

The Good Word

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ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME BY DR. SERAPHIM STEGER



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St. Hippolytus of Rome (c. AD 170 to c. AD 235) was a presbyter of the church at Rome under Pope Zephyrinus (ruled AD 199 to AD 217). He was renowned for his learning, eloquence, and preaching which was even heard and noted by Origen of Alexandria. Writing in Greek, St. Hippolytus was the most important theologian and most prolific writer of the Roman Church in the pre-Constantinian era. St. Photios the Great (c. AD 810 to c. AD 893) of Constantinople mentions him in his *Bibliotheca* (codex 121) describing him as a disciple of St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. AD 130 to c. AD 202), who was a disciple of St. Polycarp of Smyrna (AD 69 to AD 155).

Until the discovery and publication in 1851 of St. Hippolytus' book entitled *A Refutation of All Heresies*, one of the most important sources for heresies which disturbed the early Church, many authentic facts concerning him were difficult to separate from the


many extant conflicting statements about him.

We now know that St. Hippolytus came into conflict and schism with the popes of his time by advocating excessive rigorism and uncompromising doctrinal stances. 1. He opposed Roman bishops who softened the penitential system to accommodate the large number of new pagan converts. 2. He accused Pope Zephyrinus (ruled AD 198 to AD 217) of modalism, the heresy which held that the names Father and Son are simply different designations for the same subject. In contrast, St. Hippolytus championed the Logos doctrine of the Greek apologists, most notably St. Justin the Philosopher and Martyr (AD 103 to AD 165), which distinguished the Father from the Logos (the Word). 3. An ethical conservative, he was scandalized when Pope Callixtus I (ruled AD 217 to AD 222) extended absolution to Christians who had committed serious sins including adultery. As a result he left the Roman communion and had himself elected antipope by his small group of followers. 4. He continued in conflict with Pope Urban I (ruled AD 222 to AD 230) and Pope Pontian (ruled AD 230 to AD 235).

During the Christian persecution by Emperor Maximinus Thrax in AD 235 St. Hippolytus and Pope Pontian were both exiled to the unhealthy island of Sardinia where they reposed shortly thereafter. It is believed that shortly before his exile or death St. Hippolytus was reconciled to the Church of Rome. Both Pope Pontian's and St. Hippolytus' remains were returned to Rome in AD 236. St. Hippolytus was buried in a cemetery on the Via Tiburtina on August 13 of that same year. By AD 255 Rome had recognized both Pope Pontian and St. Hippolytus as martyrs, the latter with the rank of a priest. An inscription on the marker over his grave composed by Pope Damascus I (ruled AD 366 to AD 384) mentioned that St. Hippolytus had been a follower of the Novatian schism while a presbyter, but before his death had exhorted his followers to become reconciled to the Catholic Church.

Besides being the author of the *Refutation of All Heresies*, he composed monographs against the heretics Marcion, the Montanists, the Alogi, and Caius, and penned commentaries on the *Book of Daniel* and the *Song of Songs*. St. Jerome attributes to him a book on Church canon law, the *Constitutiones per Hippolytum*, which is a very important source for the rites and

Correction of error in previous printed issue : In Table 4 Noe's **Year of Birth** shown as "1656" should read "1662".



customs of the Church of Rome in the 3rd century, and parallels the eighth book of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. St. Hippolytus also calculated and compiled a table of dates for Pascha as well as a chronicle of the world, which has been a most useful resource for later chroniclers. Lastly, he is perhaps best known for his *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, his only work to have been preserved in Greek in its entirety.¹

In his interpretation of the Antichrist St. Hippolytus expands upon the writings of his teacher St. Irenaeus of Lyon.² St. Hippolytus' treatise is especially notable for its numerous scriptural quotations from both the Old and New Testaments including many from the *Apocalypse of St. John the Theologian*. Moreover, A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D., the translator and editor of St. Hippolytus' *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist* in the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, remarks in a footnote (c. 1886) at the very end of the treatise:

"The immense value of these quotations, authenticating the Revelations and other Scriptures, must be apparent. Is not this treatise a voice to our own times of vast significance?"³

With that in mind, let us now proceed to study this important early 3rd century AD Patristic text. Chapter and verse numbers have been added to the scriptural passages for convenience. Square bracketed "[]" notes reflect the footnotes of A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D.

**ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME:
*TREATISE ON CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST, PART I*⁴**

1. As it was your desire, my beloved brother Theophilus, to be thoroughly informed on those topics which I put summarily before you, I have thought it right to set these matters of inquiry clearly forth to your view, drawing largely from the Holy Scriptures themselves as from a holy fountain, in order that you may not only have the pleasure of hearing them on the testimony of men, but may also be able, by surveying them in the light of (divine) authority, to glorify God in all. For this will be as a sure supply furnished you by us for your journey in this present life, so that by ready argument applying things ill understood and apprehended by most, you may sow them in the ground of your heart, as in a rich and clean soil. By these, too, you will be able to silence those who oppose and

gainsay the word of salvation. Only see that you do not give these things over to unbelieving and blasphemous tongues, for that is no common danger. But impart them to pious and faithful men, who desire to live holily and righteously with fear. For it is not to no purpose that the blessed apostle exhorts Timothy, and says,

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called; 21 which some professing have erred concerning the faith (1 Tim. 6:20-21).

And again,

Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me in many exhortations, 2 the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:1-2)."

If, then, the blessed (apostle) delivered these things with a pious caution, which could be easily known by all, as he perceived in the spirit that *all men have not faith (2 Thes. 3-2)*, how much greater will be our danger, if, rashly and without thought, we commit the revelations of God to profane and unworthy men?


2. For as the blessed prophets were made, so to speak, eyes for us, they foresaw through faith the mysteries of the word, and became ministers of these things also to succeeding generations, not only reporting the past, but also announcing the present and the future, so that the prophet might not appear to be one only for the time being, but might also predict the future for all generations, and so be reckoned a (true) prophet. For these fathers were furnished with the Spirit, and largely honored by the Word Himself; and just as it is with instruments of music, so had they the Word always, like the plectrum, in union with them, and when moved by Him the prophets announced what God willed. For they spake not of their own power [*cf. 2 Pet. 1:21*] (let there be no mistake as to that), neither did they declare what pleased themselves. But first of all they were endowed with wisdom by the Word, and then again were rightly instructed in the future by means of visions. And then, when thus themselves fully convinced, they spake those things which were revealed by God to them alone, and concealed from all others. For with what reason should the prophet be called a prophet, unless he in spirit foresaw the future? For if the prophet spake of any chance event, he would not be a prophet then in speaking of things which were under the eye of all. But one who sets forth in detail things yet to be, was rightly judged a prophet. Wherefore prophets were with good reason called from the very first *seers* [1 Samuel 9:9 KJV / 1 Kingdoms 9:9 Lxx]. And hence we, too, who are rightly instructed in what was declared aforetime by them, speak not of our own capacity. For

1. The online Catholic Encyclopedia at <https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=5792> presents a very detailed life for him.

2. St. Irenaeus, *Chapters 25-30*, in *Against Heresies, Vol. 5*, in Roberts, Alexander, Donaldson, James, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF), Vol. 1*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA, 1994, pp. 553-560

3. A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D., footnote 4, p 219, in St. Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, ANF, Vol. 5*, pp. 204-219.

4. St. Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, ANF, Vol. 5*, pp. 204-219.



we do not attempt to make any change one way or another among ourselves in the words that were spoken of old by them, but we make the Scriptures in which these are written public, and read them to those who can believe rightly; for that is a common benefit for both parties: for him who speaks, in holding in memory and setting forth correctly things uttered of old; and for him who hears, in giving attention to the things spoken. Since, then, in this there is a work assigned to both parties together, viz., to him who speaks, that he speak forth faithfully without regard to risk, and to him who hears, that he hear and receive in faith that which is spoken, I beseech you to strive together with me in prayer to God.

