



St. John of Damascus - Concerning the Antichrist

It should be known that the Antichrist is bound to come. Every one, therefore, who confesses not that the Son of God came in the flesh and is perfect God and became perfect man, after being God, is Antichrist. But in a peculiar and special sense he who comes at the consummation of the age is called Antichrist. First, then, it is requisite that the Gospel should be preached among all nations, as the Lord said, and then he will come to refute the impious Jews. For the Lord said to them: 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. And the apostle says, Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause Gad shall send them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. The Jews accordingly did not receive the Lord Jesus Christ who was the Son of God and God, but receive the impostor who calls himself God. For that he will assume the name of God, the angel teaches Daniel, saying these words, Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers. And the apostle says: Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son, of perdition: who opposeth and exalleth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God; in the temple of God he said; not our temple, but the old Jewish temple. For he will come not to us but to the Jews: not for Christ or the things of Christ: wherefore he is called Antichrist.

First, therefore, it is necessary that the Gospel should be preached among all nations: And then shall that wicked one be revealed, even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, whom the Lord shall consume with the word of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. The devil himself, therefore does not become man in the way that the Lord was made man. God forbid! but he becomes man as the offspring of fornication and receiveth all the energy of Satan. For God, foreknowing the strangeness of the choice that he would make, allows the devil to take up his abode in him. He is, therefore, as we said, the offspring of fornication and is nurtured in secret, and on a sudden he rises up and rebels and assumes rule. And in the beginning of his rule, or rather tyranny, he assumes the role of sanctity. But when he becomes master he persecutes the Church of God and displays all his wickedness. But he will come with signs and lying wonders, fictitious and not real, and he will deceive and lead away from the living God those whose mind rests on an unsound and unstable foundation, so that even the elect shall, if it be possible, be made to stumble. But Enoch and Elias the Thesbite shall be sent and shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, that is, the synagogue to our Lord Jesus Christ and the preaching of the apostles: and they will be destroyed by him. And the Lord shall come out of heaven, just as the holy apostles beheld Him going into heaven perfect God and perfect man, with glory and power, and will destroy the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction, with the breath of His mouth. Let no one, therefore, look for the Lord to come from earth, but out of Heaven, as He himself has made sure.