Baptist was in prison and things did not look very sunny for him just then, and doubts formed in his mind as to whether he had been deceived in the Messiah. To settle these doubts and clear his spiritual atmosphere, he resolved to send a direct request to Jesus Himself. Two of his disciples are called and sent with the question, "Art Thou He that should come or look we for another?" His soul needs a clear "Yes" or "No" to this appeal. He must have it, nothing else will suffice.

The men come to Jesus and deliver the message, thereby requesting the Lord to tell them plainly whether He be the Messiah or not.

How did the Master answer this anguished appeal? Did He give a simple, direct, unequivocal affirmative or negative, to ease the tension of the breaking heart of the faithful John in prison? It would have been easy for the Lord to have done this. We are prone to think He ought to have done this, but He did not.

What did He do?

How did He answer the eager prophet's request? Listen,—

"In that same hour He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind He gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

What does all this mean?

Is this an answer to the Baptist's question?

It apparently is not, and yet it is.

Yes, and it is the greatest and best answer Christ could give to this man. Christ adapts His words to the minds of His hearers. To the uneducated woman of Samaria He says, "I that speak unto thee am He."

To the great prophet, steeped in the prophetic Word of God, he works miracles which fulfil the prophetic scriptures concerning the Messiah, (See Is. 35:3-5; 61-1, etc.) John knowing these prophecies and looking eagerly for their fulfilment, would at once recognize such as credentials of supreme authority, and would be more convinced by them than by any number of bold claims of a man without them.

There is nothing more re-assuring to genuine faith than the perception of the fulfilment of "the more sure word of prophecy," for which one has been watching through the clouds and mists of many a long weary year.

John was re-assured and satisfied, and joyfully reconciled to his dark, mysterious martyrdom. And millions more have, since that time, under the influence of the same prophetic word, gone gladly to the rack and flame, for love of that same Christ.

Fulfilled prophecy had conclusively proven to John that, this was indeed the Christ foretold of old. He was the very Messiah, the long expected Coming One.

It was therefore useless to look for another.

A Future Antichrist Taught by Some

The foregoing applies with overwhelming force to the prophecies concerning Antichrist. We hear a great deal today about the Antichrist who is still to come. Many of our leading Bible teachers are telling us that he is soon coming, and that when he is come he will do terrible things. He is to be a superman, a special offspring or incarnation of Satan: while some go as far as to say that he will be Antiochus Epiphanes literally risen from the dead. We have in one book, widely sold, read of the doings of this man in detail, all carefully mapped-out like a railroad timetable. And we confess that, as set forth therein, the record is as gruesome and blood curdling as words can possibly make it.

Among the teachers who look for this future Antichrist, we count many, if not most of our dearest friends in the cause of Christ. We have been working shoulder to shoulder with them for a quarter of a century. We have read their books; have been with them in conventions; have discussed with them the different phases of this burning subject; and have earnestly endeavored to see eye to eye with them, and have tried honestly to adopt their view of prophecy on this point; all this because they are brethren beloved for their work's sake.

But we confess again that, the more we have studied "the sure word of prophecy" and compared it with their findings, the more we are compelled to differ from them on this one point. We are in full agreement with them on all

fundamental points, and as to the personal, premillennial coming of our Blessed Lord. But concerning Antichrist we differ. We are very sorry to have to say this, but fidelity to God's Word and its fulfilment demands it.

The Faith of the Reformers

While these aforementioned brethren, beloved in the Lord, are looking for a still future Antichrist; there are others, the descendants of a long line of mighty Christian worthies and warriors, who see the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning Antichrist, in the Papacy. That is to say, the dynasty of Popes during the past twelve or fourteen centuries, is the full and complete fulfilment of those prophecies that foretell the coming of the Man of Sin, the Antichrist.

Let not the dear reader who reads this for the first time be startled. This is no new teaching. This is the faith of the great Reformers who were Spirit-taught and Spirit-filled men; whose work has stood the test of time and remains to this day, and is still a blessing to us, in fact the foundation of all evangelical religion now existing.

Behold a few of the paves of the men of God who have held this Spirit-given interpretation of prophecy,—The Waldenses (AD 1180), Wycliffe, John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Sir Isaac Newton, Bunyan. And coming to more modern times, Gaussen, Elliott, Finney, Moody, A. J. Gordon, Hudson Taylor, Spurgeon, Grattan Guinness, F. B. Meyer, Campbell Morgan, A. C. Dixon, etc.

It was this belief, viz.: that the Pope was the very Antichrist spoken of in the Word of God, which made the Reformers brave as lions and gave them courage to face the Inquisition with its dungeons, rack and flame, singing as they went. We have asked ourselves many times during the past twenty-five years,—Were these noble armies of martyrs buoyed up by a false faith? Was it an imaginary interpretation that caused them to "love not their lives unto the death?" Impossible. Did God sustain them on lies? To state the proposition is to annihilate it at one breath. Just as easy to sustain life on a painted loaf. We are compelled to believe that the Reformers' interpretation of prophecy was right. It was Spirit-given and therefore God's Truth.

