

THE ANTICHRIST AND THE POPE

According to the expectations of the New Agers expressed on the Internet

By Nicolas Zisis

“...the mystery of iniquity doth already work”¹

Ecclesiastical Tradition portrays the eschatological figure known as the Antichrist using the darkest colours: “Nothing holy will be found in this man whose identity has remained unrevealed to us ... Carrying Satan’s entire power in his person, he will demonstrate superhuman powers on one hand, and an inhuman character and no feelings on the other”².

The complete acceptance of Satan’s false promise (that “you will be as Gods” through knowledge³) is fully applied in his person; for the Antichrist will be a man who will desire to replace God through Satan’s power. As Saint John Chrysostom notes, God will allow his emergence in order for those who do not wish to be saved one way or the other to be judged: while the faithless ones would otherwise be in a position to find an excuse by claiming that “we did not believe in you because you claimed to be God” when presented in front of Christ, now they will be found to be inexcusable because they will accept the Antichrist as God, when he will not in fact come in the name of God the Father, but in his own name⁴.

The New Age of Aquarius is a movement (or more accurately a network of movements) that has tens of millions of followers around the world and whose roots can be found in the teachings chiefly of two leaders of the Theosophical Society (founded in New York, USA in 1875): Helena Blavatsky (a co-founding member of the Society) and Alice Bailey (1880-1949)⁵. Since the beginning (in accordance with its official texts) the Theosophical Society has set out to: a) create a nucleus of a universal brotherhood for mankind that will not discriminate according to race, faith, caste or social class, gender or colour; b) promote studies on syncretistic religious science⁶, philosophy and science; and c) investigate the unexplained laws of nature and man’s latent powers⁷. Similarly, New Age (having at its immediate disposal the even more progressive and avant-garde ideas of Alice Bailey) promotes an economic-political and religious union for mankind, placing emphasis on occultism and the expectation of a “Christ” in the new astrological age of “Aquarius”⁸.

¹ 2 Thess. 2:7

² A. Theodorou, *The Antichrist idea*, p.7

³ Gen. 3:1-5

⁴ St. John Chrysostom, *On the Gospel according to John* 41, PG 59:236. Ibid. *On 2 Thessalonians* 4:1, PG 62:487

⁵ M. Basilea Schlink, *New Age from a biblical viewpoint*, Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, Great Britain 1988 (first English edition), p.7ff

⁶ Comparative religion is the branch of the science of religion that usually studies the world’s religions and their diachronic evolution through comparison. This trend to compare became popular in the science of religion for the first time in the 19th century and has flourished since.

⁷ Shirley J. Nicholson, “*Theosophical Society*”, in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* 14 (1987) 464. For a general critique on Theosophy, cf. P. N. Trembelas, *Theosophy*, ed. “*O Soter*”, Athens 1988³.

⁸ M. Basilea Schlink, *New Age from a biblical viewpoint*, op. cit., p.10ff. Cf. Protopresbyter Anthony Alevizopoulos, *Occultism, Guruism, New Age*, ed. H. M. Nicopolis, Preveza 1990, pp.100-108. Also cf. P. Skaltzes, *Gnosticism, “New Age” and the Orthodox tradition*, ed. Holy Monastery of Serres and Nigriti, Serres 1994.

Of course, Masonry (Freemasonry) became the first internationally widespread form of religious syncretism, particularly after the changes it underwent through “Anderson’s constitutions” in 1723. The admittance of members in the Lodges from various religious communities, coupled with the Masons’ conviction that they are “enlightened” whereas all the ones uninitiated to Masonry are “profane”, reveals that each Lodge professes “knowledge” (“gnosis”) and “enlightenment” unattainable in other churches or religions, becoming thus a supra-religion. The faith of its members in dogmas or religions is depreciated since Masonry keeps to an abstract general faith to some “Great Architect of the Universe” while the connate human ethics and the Masonic mysteries are considered sufficient to lead man to perfection and “theosis”⁹. And while it is well-known that the principal leaders of Theosophy originate from Masonic Lodge circles and from their offshoots¹⁰, nevertheless we do not know from the available Masonic texts of any expectation of a Messiah, as is the case with Theosophy and its “daughter”, the New Age.

We thought it would be fitting to present the New Agers’ expectations on their “Christ” as these are presented on the internet; not however projected through their own prism alone, but through a comparison with the Tradition of the Church, namely the teaching of the Holy Prophets, Apostles and Fathers. Regardless as to whether one trusts the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ the God and the prophecies of the Holy Fathers on the eschatological Antichrist (with a capital A) or not, one cannot but notice a remarkable similarity in the descriptions of the Antichrist both by the Saints and by the Aquarian followers of the “son of perdition”. Even if present-day New Agers live in the realm of fantasy or disinformation this should not stop us from presenting their views even if these happen to be merely desires and expectations for a universal spiritual totalitarianism or maybe propaganda that caters to their revealed designs. We will chiefly concentrate on their Messianic expectations, which are often overlooked. Essentially, their predictions are nothing but a portrayal of the terrible things that will take place before the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ but seen through the prism “of the other side”.

As such, what follows will neither concentrate on a compositive presentation of the New Age movement as that has appeared in occult systems, secret societies and eastern religions from antiquity till today (ancient Gnosticism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Masonry, Rocicrucianism, Theosophical Society and others) nor on a general exposition of the Church’s teaching on the Antichrist. Reductions to and comparisons with unifying tendencies in many areas (globalism, ecumenism, religious syncretism, one man rules the world etc.) as well as the ever-spreading occultism on television, music, the press and elsewhere are all left to the careful and compositive thinking process of the well-meaning and prudent reader.

