

## **THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

### **Excursus: Is the Harlot the Antichrist?**

Is the Harlot the Antichrist? While the term “antichrist” is not listed in Revelation, it does appear in two of John’s epistles (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7) – but nowhere else in the New Testament.

Jesus, in Matthew 24:24 and also in Mark 13:22, said that one sign of the last times before His Second Advent would be the arising of “false christ” and “false prophets” who would deceive, if possible, the elect of God. Jesus also speaks of “false prophets” in Matthew 7:15; 24:11; and Luke 6:26. In Revelation, the “false prophet” (16:13; 19:20; 20:10) is a member of the unholy trinity, together with the dragon and the beast from the sea. But, and this is very important, Jesus never speaks of one single false christ or antichrist.

If one wanted to identify someone or something as antichrist in Revelation it would be the dragon, who is Satan (12:3, 4). Satan claims all spiritual power, which is symbolized by the seven heads, and all earthly power, symbolized by the ten horns. Therefore, the dragon stands opposite of Christ and opposes Him, as well as His Bride, the Church.

There are two women spoken of in Revelation. One represents and symbolizes the true church of Christ: the woman with Child in Ch. 12 (who is the Bride of Christ). The “other” woman symbolizes the false church: the harlot, who, together with the beast of the sea, whom she rides (17:3, 7), comprises Babylon in chapters 17-18. So, in Revelation, that which stands in opposition to Christ is the dragon, the antichrist, and that which stands opposite the church is the harlot, who, in essence, can be called the bride of Satan, the antichurch!

It’s important to understand that the antichrist of Revelation describes anyone or any system that stands in opposition to Jesus; thusly, the term “anti – against” Christ. There have been many attempts to identify the antichrist, some viable, most absurdly wrong. So here’s the bottom line:

The antichrist as described in Revelation, the dragon and his unholy trinity, will be employed to deceive the world and the elect, if possible. How can Satan deceive the elect? By using a “churchly” system that looks and speaks as if it’s Christian, but at its core, is antichrist – against Jesus and His Bride, the true Church.

The clearest identification of the harlot Babylon is that she represents the apostate church (Christianity). She looks genuinely Christian to the extent that she might at times deceive even God’s own elect people (Rev 17:6, 7; Mark 13:14-23). Since

the harlot of Revelation seems to be the same anti-Christian entity as the “abomination of desolation” in Daniel 11:31; 12:11 and as the “man of lawlessness” in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, then whoever and whatever she is at any given time, she dwells right in the bosom of visible Christianity. Note that the “man of lawlessness” calls himself God and takes his seat in the temple of God. And the “abomination of desolation” also is placed in the temple of God.

In conclusion, it’s evident that any “church” that fails or purposely denies the preaching of the Gospel, purposely denies the Blessed Sacraments and their correct administration as instituted by Jesus, and succumbs to social and worldly pressure to deny doctrine and Holy Scripture is antichrist and under control of Satan and his harlot, the false church.

Examples are numerous and sad, but we must stand firm, wearing the armor of God and continue to rightly divide the Word of Truth, rightly administer the Blessed Sacraments and teach doctrine and the Holy Scriptures. Yes, we’ll be persecuted, but at the End, we’ll be vindicated by our Heavenly Bridegroom, our Lord Jesus Christ!

Amen.

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