The Truth Perverted

But earnest enquirers will ask,—“How came it about that this teaching did not continue in the whole of the Protestant Church, which owed its very life to it? And where did the other teaching come from?”

The teaching that the Papacy was Antichrist was so self-evident, so simple, so clear and so incriminating that, it threatened to shake the whole fabric of Popedom to pieces.

This had to be offset somehow.

The Jesuits were appointed to combat this teaching.

Two of their number, Ribera and Alcasar, invented systems of interpretation intended to shield the Papacy and sidetrack Protestantism. In the year AD 1585 Ribera founded the Futurist system of interpretation of prophecy, and sent it forth on its work of chloroforming the Protestants. His subtle teaching was something as follows:—"Why, you Protestants are all off the track. You imagine the Pope is the Antichrist. You are all wrong, for these (stated) reasons. The real Antichrist is still future and will come in the last few years of the world's history." And many of our leading Bible teachers have adopted this error and are earnestly teaching it to others.

Alcasar, another Jesuit, invented the Praeterist system of interpretation in AD 1603, which declares there is no Antichrist to come. In fact there is no Second Coming of Christ, He came in the year AD 70 at the fall of Jerusalem, and Antichrist must have come before Him. This system is being serenely followed by our postmillennial brethren in great numbers of Protestant pulpits today.

Both the Praeterists and the Futurists have fallen into the cunningly laid Jesuit trap. The Jesuits have succeeded in splitting the Protestant Church into three camps, The Praeterist Futurist, and the Historical which still holds with the Reformers, and keeps the Truth alive and the witness against the real Antichrist. And the sad thing about it all is that these divisions are shooting at each other. The Futurists belabour the Praeterists because they are not biblical, and the Praeterists deride the Futurists for believing such trash. But the fact is that, the Futurist brethren who attack the post-millennial brethren with such avidity, are as much wrong as they on this point.

Rome has no kick against the teaching of a future Antichrist.

Rome does not persecute those who hold it and teach it.

Why?

Because it is her child.

Because it has robbed Protestantism of its real witness against her.

Brethren, we are fallen into the Jesuit trap.

How and When the Error was Absorbed

This Jesuit teaching did not pass into the Protestant Church for a long while. It did not deceive the Reformers or their immediate followers. It had no chance while they were on the scene. Not until the year AD 1826 was it effective. Then the bait was swallowed by the Rev. S. R. Maitland, D.D., librarian to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who endeavored to introduce it into Great Britain by publishing it.

Four years later, Mr. J. N. Darby, founder of the Plymouth Brethren, looking about him for some novelty in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, found this adopted it, and incorporated it into his works. This is in line with the well known character of the Plymouth Brethren, who criticize the churches and

aim to be different from them in teaching and work. This denomination has persistently propagated the teaching of a future Antichrist ever since their origin at the time of Darby.

Now, disguise it how they will, those modern teachers who are proclaiming a still future Antichrist, are following the Plymouth Brethren. Some do not care to have it mentioned to them, while others frankly admit it and read the works of Darby and of others of that sect. This is by no means an impeachment of the Plymouth Brethren, for we are glad to admit that most of their teachings are admirable. But in this one matter they have grievously erred.

The source of a stream indicates its nature. The Jesuits originated in a fierce hatred of Protestantism, and only exist now to overthrow it by fair means or foul. And the fact that the futurist interpretation originated with them, for ever determines its traitorous character, and it should be shunned and combated by all Protestants who are indeed children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

The True Interpretation

We are by no means attempting an exhaustive treatise in this little volume. Other far more competent witnesses have done this. We aim to present a few of the evidences in small compass, in a simple, popular way, that demonstrate that the Pope and the Papal Church are the true fulfilment of all that is written concerning Antichrist and his connections. We desire to arouse our sleeping brethren in all the different Protestant Churches, and bring this mighty God-given interpretation of prophecy within the reach of a public which may not have time to peruse the large volumes written on it. It is heart rending to see the lethargy that has fallen on the Churches in this matter as a result of Jesuit intrigue, so that the very prophecies that were given to light the Church through this dark time have absolute no light for her. Therefore we believe there is a present need for such a little book as this, and we send it forth in God's name. We make no claim to any great originality in this tract but own our indebtedness to the following,—Albert Close, of England; Dr. A. J. Gordon, late of Boston, Mass., and Dr. H. Grattan Guinness, of England, the latter being in our humble estimation the greatest prophetic gift God has given to the modern Church. And we record with gratitude that it was our great privilege to have been a student in his college in London, and to have sat at his feet.

We will now open the prophetic word with a view to answering the question which is constantly before us,—“Art thou, O Papal Antichrist, he that should come, or look we for another?”

It is our object to select from the prophetic Scriptures a few of those passages which undoubtedly refer to the Antichrist, and are held to refer to him by all well balanced expositors, though he appears under various names, such as —“The Little Horn,” “The Man of Sin,” “The Beast ,” etc.

Continued in [Part 2](#).