We hope that the impessure of the antichrists’ plans that we shall attempt will fulfill Saint Cyril’s of Jerusalem exhortation: “*Therefore, secure your self, O man. You know the signs of the Antichrist. And these you should not remember alone but you should richly extend to all. If you have a flesh child you should admonish him,*

⁹ Indicatively, cf. P. N. Trembelas *Masonism* (Freemasonry), ed. “O Soter”, Athens 1986⁵, pp. 23ff. 122ff. Archimandrite Epiphanius Theodoropoulos, *Masonry under the light of truth*, ed. “Orthodox Press”, Athens 1988⁵, pp. 95-107. The fundamental position of humanist and relativist ethics accepted in Masonry is admitted by the Freemasons themselves: “In der Sittlichkeit findet die Freimaurerei das allen Religionen Gemeinsame, die Religion, in der alle Menschen ubereinstimmen können, die aber nicht al seine gottliche Offenbarung aufgefabt widt” (Eugen Lennhoff – Oskar Posner, *Internationales Freimauer – Lexikon*, Amalthea Verlag, Wien – Munchen 1975 v.1466)

¹⁰ P. N. Trembelas, *Theosophy*, op. cit. p.13. Protopresbyter Anthony Alevizopoulos, *Occultism in the light of Orthodoxy*, issues 4-10, Athens 1996, p.124ff.

starting now; if you bore someone through catechesis, him you should also protect in advance, so that he does not end up accepting the false one as if he were real; for 'the mystery of iniquity doth already work'¹¹¹². And while we must not attempt to predict when these events will come to pass, Saint Cyril says that neither should we relax our vigilance: "And do not dare to predict when these will be, nor should you sleep in peace though, for it is said 'be watchful, for the Son of man will come at a time that you will not be expecting Him to come'.¹³ But since we had to know the signs of the end, and because we await Christ, in order not to die deceived and deluded by the liar Antichrist, the Apostles, motivated by divine will, by economy come to the true Teacher and ask Him: 'Tell us when these things will take place and what the sign of your Coming and of the end of the age will be'¹⁴. We still wait for you to come again, but Satan can transform himself into an angel of light¹⁵. Please protect us, so that we do not end up bowing before someone other than you."¹⁶

The following presentation of the New Agers' views on the Aquarian "Christ", who appears to be "before the gates", is based on information provided on the internet by the most important, perhaps, representative of New Age Messianism, the London writer and speaker Benjamin Creme. In the past 20 years, his activities have included 300 speeches on television and radio in the US alone, seven books on the "Christ Maitreya" which have been translated in seven languages, as well as the monthly publication of the international magazine *Share International* in at least seven languages in 70 countries, and which also happens to be an accredited NGO of the Department of Public Information at the United Nations¹⁷.

Below we will very briefly present only some of the basic "theological" positions of New Age as these are promoted by B. Creme and his like-minded ideological partners in *Share International* and re-published on the internet. Especially Creme's teachings stem from his spiritual communication either with the "Master Christ" Maitreya or with other "Masters", as well as from older occultist beliefs; in other words they do not constitute anything but (mainly) spiritualist "mediumistic" contacts, i.e. demonic teachings.

1. The "theology" of the New Age of Aquarius

The New Age of Aquarius does not accept the existence of a personal God, let alone the existence of a Holy Trinity of Persons. God is the set of all the laws and all the energies ruled by these laws which create whatever we can or cannot see. God is also called the Cosmic Being (Logos) that animates our planet. The etheric – natural expression of this planetary Logos and Lord of the world is Sanat Kumara, who comes from the planet Venus and lives in the energy centre of Shamballa, somewhere north of China's Gobi desert.

There is also a group of higher evolved beings, Masters and initiates, whilom common men, who all together constitute the Spiritual Hierarchy (otherwise known as the White Brotherhood, the Society of Illuminated Minds, the Powers of the Light, or "Mahatmas") and who are divided into 49 groups, the Ashrams. Each Ashram is also

¹¹ 2 Thessalonians 2:7

¹² St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis for the Illuminated* 15:18 PG 33:896A

¹³ Cf. Matthew 24:44 Mark 13:33 Luke 21:36

¹⁴ Matthew 24:3

¹⁵ 2 Corinthians 11:14

¹⁶ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis for the Illuminated* 15:4 PG 33:876AB

¹⁷ Share International magazine, http://www.shareintl.org/magazine/SI_main.htm . Benjamin Creme: a messenger of hope, http://www.shareintl.org/background/bcreme/bc_main.htm

under the rule of one Master of Wisdom. Each time the Hierarchy has a new head he is called Christ or Universal Master or Master of Masters, an office currently held for the astrological Age of Aquarius (whose duration is estimated to be approximately 2,150 years) by Master Maitreya, who possesses the “energy of the Cosmic Christ”, the “Christ Conscience”. The Christ is not identified here with Jesus of Nazareth whom Christians believe to be the Christ.

Occasionally, spiritual beings of a higher evolution, either human or from outer space or even cosmic, known as the Avatars, respond to the calls of humanity for help and accept to teach humans the path to evolution¹⁸.

2. The anthropology of the New Agers

Man is nothing else but God, a spark of God¹⁹. Knowledge of God is nothing else but knowledge of our selves²⁰. The Law of Rebirth, of Reincarnation, has no other purpose than to gradually lead us (through the course of many lives) to the union and absorption in God²¹. Beyond every other element, body, spirit, or mind, there is a divine Self, the “Ego”, which we must let free to develop. For this reason, we must not follow others or be constrained by others: “Be what you are” is the New Agers’ motto. Freedom is the most important thing that has been granted to man while loneliness is the highest blessing that man can achieve²².

The spiritual element does not coincide with the religious element, but includes even science²³. Gradually, through evolution, piety must give way to knowledge and occultism²⁴.

In order for man to free himself from the lower elements he must concentrate on three things: knowledge (*awareness*), environment and independence (*detachment*). Do not follow others²⁵, but also do not be self-sufficient in your views; mother of all evil is man’s perception that “I am right, I am OK”. This form of self-sufficiency is the greatest evil²⁶.

There is no such thing as sin, since this is just an invention of the Church; there is only perfection and imperfection²⁷. Evil is considered to be anything that goes against the evolutionary process, namely the course to the theosis (divinisation) of man and of the world according to nature; the “immateriality” of matter²⁸.

3. The teaching of the New Agers on the arrival of the Antichrist

¹⁸ *Glossary of esoteric terms*, http://www.shareintl.org/background/glossary/g_main.htm and also *The Ageless Wisdom Teachings in brief*, http://www.shareintl.org/background/awteachings/AWT_main.htm

¹⁹ *The art of Self-realization*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_art-self-realiz.htm

²⁰ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion (2)*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_Mt-religion.htm : “Self-realization is God-realization. The teaching of the Master inspires you to look within. This has nothing to do with religion, politics or any form of ideology”.

²¹ *Glossary of esoteric terms*, op. cit.

²² *The practice of Self-realization*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt-pract-Self-realiz.htm. *A Prayer for the New Age*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt-prayer-newage.htm.

²³ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, http://www.shareintl.org/background/FAQ/faq_main.htm

²⁴ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion (1)*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_religion.htm

²⁵ *The practice of Self-realization*, op. cit.

²⁶ *The Law of Cause and Effect*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_law-cause-effect.htm

²⁷ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion (1)*, op. cit.