3. Do you wish then to know in what manner the Word of God, who was again the Son of God [Isa. 42:1; Matt. 12:18], as He was of old the Word, communicated His revelations to the blessed prophets in former times? Well, as the Word shows His compassion and His denial of all respect of persons by all the saints, He enlightens them and adapts them to that which is advantageous for us, like a skillful physician, understanding the weakness of men. And the ignorant He loves to teach, and the erring He turns again to His own true way. And by those who live by faith He is easily found; and to those of pure eye and holy heart, who desire to knock at the door, He opens immediately. For He casts away none of His servants as unworthy of the divine mysteries. He does not esteem the rich man more highly than the poor, nor does He despise the poor man for his poverty. He does not disdain the barbarian, nor does He set the eunuch aside as no man [Isa. 56:3-5]. He does not hate the female on account of the woman's act of disobedience in the beginning, nor does He reject the male on account of the man's transgression. But He seeks all, and desires to save all, wishing to make all the children of God, and calling all the saints unto one perfect man. For there is also one Son (or Servant) of God, by whom we too, receiving the regeneration through the Holy Spirit, desire to come all unto one perfect and heavenly man [Eph. 4:13].


4. For whereas the Word of God was without flesh, He took upon Himself the holy flesh by the holy Virgin, and prepared a robe which He wove for Himself, like a bridegroom, in the sufferings of the cross, in order that by uniting His own power with our mortal body, and by mixing the incorruptible with the corruptible, and the strong with the weak, He might save perishing man. The web-beam, therefore, is the passion of the Lord upon the cross, and the warp on it is the power of the Holy Spirit, and the woof is the holy flesh wrought

(woven) by the Spirit, and the thread is the grace which by the love of Christ binds and unites the two in one, and the combs or (rods) are the Word; and the workers are the patriarchs and prophets who weave the fair, long, perfect tunic for Christ; and the Word passing through these, like the combs or (rods), completes through them that which His Father willeth.

OVERVIEW OF THE ANTICHRIST FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

5. But as time now presses for the consideration of the question immediately in hand, and as what has been already said in the introduction with regard to the glory of God, may suffice, it is proper that we take the Holy Scriptures themselves in hand, and find out from them what, and of what manner, the coming of Antichrist is; on what occasion and at what time that impious one shall be revealed; and whence and from what tribe (he shall come); and what his name is, which is indicated by the number in the Scripture; and how he shall work error among the people, gathering them from the ends of the earth; and (how) he shall stir up tribulation and persecution against the saints; and how he shall glorify himself as God; and what his end shall be; and how the sudden appearing of the Lord shall be revealed from heaven; and what the conflagration of the whole world shall be; and what the glorious and heavenly kingdom of the saints is to be, when they reign together with Christ; and what the punishment of the wicked by fire {is to be}.

6. Now, as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is also God, was prophesied of under the figure of a lion [Gen. 49:8, Rev. 5:5] on account of His royalty and glory, in the same way have the Scriptures also aforesaid spoken of Antichrist as a lion, on account of his tyranny and violence. For the deceiver seeks to liken himself in all things to the Son of God. Christ is a lion, so Antichrist is also a lion; Christ is a king [John 18:37], so Antichrist is also a king. The Saviour was manifested as a lamb [John 1:29]; so he too, in like manner, will appear as a lamb, though within he is a wolf. The Saviour came into the world in the circumcision, and he will come in the same manner. The Lord sent apostles among all the nations, and he in like manner will send false apostles. The Saviour gathered together the sheep that were scattered abroad [John 11:52], and he in like manner will bring together a people that is scattered abroad. The Lord gave a seal to those who believed on Him, and he will give one in like manner. The Saviour appeared in the form of man, and he too will come in the form of a man. The Saviour raised up and showed His holy flesh like a temple [John 2:19], and he will raise a temple of stone in Jerusalem. And his seductive



arts we shall exhibit in what follows. But for the present let us turn to the question in hand.

7. Now the blessed Jacob speaks to the following effect in his benedictions, testifying prophetically of our Lord and Saviour:

Judah, let thy brethren praise thee: thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. 9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the shoot, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lion's whelp; who shall rouse him up? 10 A ruler shall not depart from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until he come for whom it is reserved; and he shall be the expectation of the nations. 11 Binding his ass to a vine, and his ass's colt to the vine tendril; he shall wash his garment in wine, and his clothes in the blood of the grapes. 12 His eyes shall be gladsome as with wine, and his teeth shall be whiter than milk (Gen. 49:8-12).