²⁸ *Glossary of esoteric terms*, op. cit.

Every religious community awaits its Messiah in the same way; so do the New Agers teach. This way is none other than the one evangelised by New Age. The Christ of the Christians during His Second Coming, the expected Messiah of Judaism, the Imam Mahdi of the Mohammedans, the reincarnation of the Krishna of the Hindus, and the Fifth Buddha (i.e. *Maitreya*, the kind one) of the Buddhists are none other but one and the same person: the Master Maitreya who will soon walk among men²⁹.

“Christ” Maitreya comes to men as a man; not however as any man but that man who has achieved “the completeness of divinity”³⁰.

He has already made about 200 miraculous appearances on different parts of the planet and he has performed many “miracles”, among them the appearance of luminous crosses, the gush of water and many others³¹.

“Christ Maitreya”, who apparently hails from the Himalaya, has shaped himself a body (*mayavipura*) which will become appropriate dwelling for him so that he can live together with men during the New Age³². As an Aquarius, he comes to suffuse humanity with new powers: “*My work will be to channel these waters of life through you. I am the Aquarius. I am the vessel of truth.*”³³

His coming has been prepared for a long time now and almost everything needed to establish his dominion has been completed, once the world realises the need for his coming to establish social justice and equal distribution of goods: “*there is now a huge army ready to follow his guidance; they appear in every country, demanding justice and freedom*”. Everything is so much in accordance with the plan that few people today can doubt that an invisible hand (that of Maitreya) directs the international developments³⁴.

His official worldwide public appearance will take place on a particular day in the future, known as the “Day of Declaration”, so that the entire world will become aware of his presence. This announcement is necessary, for otherwise the “Master” would remain unknown to many³⁵.

The appearance of the newly appeared “Christ” will become perceived by as many people as possible through television and radio, where he will be invited to speak through the means of a global satellite transmission. Maitreya will not actually speak to the mass media outlets but he will “telepathically” address his message to mankind (of justice etc.) in his “incarnated” form; each man will internally understand his message in their own tongue, and thus this day will resemble the Christian Pentecost. Those who do not have access to the specific mass media outlets used will become aware of the “Day of Declaration” in a particularly perceptible manner (also in a bodily fashion), which will be confirmed through an “overshadowing”, an “embrace”. This way, “Christ” Maitreya will convince even the “fundamentalist”

²⁹ *Free Newsletter*, <http://www.shareintl.org/newsletter/newsletter.htm>

³⁰ By the Master, through Benjamin Crème, *The Son of Man*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_mission/mm_sonoman.htm: “The Christ comes as a man among men, but a man who has achieved the fullness of divinity”.

³¹ *Maitreya’s worldwide appearances*, http://www.shareintl.org/maitreya/Ma_wwa.htm . *Signs and miracles*, http://www.shareintl.org/background/miracles/MI_main.htm

³² Benjamin Crème, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

³³ Benjamin Crème, *The esoteric work of the Christ*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_mission/Mm_bcesoteric.htm

³⁴ By the Master, through Benjamin Crème, *His name is Love*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_mas-name-love.htm

³⁵ By the Master, through Benjamin Crème, *The Son of Man*, op. cit.: “So far from the general notion is He that He would pass unnoticed in the crowd... Only His Declaration before the world will establish Him in the sight and hearts of men”.

Christians whom he will overshadow that he is the real Christ, the Universal Master himself, and that he is the common leader of all people, religious and non-religious alike. His coming will be accompanied by the appearance of hundreds of thousands of healings around the world. In fact, these will also constitute the three signs of his coming³⁶ and the beginning of his work.

The “Christ” will not pursue political-governmental duties. However, each time his advice is sought on hard-to-solve problems, he will help those in power to solve them³⁷. The leaders, hard-pushed by the nations, will apply his counsel after an international economic crash that will begin in Japan, which Maitreya has already foreseen³⁸. After all, he has already come in contact with many leaders and agents, whose help will be asked before the “Day of Declaration” commences³⁹.

After his celebrated coming, Maitreya will receive help from another three “Masters”, Kuthumi (or Koot Hoomi), Morya (or Moria) and “Jesus”⁴⁰ (after all, in many places the texts present the coming of the Aquarian “Christ” as the crowning of the coming of the “Masters”, of the “externalisation of the Hierarchy”⁴¹). He will also be helped by the beings that until now we knew as extra-terrestrials, who are however brothers of ours living in outer space (Space Brothers) and who already make sure the earth’s orbit is maintained and that terrible ecological disasters are averted⁴². Apart from these beings, Maitreya will also be followed by the “Army of Light”, a “celestial army” of angels (*Devas*) who will aid his victory against the darkness, an army initially invisible to men⁴³. His presence will signify the beginning of a New Order of cooperation between angels and men having “theosis” in mind⁴⁴.

These beings of “light”, the “Elder Brothers”, already speak through their New Age “telepathic” counterparts (commonly known as “mediums”):

“We, the Elder Brothers, watch and wait, ready to respond when men seek our guidance and experience. That experience is hardly won and constitutes our right to oversee men’s journey of return. Soon, men will discover that they are not, nor ever have been, alone; that always in times of crisis have the Guardians been near, protecting and guiding from the wings. Within the limits of the Law has our help ever been forthcoming and on this fact men may rely. They will see us as brothers, rather older in experience than themselves, in whose footsteps they may follow with assurance; as teachers on the path of the infinite way, who will guide them safely to

³⁶ *Highlights of Maitreya’s public emergence*, http://www.shareintl.org/maitreya/Ma_emerge.htm

³⁷ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit. *Free newsletter*, op. cit.: “As the benevolent changes he inspires become realities, he awaits an invitation from humanity to enter into full public life”.

³⁸ *The Law of Cause and Effect*, op. cit.

³⁹ *Free newsletter*, op. cit.

⁴⁰ Peter Liefhebber, *Jesus of Nazareth and Maitreya the Christ*,

http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_pl-JnM.htm

⁴¹ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *The Masters in the world*,

http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_mas-masters.htm

⁴² *UFOs – Frequently Asked Questions*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/UFOs/faq_UFOs.htm

⁴³ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion* (2), op. cit.: “He does, indeed, come with a ‘celestial army’, which will be largely invisible to the bulk of humanity for a very long time to come. Many great and powerful Angels (*Devas*) attend the Christ and carry out His plans”.

⁴⁴ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *Co-workers with God*,

http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_mas-co-works.htm

the feet of God; as co-workers, ready to act together for the transformation of the world and the realisation of the Divine Plan."⁴⁵

"Christ" Maitreya claims that he will not use violence against his opponents⁴⁶. On the other hand, he claims elsewhere that men only have two choices: either to accept Maitreya or to passively await the ensuing developments⁴⁷. The "Sword of Cleavage" that his love is will dichotomise the world into those who will accept the new situation and to those who will remain in the old paths of disunion, which are the ones that inevitably lead the world to chaos⁴⁸. The "Powers of Light" will succeed in dominating over the "Powers of Darkness" of the old civilisation⁴⁹. Maitreya will cause as little a rift as possible⁵⁰. Maitreya appears to be saying that "*many will accept me, but not all. Nevertheless, my Army of Light will surely triumph*"⁵¹. We would add that this statement can of course be interpreted in many ways, especially when we take into consideration the fact that those who insist on old "forms" are considered by the New Agers as "agents responsible for continuous divisions"⁵² while "Christian totalitarianism" will be "the last one to disappear"⁵³. After all, let us not forget that according to New Age "evil" is considered to be anything opposing the evolutionary process of immaterialising matter.

Maitreya's nation will primarily exhibit care for **the treatment of hunger on a global scale** through an equal distribution of food, and immediately afterwards for **the treatment of ecological catastrophes**. Under the supervision of the United Nations, an organisation that will become the united government of the entire world⁵⁴, the distribution of food will be realised using a global system of wealth exchange that will replace the current economic model, despite the reactions of some of today's privileged ones, who will be pushed aside⁵⁵. By realising that the earth itself is a "God" just like they are (as well as every other being is), men will become conscious of their unbreakable bond with "Mother" Earth (the Great Mother of all). The earth will in turn reveal to men its secret laws with which man will be proved to be God⁵⁶.

⁴⁵ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *The Guardians*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_mas-guardians.htm

⁴⁶ *Maitreya's teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.

⁴⁷ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *The return of the Christ*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt-mas-return.htm

⁴⁸ *Ageless Wisdom teachings and spirituality*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/faq_trad-ageless.htm

⁴⁹ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *Maitreya's Call*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_mas-M_call.htm

⁵⁰ By the Master, through Benjamin Creme, *The return of the Christ*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_mas-returnofX.htm : "The task before the Christ will be so to guide this mounting cry for freedom, sharing and peace that the minimum cleavage results."

⁵¹ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.: "Many will accept me, but not all. Nevertheless, my Army of Light will surely triumph".

⁵² *Maitreya's teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.: "Those who cling to old forms will create division after division"

⁵³ *Maitreya's priorities*, http://www.shareintl.org/maitreya/Ma_prior.htm : "It will be the last to disappear, but eventually totalitarianism in the churches will go. Then humanity will know freedom for the first time: political freedom, economic freedom and justice, and freedom of thought and belief".

⁵⁴ *Glimpses of the future*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/archives/M_teachings/Mt-future.htm

⁵⁵ *Maitreya's priorities*, op. cit.: "A sophisticated form of barter, on a global scale, will eventually replace the present economic system".

⁵⁶ *Free newsletter*, op. cit.

Through use of the new “technology of the Light”, crime will disappear: as soon as someone attempts to commit a crime he will “freeze” on the spot thanks to the control centres. Terrorism will disappear since terrorists will have nowhere to hide any more⁵⁷. Maitreya has already contributed in increasing the temperature of the planet; and when he takes on the task of restoring the earth’s equilibrium through use of a special energy he has received from the Avatar of Composition, the increase of food production on the planet will then be beyond every expectation⁵⁸.

Maitreya’s stay in this world will last for the entire course of the Age of Aquarius, i.e. for the next 2,500 years⁵⁹. Gradually, he will begin to reveal various truths to humanity, starting from those of the unity of men, of the soul, of the distribution of goods, of the law of cause and effect (i.e. of karma), of reincarnation, of innocence⁶⁰. Eventually, he will depart earth in order to return again at the end of the seventh “cosmic cycle” as a higher “cosmic Maitreya”⁶¹.

Because Maitreya has the ability to appear from and to disappear back to nothingness, he cannot be harmed by anyone, let alone be killed⁶². After all, “as Christ” he has already passed through the “fourth degree of initiation” (namely self-sacrifice, the Crucifixion).

4. Maitreya and Pope: “Master and Servant”

The revelation of Benjamin Creme’s New Agers on the role that the Papal institution is expected to play according to them in the preparation for Maitreya’s coming is very interesting and perhaps even startling, beyond one’s expectations.

As we have already said, New Agers make a distinction between the person of the Christ (Maitreya) and that of the historical Jesus of Nazareth. According to them, the man Jesus had been the reincarnation of Jesus of Navi, of Isaiah and of the Jesus mentioned by Prophet Zechariah⁶³, and had accepted the “overshadowing” of the Christ Maitreya during His baptism in the Jordan River⁶⁴. After His Crucifixion, He was reincarnated into Apollonius Tyaneus (of Tyana)⁶⁵, when he also became a “Master” (Master Jesus) and went to India. For the last 600 years he has been reincarnated in the body of a Syriac, and since 1984 he has been living in Rome. He

⁵⁷ *Science, medicine and technology in the Age of Light*,

http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_sci-med-tech.htm

⁵⁸ *Glimpses of the future*, op. cit. *The environment will become the number one issue*,

http://www.shareintl.org/archives/M_teachings/Mt_environment.htm

⁵⁹ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

⁶⁰ *Glimpses of the future*, op. cit.

⁶¹ Benjamin Creme, *The esoteric work of the Christ*, op. cit.

⁶² Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

⁶³ Zechariah 3:1

⁶⁴ This is a view that immediately brings to mind the adoptive-related heretical theological systems of the first centuries of the Ecclesia and of Nestorianism. In these there is mention on “adoption” of the person of Jesus of Nazareth by an impersonal power-Logos (Paul of Samosata) or by the person of the Son and Logos who is God (Nestorius) respectively; in none of these cases do we meet a divine hypostasis (Son) in two perfect natures (divine and human).

⁶⁵ Apollonius of Tyana (1st century AD) was a Pythagorean philosopher from Cappadocia, a traveller, a fervent lover of the idolatrous ethics, a miracle-worker and a man of strictly ascetical behaviour. The Neo-Platonic philosophers Hierocles and Porphyrius projected him as a counterpart to the person of the Lord Jesus.

belongs to the “Spiritual Hierarchy” and he is nothing but a disciple and assistant of the “Christ” Maitreya⁶⁶.