8. Knowing, then, as I do, how to explain these things in detail, I deem it right at present to quote the words themselves. But since the expressions themselves urge us to speak of them. I shall not omit to do so. For these are truly divine and glorious things, and things well calculated to benefit the soul. The prophet, in using the expression, *a lion's whelp*, means him who sprang from Judah and David according to the flesh, who was not made indeed of the seed of David, but was conceived by the (power of the) Holy Spirit, and came forth from the holy shoot of earth. For Isaiah says, *There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall grow up out of it (Isa. 11:1)*. That which is called by Isaiah a *flower* {Lxx}, Jacob calls a shoot. For first he shot forth, and then he flourished in the world. And the expression, *he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as a lion's whelp*, refers to the three days' sleep (death, couching) of Christ; as also Isaiah says, *How is faithful Sion become an harlot! it was full of judgment; in which righteousness lodged (couched); but now murderers (Isa. 1:21)*. And David says to the same effect, *I laid me down (couched) and slept; I awaked: for the Lord will sustain me (Ps. 3:5)*, in which words he points to the fact of his sleep and rising again. And Jacob says, *Who shall rouse him up?* And that is just what David and Paul both refer to, as when Paul says, *and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead (Gal 1:1b)*.

9. And in saying, *A ruler shall not depart from Judah, nor a leader from his thighs, until he come for whom it is reserved; and he shall be the expectation of the nations*, he referred the fulfillment (of that prophecy) to Christ. For He is our expectation. For we expect Him, (and) by faith we behold Him as He comes from heaven with power.

10. *Binding his ass to a vine ...* that means that He unites His people of the circumcision with His own calling (vocation). For He was the vine [John 15:1]. *And his ass's colt to the vine-tendril*: that denotes the people of the Gentiles, as He calls the circumcision and the uncircumcision unto one faith.


11. *He shall wash his garment in wine*, that is, according to that voice of His Father which came down by the Holy Spirit at the Jordan. *And his clothes in the blood of the grape*. In the blood of what grape, then, but just His own flesh, which hung upon the tree like a cluster of grapes?—from whose side also flowed two streams, of blood and water, in which the nations are washed and purified, which (nations) He may be supposed to have as a robe about Him.

12. *His eyes gladsome with wine*. And what are the eyes of Christ but the blessed prophets, who foresaw in the Spirit, and announced beforehand, the sufferings that were to befall Him, and rejoiced in seeing Him in power with spiritual eyes, being furnished (for their vocation) by the word Himself and His grace?

13. And in saying, *And his teeth (shall be) whiter than milk*, he referred to the commandments that proceed from the holy mouth of Christ, and which are pure (purify) as milk.

14. Thus did the Scriptures preach before-time of this lion and lion's whelp. And in like manner also we find it written regarding Antichrist. For Moses speaks thus: *Dan is a lion's whelp, and he shall leap from Bashan⁵ (Deut. 33:22)*. But that no one may err by supposing that this is said of the Saviour, let him attend carefully to the matter. *Dan*, he says, *is a lion's whelp*; and in naming the tribe of Dan, he declared clearly the tribe from which Antichrist is destined to spring. For as Christ springs from the tribe of Judah, so Antichrist is to spring from the tribe of Dan. And that the case stands thus, we see also from the words of Jacob: *Let Dan be a serpent, lying upon the ground, biting the horse's heel (Gen. 49:17)*. What, then, is meant by the serpent but Antichrist, that deceiver who is mentioned in Genesis [3:10], who deceived Eve and supplanted Adam (πτερνίσας, bruised Adam's heel)? But since it is necessary to prove this assertion by sufficient

5. Note: Bashan [בשן] *ha-Bashan = the Fruitful* is in SW Syria and includes the Golan Heights and Laish/Leshem where the tribe of Dan migrated (Judges 18, 19). The mountains of Bashan are 100 miles directly east of the Sea of Galilee. Mt. Bashan is the tallest peak there. *Ps. 68:15-16 (MT, lit.) Mt. Bashan is God's towering mountain; Mt. Bashan is a mountain of many tall peaks. 16 Why gaze with envy, you mountain peaks, at the mountain God desired for His dwelling [Mt. Zion]? The Lord will tabernacle there forever. Contrast the Lxx's Ps. 67:15-16 (HTM) with its "butter/curdled mountain(s)."*



testimony, we shall not shrink from the task.