Two articles uploaded on the internet site of *Share International* (one in February 2000 and the other in April 2001) completed the until-then partial portrayal of “Jesus”: the first article (by Aart Jurriaanse) on the salvation of the West by the “Master Jesus” mentions the following: “*All this is the responsibility of the Master Jesus – and what a task! But there is no doubt that progress is being made, and he [“Jesus”] hopes to achieve greater success through a new approach from the Christian Churches, paving the way in both Europe and America for the return of the Christ. ... It is forecast that the Master Jesus will yet occupy the chair of the Pope of Rome, and that from that seat he will then be able to re-inspire and re-orient the whole field of Christian religion, diverting it from its present political and temporal trends, towards a more spiritual approach*”⁶⁷.

In the second article, B. Creme himself confirms the words of Jurriaanse: “*He [Jesus] lives now in a Syriac body which is some 600 years old, and has his base in Rome. He has, in the last 2,000 years, worked in the closest relation to the Christ, saving his time and energy where possible, and has special work to do with the Christian Churches. He is one of the Masters who will very shortly return to outer work in the world, taking over the throne of St. Peter, in Rome. He will seek to transform the Christian Churches, in so far as they are flexible enough to respond correctly to the new reality which the return of the Christ and the Masters will create.*”⁶⁸

“Jesus”, who has already guided many theologians and clerics of every confession to the indicated path⁶⁹ of “esotericism”, will remain on Maitreya’s side after the latter’s universal declaration, working together with him and revealing that he is a disciple of Maitreya, giving the Gospel its “correct” occultist interpretation⁷⁰. From that point onwards, thanks to Maitreya’s very presence, **theologians and priests will not be required to interpret or misinterpret his teachings** in the New Age⁷¹.

This expectation of the New Agers has its source in New Age’s perception on religion, a perception that has been inherited from the multi-faceted Gnosticism, Occultism, Kabbalah (Judaic Occultism), Freemasonry, Theosophy and every type of “esotericism” (namely knowledge or “gnosis” of the “secret powers” of the visible and the invisible world). According to this perception, all religions have a common nucleus, hidden from the simple faithful and discerned only by the initiated in this

⁶⁶ Peter Liefhebber, *Jesus of Nazareth and Maitreya the Christ*, op. cit.

⁶⁷ Aart Jurriaanse, *The Master Jesus*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_ajJesus.htm (last modified 28 Feb. 2000)

⁶⁸ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

⁶⁹ Aart Jurriaanse, *The Master Jesus*, op. cit.

⁷⁰ *Maitreya and Jesus*, http://www.shareintl.org/maitreya/Ma_&jesus.htm : “With the emergence of Maitreya, the Master Jesus is playing a major role for the second time. This open collaboration, which will be visible to all, will end any lingering doubts concerning the true relationship between Maitreya the Christ and his disciple, the Master Jesus”. With “Christ’s” coming, “freed of the man-made dogmas and doctrines, the Christian Bible will find a new lease of life in the demonstration of the age-old story of initiation through the Gospel of the life of Jesus, and as a constant reminder of the interaction of God and man in man’s long journey to divinity” (*Maitreya’s teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.)

⁷¹ Benjamin Creme, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

“gnosis” (knowledge). As we already saw, according to the neo-Gnostics of the New Age, this nucleus is the teaching that man is God by nature, a ‘spark of the Divinity’ and that he must set in motion his secret divine powers. The teaching of the various “Masters” – founders of the religions has been misinterpreted by their followers, **who come in conflict with each other only because of this misinterpretation**⁷².

Consequently, Maitreya and the other “Masters” do not aim at abolishing the religions but at designating a new meaning to them so that they can bring out this newly assigned common meaning in the open. This way, a One World Religion will inevitably be established⁷³ whose temples will be pyramid-like (tetrahedral)⁷⁴.

So it is clear that the Papal institution is expected to play an important role, that of the guide of the divided Christianity of West and East, towards unification (and we would add: vested with the power of “infallibility”). After all, after his day of universal declaration, Maitreya will begin a number of trips around the world (following Papal patterns) with the aim of becoming better known to the various nations’ peoples⁷⁵. By visiting the temples that he will set up himself, Maitreya will initiate those accepting of his teaching to the reality that he brings. The Churches, the Mosques and the other temples will be common places of worship for all the people⁷⁶.

Crete claims that certain Vatican officials have already become aware of the presence of “Christ” on earth, while two Cardinals, members of Curia (the Synod surrounding the Pope) are “Christ” Maitreya’s followers. On this subject, a cleric of the Vatican (also a follower of Maitreya) gave an interview to the tabloid *National Examiner*, whose views however were denied by the Vatican. One way or another, Crete hopes that after the day of Declaration, the Pope will closely collaborate with the “Master Jesus”⁷⁷. However, the orthodox Christian leaders (he refers here to the conservatives⁷⁸ of every confession) will be the last to accept Maitreya; who is not the Son of God, but the “Great Brother” of humanity⁷⁹.

Regardless of the aforementioned rumours, if one only takes into consideration the well-known initiative of the “Holy See” to promote the inter-

⁷² *Maitreya’s teachings on religions* (1), op. cit.: “There is really no contradiction between the different religions. Religions have been trapped through words and slogans into vying with each other. This competition will disappear and the essence will remain. Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists will all experience Oneness”.

⁷³ Aart Jurriaanse, *Individual Masters*, http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_aji-masters.htm “One of the special projects on which Master KH is at present engaged, in close collaboration with the Masters Morya and Jesus, is to find a basis for the synthesis of Eastern and Western religious thought, with the objective of eventually developing the One Word Religion, which will serve as the common bond for the unification of humanity”.

⁷⁴ *Free newsletter*, op. cit.

⁷⁵ Benjamin Crete, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.

⁷⁶ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.: “Churches, mosques and temples will become meeting places, as well as centres where those in need can be helped by others ... Maitreya will go from country to country and in the temples which will be set up in various countries He will act as the Initiator for those ready for this experience”.

⁷⁷ *Maitreya’s teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.

⁷⁸ Religious Science terminology uses the term “orthodox” to signify the “fundamentalists” of every religion: Orthodox Judaizers etc. It does not necessarily refer to Orthodox Christians.

⁷⁹ Benjamin Crete, *Frequently Asked Questions*, op. cit.: “It may be that the orthodox Christian leaders will be among the last to recognize the Christ. He is not the one and only Son of God, but the friend and Elder Brother of Humanity”.

religious dialogue and the ensuing common prayers with Buddhists and Muslims that have taken place (in Assisi etc.), this alone suffices to indicate that the New Agers' expectations on the future role that the Vatican will play in the promotion of the Pan-Religion (the one that would be so favourable to the ascent of any "Maitreya") may not be so utopian after all.

5. Distortion of the Holy Writ's warnings

Based on the aforementioned material, it is hardly necessary to add that there is not a single element of the word of God, and of the teaching of the Ecclesia, which has remained untouched by the delusions of New Age. A theological confutation of these delusions would demand a synopsis of the entire anti-Gnostic and anti-Nestorian theological literature!

Still, we need to point out hereupon that Maitreya through his "mystics" distorts a lot of concepts that for centuries now the Christian world would preserve in its memory about the forthcoming final apostasy of the end of times. Among these distortions, we mention the following typical examples:

Satan does not exist as a being, as a person: he is the personification of the evil that exists inside us. **The concept of Lucifer is positive**: as the name suggests, it symbolises the transmission of light⁸⁰. After all, we need to note that in many places we find New Age being called as the "Age of Light" (also cf. technology of light, powers of light etc.)⁸¹

The "mystics" also distort the Christian beliefs on the Antichrist, claiming that the Antichrist is not a specific person but a catastrophic energy of the will of God that paves the way before every new astrological age by destroying the old conditions. The energy of the Antichrist before Christianity ("Age of Pisces" according to the New Age) had been incarnated by Nero and before Maitreya by Hitler; consequently we must not expect another Antichrist for the next 3,000 years⁸².

Finally, we must note that according to the teachings of New Age, the attempt to associate the number 666 with some future tyrant is erroneous, for the number 666 refers exclusively to Emperor Nero⁸³. This view of the New Agers does not come as a surprise, since decades ago the "spiritual mother" of all New Agers, Alice Bailey, was propagandising that the number 666 is a number with divine attributes and that its frequent use accelerates the coming of the New Age⁸⁴.

The texts of the former Methodist pastor-cum-New Ager propagandist Howard Ray Carey⁸⁵ also contain many distortions on the Holy Writ and the Prophecies.

⁸⁰ *Maitreya's teachings on religion* (1), op. cit.

⁸¹ After 1885, Helena Blavatsky was already publishing a magazine entitled "Lucifer".

⁸² *The Ageless Wisdom Teachings in brief*,
http://www.shareintl.org/background/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_pl666.htm

⁸³ Peter Liefhieber, *666 and other misunderstandings*,
http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/aw_pl666.htm

⁸⁴ M. Basilea Schlink, *New Age from a biblical viewpoint*, op. cit. p.17ff.

⁸⁵ Rev. Howard Ray Carey, *Bible prophecy & the second coming*,
http://www.shareintl.org/archives/AgelessWisdom/the_joy/aw_hcBprophecy.htm

6. Observations based on ecclesiastical Tradition

Out of necessity, we shall only present a summary for a topic as huge as this one is and will thus concentrate only on some rudimentary points related to the coming of the Antichrist based upon our ecclesiastical Tradition, looking only at the most important records⁸⁶.

The first warning on the coming of the person of the Antichrist comes from the very lips of our Lord Jesus Himself at a point in the Gospel according to John, whose significance is barely detected at first read. The Lord, complaining about the Judeans' disbelief, reveals that, while the Judeans did not accept Him even though He had come in the name of the Father, they will accept someone else who will come and who will bring His special name as guaranty for his work: *"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"*⁸⁷. Here we note that someone, who will become accepted by the Judeans as their Messiah, will come; but not as one who proceeds from God the Father, but as a self-powered saviour. Furthermore, we read in the words of the Lord that follow that the reason for the Judeans' lack of faith in the true Christ is their love for human glory and not for the glory that God gives⁸⁸.

When His disciples posed a special question about the signs on the end of times, the Lord provided them with a series of signs for the coming of the Antichrist which, according to the synoptic Evangelists⁸⁹ and in agreement with Saint Cyril's of Jerusalem exposition, are the following: a) the emergence of many false "Christs"; b) the waging of wars; c) the spreading of epidemics, hunger, earthquakes and adverse weather conditions (*"and fearful sights from heaven and great winters"*)⁹⁰; d) the rise of scandals, hatred, *misadelpchia* (brotherly spite), and in general the reduction of love; e) the spread of the (Orthodox) Gospel to all the nations. After these events have taken place, "the abomination of the desolation" will appear "in a holy land" and some earthly "Christ" will be advertised⁹¹. But Christ warns us: *"Then if any man shall say unto you, lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you: Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."*⁹²

Apostle Paul also notes a few "prosopographical" characteristics of the Antichrist, elucidating to the first Thessalonian Christians the events that must necessarily come before the Second Coming. These signs are found in verses 1-12 of

⁸⁶ An extensive presentation of the hagiographical and patristic witness on the subject of the person of the Antichrist is made by Professor A. Theodorou, op. cit. Also in a recent edition of the same study by A. Theodorou, *The hour of the Antichrist*, ed. "Parousia", Athens 1997.

⁸⁷ John 5:43

⁸⁸ John 5:44: *"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"*

⁸⁹ Matthew 24. Mark 13. Luke 21.

⁹⁰ Luke 21:11

⁹¹ St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis of the Illuminated*; 15:5-9. PG 33:876A-880B

⁹² Matthew 24:23-27

the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians and are the following: a) that before the Second Coming of Christ, there will first come an apostasy from God and then the rising of the “man of transgression”, the “son of perdition”; b) that this man will raise himself above the gods and sanctities (“*sevasma*” = respect for something considered as holy) of all nations, trying to prove that he is God; c) that this man will place himself in God’s place inside God’s temple⁹³; d) that there is something that hinders the implementation of all these events, even though “the mystery of iniquity doth already work” in those days too; and finally, e) that the man of perdition, the Antichrist, will perform every type of miracle (powers, false signs and wonders) with Satan’s aid, misleading however, with God’s condescendence, only those who do not want to be saved, so that those who loved the lies may be condemned, for they will be found to be inexcusable (as we already explained in the beginning of the article)⁹⁴.

Saint John Chrysostom, but also other interpreters (Saint Irenaeus, Tertullian, Lactantius, Saint John the Damascene, Theophylact, Zigavinos), all agree that the “*catechon*” that holds back the coming of the Antichrist is the Roman Empire (Romanity); its abolition will signify that the time for the rising of the Antichrist is close at hand. The views that the word “*catechon*” signifies the limits set by God (Theodore of Mopsouestia, Theodoretus of Cyrus, Photius the Great), the incompleteness of the evangelism of the nations (Theodoretus) or the Holy Spirit (Severianus) are less popular⁹⁵.