15. That it is in reality out of the tribe of Dan, then, that that tyrant and king, that dread judge, that son of the devil, is destined to spring and arise, the prophet testifies when he says, *Dan shall judge his people, as (he is) also one tribe in Israel (Gen. 49:16)*. But some one may say that this refers to Samson, who sprang from the tribe of Dan, and judged the people twenty years. Well, the prophecy had its partial fulfillment in Samson, but its complete fulfillment is reserved for Antichrist. For Jeremiah also speaks to this effect:

From Dan we are to hear the sound of the swiftness of his horses: the whole land trembled at the sound of the neighing, of the driving of his horses (Jer. 8:16)

And another prophet says:

“He shall gather together all his strength, from the east even to the west. They whom he calls, and they whom he calls not, shall go with him. He shall make the sea white with the sails of his ships, and the plain black with the shields of his armaments. And whosoever shall oppose him in war shall fall by the sword” [unknown, perhaps from an apocryphal book].

That these things, then, are said of no one else but that tyrant, and shameless one, and adversary of God, we shall show in what follows.

16. But Isaiah also speaks thus:

And it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will punish (visit) the stout mind, the king of Assyria, and the greatness (height) of the glory of his eyes. 13 For he said, By my strength will I do it, and by the wisdom of my understanding I will remove the bounds of the peoples, and will rob them of their strength: 14 and I will make the inhabited cities tremble, and will gather the whole world in my hand like a nest, and I will lift it up like eggs that are left. And there is no one that shall escape or gainsay me, and open the mouth and chatter. 15 Shall the axe boast itself without him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself without him that shaketh (draweth) it? As if one should raise a rod or a staff, and the staff should lift itself up: and not thus. 16 But the Lord shall send dishonor unto thy honor; and into thy glory a burning fire shall burn. 17 And the light of Israel shall be a fire, and shall sanctify him in flame, and shall consume the forest like grass (Isa. 10:12-17).

17. And again he says in another place:

How hath the exactor ceased, and how hath the oppressor ceased! 5 God hath broken the yoke of the rulers of sinners, He who smote the people in wrath, and with an incurable stroke: 6 He that strikes the people with an incurable stroke, which He did not spare. 7 He ceased (rested) confidently: the whole earth shouts with rejoicing. 8 The trees of Lebanon rejoiced at thee, and the cedar of Lebanon, (saying), Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us. 9 Hell from beneath is moved at meeting thee: all the mighty ones, the rulers of the earth, are gathered together—the lords from their thrones. 10 All the kings of the nations, all they shall


answer together, and shall say, And thou, too, art taken as we; and thou art reckoned among us. 11 Thy pomp is brought down to earth, thy great rejoicing: they will spread decay under thee; and the worm shall be thy covering. 12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! He is cast down to the ground who sends off to all the nations. 13 And thou didst say in thy mind, I will ascend into heaven, I will set my throne above the stars of heaven: I will sit down upon the lofty mountains towards the north: 14 I will ascend above the clouds: I will be like the Most High. 15 Yet now thou shalt be brought down to hell, and to the foundations of the earth! 16 They that see thee shall wonder at thee, and shall say, This is the man that excited the earth, that did shake kings, 17 that made the whole world a wilderness, and destroyed the cities, that released not those in prison. 18 All the kings of the earth did lie in honor, every one in his own house; 19 but thou shalt be cast out on the mountains like a loathsome carcass, with many who fall, pierced through with the sword, and going down to hell. 20 As a garment stained with blood is not pure, so neither shalt thou be comely (or clean); because thou hast destroyed my land, and slain my people. Thou shalt not abide, enduring for ever, a wicked seed. 21 Prepare thy children for slaughter, for the sins of thy father, that they rise not, neither possess my land (Isa. 14:4b-21).