On this matter, Theodore bishop of Mopsouestia shrewdly points out that the devil created all heresies and religions as a scaffolding on which he will build an “apse”, his worship, in the person of the Antichrist. After this worship is finally “constructed”, the scaffolding will be useless, and so the Antichrist will then cancel all heresies and religions, every “god” and “*sevasma*”, in order to openly consecrate his own worship like an “apse” that has been built on top of the (useless now) scaffoldings⁹⁶.

However, the New Testament book that can especially be used in order to obtain definitive signs on the Antichrist’s activities (in accordance with the interpreters⁹⁷) is the Book of Revelation **of Saint John the Theologian** (AD 95).

⁹³ Apart from the Temple of Jerusalem (viz. the Judaic one of Solomon), St. John Chrysostom and Theophylact also include all the Christian Churches. Theodoretus and Ecumenius include only the Christian Churches and not the Temple of Jerusalem. St. Irenaeus, St. Hippolytus, St. Cyril of Jerusalem and Origen include only the Temple of Solomon. John Galanis, *The Second epistle of Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians*, Interpretation of the NT 11b, ed. P. Pournaras, Thessalonica 1989, pp. 178ff.

⁹⁴ St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite mentions that even if we examine only the words of Apostle Paul, that the Antichrist will be a “man of perdition” and that he will attempt to prove himself as God, these suffice to condemn the view of those who make the Antichrist to be whole nations or states. St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, *Interpretation on the 14 Epistles of Apostle Paul*, Tome III, ed. “Orthodox Kypseli”, Thessalonica 1990, p.113, footnote 14

⁹⁵ John Galanis, op. cit. pp.185ff.

⁹⁶ On 2 Thessalonians PG 66, 933C: “Ὡσπερ δε ἀμίδος σφιγγείσης και λαβούσης την οικείαν κατασκευήν, η υποσκευή αίρεται, μένει δε μόνη η αμίδος στερρά, ούτως ο διάβολος τας αιρέσεις τας πολλάς και τας της πλάνης οδοῦς αντί υποσκευής υπέθηκεν, ὡσπερ αμίδα, μεγίστην την εαυτού προσκύνησιν προκατασκευάζων, ίν' όταν έλθη εκδικίων πάσας τας αιρέσεις και αυτός καταργή, γυμνήν την εαυτού προσκύνησιν εισάγων ανθρώποις”.

⁹⁷ We are aware that the Holy Monastery of Devout Nicodemus in Goumenissa, Kilkis, is preparing a special edition on the Antichrist and his mark, which we await with great interest.

The 13th chapter of the Apocalypse, where the events that Prophet Daniel had foreseen⁹⁸ are described in more detail, mentions two beasts: one emerging from the sea (the sea denotes the nations or the turbulent and fickle lifestyle⁹⁹), and the other coming from the earth (which beast coincides with the false prophet mentioned further on¹⁰⁰); the latter playing an epicurean role to the former. The dragon (Satan) “gave his power and his throne and great authority” to the first beast, which is identified by all interpreters with the Antichrist. Thereinafter, it is mentioned that one of his seven heads shall revive from a fatal wound (maybe he will raise one of his consorts or perhaps this refers to a reunification of the Roman Empire¹⁰¹), that he will cause the world to admire him and that he will fight the faithful and win; also that he will blaspheme God and the Saints and that the entire globe will bow before him apart from those whose names have been written in the Bible of Life. The second beast, the false prophet, resembles a lamb with his two horns, but speaks satanic words (“*and he spoke like a dragon*”); based on the first beast’s power he will deceive the whole world by performing unprecedented miracles so that the globe (*Æcumene*) may bow before the Antichrist, the beast that will emerge from the sea. He will also convince people to construct an idol of the first beast which in a way will appear to come to life and speak through the power of a spirit (he is referring to a dirty spirit¹⁰²). Those who will not bow before this idol will be put to death, while right to buy and sell will be granted only to those men (of every social class) who will accept the mark (more accurately *charagma* = engraving, incision) on their right hand or on their forehead, which will be the name of the beast or the number of his name: the number of the beast’s name is “the number of a man” and it is 666¹⁰³. At another point, the Apocalypse presents the ten kings who will ally with the beast and offer him their power and authority with one mind¹⁰⁴. Satan’s power during this time period is compared to the one he used to have before Christ’s salvific work; this way the Dragon, who had been chained in the abyss for 1,000 years, will be released towards the close of history and rising from the abyss will gather the nations in a war against the Church¹⁰⁵. The tyranny of the beast will be preceded by the arrival of two prophets and martyrs who will preach the gospel of repentance and who will be put to death by the beast¹⁰⁶. It is noteworthy that all the interpreters agree that the second beast, the false prophet, is a carrier of spiritual and in fact of hieratical authority¹⁰⁷; also that the beast’s image will be venerated all over the world, as is also clear by the text itself.

⁹⁸ Daniel 7.

⁹⁹ Aretha of Caesarea, *Memorandum on Revelation 36*, PG 106:672A. Cf. Andrew of Caesarea, *Interpretation on Revelation 36*, PG 106:332D. P. Bratsiotes, *John’s Revelation*, ed. Ch. P. Synodinus, in Athens, 1955, p.208.

¹⁰⁰ As can be seen by the name quotes in Revelation 16:13; 20:10; and especially 19:20

¹⁰¹ Andrew of Caesarea, op. cit. 36:37, PG 106:333BC.337A

¹⁰² As Andrew of Caesarea underlines, *ibid.* 37, PG 106:340

¹⁰³ Rev. 13:1-18

¹⁰⁴ Rev. 17:12-14

¹⁰⁵ Rev. 20:1-10

¹⁰⁶ Rev. 11:3-13; the Fathers, the older interpreters and also some of the contemporary ones agree that these two martyrs are the prophets Elijah and Enoch, who have not yet known death (cf. Gen. 5:24. 4 Kings 2:11). Cf. P. Bratsiotes, op. cit. p.180. *Ed.*: While the belief that these two martyrs are the two aforementioned prophets is widely accepted in the Church, the view that they had ascended into Heaven is certainly a fallacy, not an Orthodox position. For more information cf. the article from OODE found at: <http://www.oodegr.com/english/dogma/diafora/Hlias1.htm> .