18. Ezekiel also speaks of him to the same effect, thus:

Thus saith the Lord God, Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the sea; yet art thou a man, and not God, (though) thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God. 3 Art thou wiser than Daniel? Have the wise not instructed thee in their wisdom? 4 With thy wisdom or with thine understanding hast thou gotten thee power, and gold and silver in thy treasures? 5 By thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy power? Thy heart is lifted up in thy power. 6 Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God: behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, plagues from the nations: 7 and they shall draw their swords against thee, and against the beauty of thy wisdom; and they shall level thy beauty to destruction; 8 and they shall bring thee down; and thou shalt die by the death of the wounded in the midst of the sea. 9 Wilt thou yet say before them that slay thee, I am God? But thou art a man, and no God, in the hand of them that wound thee. 10 Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord (Eze. 28:2-10).

19. These words then being thus presented, let us observe somewhat in detail what Daniel says in his visions. For in distinguishing the kingdoms that are to rise after these things, he showed also the coming of Antichrist in the last times, and the consummation of the whole world. In expounding the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, then, he speaks thus:

Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image standing before thy face: 32 the head of which was of fine gold, its arms and shoulders of silver, its belly and its thighs of brass, 33 and its legs of iron, (and) its feet part of iron and part of



clay. 34 *Thou sawest, then, till that a stone was cut out without hands, and smote the image upon the feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to an end.* 35 *Then were the clay, the iron, the brass, the silver, (and) the gold broken, and became like the chaff from the summer threshing-floor; and the strength (fulness) of the wind carried them away, and there was no place found for them. And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35).*

20. Now if we set Daniel's own visions also side by side with this, we shall have one exposition to give of the two together, and shall (be able to) show how concordant with each other they are, and how true. For he speaks thus:

I Daniel saw, and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. 3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 4 The first (was) like a lioness, and had wings as of an eagle. I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 And behold a second beast like to a bear, and it was made stand on one part, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it. 6 I beheld, and lo a beast like a leopard, and it had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl, and the beast had four heads. 7 After this I saw, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; it had iron teeth and claws of brass, which devoured and brake in pieces, and it stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. 8 I considered its horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, and before it there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things (Dan. 7:2-8).

21. *I beheld till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of days did sit: and His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was a flame of fire, His wheels were a burning fire. 10 A stream of fire flowed before Him. Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood around Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake, till the beast was slain and perished, and his body given to the burning of fire. 12 And the dominion of the other beasts was taken away (Dan. 7:9-12).*

22. *I saw in the night vision, and, behold, one like the Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before Him. 14 And there was given Him dominion, and honor, and the kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13-14).*


23. Now since these things, spoken as they are with a mystical meaning, may seem to some hard to understand, we shall keep back nothing fitted to impart an intelligent apprehension of them to those who are

possessed of a sound mind. He said, then, that a *lioness came up from the sea*, and by that he meant the kingdom of the Babylonians in the world, which also was the head of gold on the image. In saying that *it had wings as of an eagle*, he meant that Nebuchadnezzar the king was lifted up and was exalted against God. Then he says, *the wings thereof were plucked*, that is to say, his glory was destroyed; for he was driven out of his kingdom. And the words, *a man's heart was given to it, and it was made stand upon the feet as a man*, refer to the fact that he repented and recognized himself to be only a man, and gave the glory to God.

24. Then, after the lioness, he sees a *second beast like a bear*, and that denoted the Persians. For after the Babylonians, the Persians held the sovereign power. And in saying that there were *three ribs in the mouth of it*, he pointed to three nations, viz., the Persians, and the Medes, and the Babylonians; which were also represented on the image by the silver after the gold. Then (there was) *the third beast, a leopard*, which meant the Greeks. For after the Persians, Alexander of Macedon obtained the sovereign power on subverting Darius, as is also shown by the brass on the image. And in saying that it had *four wings of a fowl*, he taught us most clearly how the kingdom of Alexander was partitioned. For in speaking of *four heads*, he made mention of four kings, viz., those who arose out of that (kingdom). For Alexander, when dying, partitioned out his kingdom into four divisions.

25. Then he says: *A fourth beast, dreadful and terrible; it had iron teeth and claws of brass.* And who are these but the Romans? which (kingdom) is meant by the iron—the kingdom which is now established; for the legs of that (image) were of iron. And after this, what remains, beloved, but the toes of the feet of the image, in which part is iron and part clay, mixed together? And mystically by the toes of the feet he meant the kings who are to arise from among them; as Daniel also says (in the words), *I considered the beast, and lo there were ten horns behind it, among which shall rise another (horn), an offshoot, and shall pluck up by the roots the three (that were) before it.* And under this was signified none other than Antichrist, who is also himself to raise the kingdom of the Jews. He says that three horns are plucked up by the root by him, viz., the three kings of Egypt, and Libya, and Ethiopia, whom he cuts off in the array of battle. And he, after gaining terrible power over all, being nevertheless a tyrant, shall stir up tribulation and persecution against men, exalting himself against them. For Daniel says:

I considered the horn, and behold that horn made war



with the saints, and prevailed against them (Dan. 7:21), till the beast was slain and perished, and its body was given to the burning of fire (Dan. 7:11).

26. After a little space the stone (Dan. 2:34-45) will come from heaven which smites the image and breaks it in pieces, and subverts all the kingdoms, and gives the kingdom to the saints of the Most High. This is the stone which becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth, of which Daniel says:

I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and was brought near before Him. 14 And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; and all peoples, tribes, and languages shall serve Him: and His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed (Dan. 7:13-14).

He showed all power given by the Father to the Son [cf. Matt. 28:18], who is ordained Lord of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth, and Judge of all [cf. Phil. 2:10]: of things in heaven, because He was born, the Word of God, before all (ages); and of things on earth, because He became man in the midst of men, to re-create our Adam through Himself; and of things under the earth, because He was also reckoned among the dead, preaching the Gospel to the souls of the saints [cf. 1 Pet. 3:19], (and) by death overcoming death.

27. As these things, then, are in the future, and as the ten toes of the image are equivalent to (so many) democracies, and the ten horns of the fourth beast are distributed over ten kingdoms, let us look at the subject a little more closely, and consider these matters as in the clear light of a personal survey.

28. The golden head of the image and the lioness denoted the Babylonians; the shoulders and arms of silver, and the bear, represented the Persians and Medes; the belly and thighs of brass, and the leopard, meant the Greeks, who held the sovereignty from Alexander's time; the legs of iron, and the beast dreadful and terrible, expressed the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet which were part clay and part iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ.

29. These things, beloved, we impart to you with fear, and yet readily, on account of the love of Christ, which surpasseth all. For if the blessed prophets who preceded us did not choose to proclaim these things, though they knew them, openly and boldly, lest they should disquiet the souls of men, but recounted them

mystically in parables and dark sayings, speaking thus, *Here is the mind which hath wisdom (Rev. 17:9)*, how much greater risk shall we run in venturing to declare openly things spoken by them in obscure terms! Let us look, therefore, at the things which are to befall this unclean harlot in the last days; and (let us consider) what and what manner of tribulation is destined to visit her in the wrath of God before the judgment as an earnest of her doom.

30. Come, then, O blessed Isaiah; arise, tell us clearly what thou didst prophesy with respect to the mighty Babylon. For thou didst speak also of Jerusalem, and thy word is accomplished. For thou didst speak boldly and openly:

Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate as overthrown by many strangers, 8 The daughter of Sion shall be left as a cottage in a vineyard, and as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city (Isa. 1:7-8).

What then? Are not these things come to pass? Are not the things announced by thee fulfilled? Is not their country, Judea, desolate? Is not the holy place burned with fire? Are not their walls cast down? Are not their cities destroyed? Their land, do not strangers devour it? Do not the Romans rule the country? And indeed these impious people hated thee, and did saw thee asunder, and they crucified Christ. Thou art dead in the world, but thou livest in Christ.

31. Which of you, then, shall I esteem more than thee? Yet Jeremiah, too, is stoned. But if I should esteem Jeremiah most, yet Daniel too has his testimony. Daniel, I commend thee above all; yet John too gives no false witness. With how many mouths and tongues would I praise you; or rather the Word who spake in you! Ye died with Christ; and ye will live with Christ. Hear ye, and rejoice; behold the things announced by you have been fulfilled in their time. For ye saw these things yourselves first, and then ye proclaimed them to all generations. Ye ministered the oracles of God to all generations. Ye prophets were called, that ye might be able to save all. For then is one a prophet indeed, when, having announced beforetime things about to be, he can afterwards show that they have actually happened. Ye were the disciples of a good Master. These words I address to you as if alive, and with propriety. For ye hold already the crown of life and immortality which is laid up for you in heaven [cf. 2 Tim. 4:8].

32. Speak with me, O blessed Daniel. Give me full assurance, I beseech thee. Thou dost prophesy concerning the lioness in Babylon [cf. Dan. 7:4]; for thou wast a captive there. Thou hast unfolded the future

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guarding the bear; for thou wast still in the world, and didst see the things come to pass. Then thou speakest to me of the leopard; and whence canst thou know this, for thou art already gone to thy rest? Who instructed thee to announce these things, but He who formed thee in (from) thy mother's womb [cf. Jer. 1:5]? That is God, thou sayest. Thou hast spoken indeed, and that not falsely. The leopard has arisen; the he-goat is come; he hath smitten the ram; he hath broken his horns in pieces; he hath stamped upon him with his feet. He has been exalted by his fall; (the) four horns have come up from under that one [cf. Dan. 8:2-8]. Rejoice, blessed Daniel! thou hast not been in error: all these things have come to pass.

33. After this again thou hast told me of the beast dreadful and terrible. *It had iron teeth and claws of brass: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it (Dan. 7:6).* Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces; already it brings all the unwilling into subjection; already we see these things ourselves. Now we glorify God, being instructed by thee.

34. But as the task before us was to speak of the harlot, be thou with us, O blessed Isaiah. Let us mark what thou sayest about Babylon:

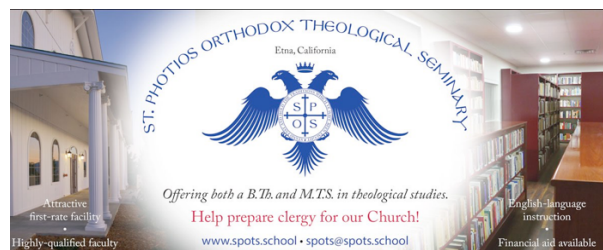
Come down, sit upon the ground, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit, O daughter of the Chaldeans; thou shalt no longer be called tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstone, grind meal, draw aside thy veil, shave the grey hairs, make bare the legs, pass over the rivers. 3 Thy shame shall be uncovered, thy reproach shall be seen: I will take justice of thee, I will no more give thee over to men. 4 As for thy Redeemer, (He is) the Lord of hosts, the Holy One of Israel is his name. 5 Sit thou in compunction, get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: thou shalt no longer be called the strength of the kingdom.

35. *6 I was wroth with my people; I have polluted mine inheritance, I have given them into thine hand: and thou didst*

show them no mercy; but upon the ancient (the elders) thou hast very heavily laid thy yoke. 7 And thou saidst, I shall be a princess for ever: thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember thy latter end. 8 Therefore hear now this, thou that art delicate; that sittest, that art confident, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and there is none else; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. 9 But now these two things shall come upon thee in one day, widowhood and the loss of children: they shall come upon thee suddenly in thy sorcery, in the strength of thine enchantments mightily, in the hope of thy fornication. 10 For thou hast said, I am, and there is none else. And thy fornication shall be thy shame, because thou hast said in thy heart, I am. 11 And destruction shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know it. (And there shall be) a pit, and thou shalt fall into it; and misery shall fall upon thee, and thou shalt not be able to be made clean; and destruction shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know it. 12 Stand now with thy enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, which thou hast learned from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to be profited. 13 Thou art wearied in thy counsels. Let the astrologers of the heavens stand and save thee; let the star-gazers announce to thee what shall come upon thee. 14 Behold, they shall all be as sticks for the fire; so shall they be burned, and they shall not deliver their soul from the flame. Because thou hast coals of fire, sit upon them; so shall it be for thy help. 15 Thou art wearied with change from thy youth. Man has gone astray (each one) by himself; and there shall be no salvation for thee (Isa. 47:1-15).

These things does Isaiah prophesy for thee. Let us see now whether John has spoken to the same effect. ❖ ❖ ❖

NEXT ISSUE: ST. HYPPOLYTUS, PART II



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