¹⁰⁷ Cf. also P. Bratsiotes, op. cit. p.214ff. Archimandrite Joel Yannacopoulos, *Interpretation of the Book of Revelation*, ed. P. Pournaras, Thessalonica 1991², p.144-148; S. Agourides, *John’s Revelation*, Interpretation of the NT 18, ed. P. Pournaras, Thessalonica 1994, p.315

Apart from the holy texts of the Holy Writ, the Holy Fathers have left us with a lot of material on the subject of the Antichrist through their homilies, some of which were based on divine revelations that the Saints themselves had received, and some of which had been earlier oral traditions and interpretations of biblical passages. Indicatively, we bring only a few token records by a very small number of Fathers.

Primarily, we find two homilies signed by the name of Saint Hippolytus of Rome (AD 170-236) that are relevant to our topic: “*On the Christ and the Antichrist*” and “*On the end of the world*”¹⁰⁸. The latter homily is a pseudepigraph, work of the 7th century, and constitutes a revision of the authentic former homily mixed with elements **from the works of Devout Ephraim**¹⁰⁹.

Saint Hippolytus (whose authentic work consists almost in its entirety of a compositive presentation of all the verses of the Holy Writ that refer to the Antichrist) traces the Antichrist’s lineage (in the same way Saint Irenaeus bishop of Lugdunum had done before him) to the Hebraic tribe of Dan¹¹⁰.

In the pseudepigraph work “*On the end of the world*” we made a note of the records of two further pieces of information: initially, the Antichrist will persistently resist becoming the sovereign leader of all the people until such a time when their continual insistence to take over will lead him to accept the position eventually. Furthermore, through his mouthpieces (men and demons, perhaps even anthropomorphic demons)¹¹¹, he will openly advertise that he can provide people with food, because the earth and the sea obey him: “*everyone will come to witness the mightiness of his power; for here he will provide bread and offer wine to you and extravagant riches and expensive materials. The earth and the sea will obey his every command.*”¹¹²

Devout Ephraim the Syriac (AD 306-373) has written four (among many other equally wonderful) homilies that refer (among other issues) to the Antichrist¹¹³. From his lengthy presentation on all those things that shall come to pass in the wretched one’s era, we borrow only a few words, which are also common to many other patristic writings:

The Antichrist will appear at first to be extremely righteous, humble, quiet, just; he will hate the idols and bribery, he will be pious, good, charitable, handsome, calm, cheerful to all, meek, extremely honouring the Judeans; so much so will he be all those things that all the nations will offer him the authority themselves, him being the most suitable to have it. As soon as he rises to power, he will fight three great

¹⁰⁸ Also relevant but in an indirect kind of way is his hermeneutical work *On Daniel*, PG 10:637A-669A.

¹⁰⁹ P. Christou, *Greek Patrology*, Tome II ed. PIPM, Thessalonica 1978, p.736ff.

¹¹⁰ *On the Christ and the Antichrist*, PG 10:737A-740A

¹¹¹ *On the end of the world* 26, PG 10:929A

¹¹² *On the end of the world* 28 and 24.25, PG 10:932B. 928AB

¹¹³ *Homily on Christ’s coming, on the end of the world and on the coming of the Antichrist*; also three homilies *On the Coming of Christ, in the Works of Devout Ephraim*, Text – translation – commentary K.G. Franjola, ed. “*The Garden of Panagia*”, tome IV, 1992, pp.111-128, 180-184, 185-191 and 192-199

kings and win. He will then immediately show his exact opposite true character: arrogant, cruel and so on¹¹⁴.

The Dragon, as Devout Ephraim calls the Antichrist, will “*place cowardice, neglect and a dreadful faithlessness inside the hearts of men*” and will perform “*signs and wonders and create awesome phenomena so that he may, if possible, deceive even the elect, and to deceive everyone with the false miracles and the phantastic wonders that he will perform*”¹¹⁵. He will walk on the waters, he will appear to move mountains, and he will gather around him birds and serpents¹¹⁶.

The Antichrist “*will present himself as a god, using fearsome phantasies; he will appear to be flying in the air, surrounded by all the demons [who will appear] in the form of angels in front of the tyrant; for he will be shouting with force, shape-shifting, causing immense fear to all men*”. There will be a great stir in the nations, as they will “*keep coming from the ends of the earth to see the tyrant*”; many will bow before him and shout in fear: “you are our Saviour”. After the Antichrist receives the sovereign authority, “*he will send his demons to the four corners of the world for them to preach with candour that ‘A great king of great glory has appeared; come to see’*”. The faithful who will not bow before him will be persecuted by him on land and sea, but they will be protected by God who is an affectionate Father.

Because he knows that his false miracles are powerless against the power of the Cross, he will set as a necessary precondition for the distribution of foods the placement of his mark on the forehead or on the right hand, with the aim of cancelling the power of the Sign of the Cross and the ensuing support from Christ to the Christians. Apart from this devious plan, namely of pressuring people to accept his mark in order not to starve, he will pursue to blot out the memorial of the name of Christ on earth¹¹⁷. He will never himself bear to even utter the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit¹¹⁸. Chief aides to his work of marking and distributing food will be rulers assigned by him¹¹⁹. This of course presupposes that he will have already obtained complete control over the distribution of goods. Also, it is clear from the text that the marking will come before the false miracles of the Antichrist, because any Christian who has not received the mark will not be deceived by these miracles, as Devout Ephraim expressly mentions.

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (AD 313-387) also notes (apart from things already mentioned above) that the devil engendered the divisions between the nations in order for the Antichrist to become more easily accepted: “*for the devil is preparing schisms among the nations in order for the coming [Antichrist] to be easily accepted*”. He also adds that the Antichrist will seize the Roman power by dint of his magical arts at a time when ten Roman kings will be ruling ten different kingdoms during the same time period, and that he will overcome three of them. The Antichrist will deceive the Judeans by pretending to be the Messiah and the gentiles through his “miracles”. Because the Antichrist will be a formidable opponent, the Lord advised all those

¹¹⁴ *Homily on the coming of the Lord, and on the end of the world, and on the coming of the Antichrist*, op. cit. p.119ff

¹¹⁵ *Homily on the coming of the Lord*, op. cit. p.111ff

¹¹⁶ *On the coming of the Lord*, op. cit. p.189ff

¹¹⁷ *Homily on the coming of the Lord*, op. cit. pp.112-114. 117

¹¹⁸ *On the coming of the Lord*, op. cit. p.191

¹¹⁹ *On the coming of the Lord*, op. cot. P.182

Christians who are weak, not ready to face martyrdom, to take refuge in the mountains¹²⁰. The Antichrist's reign will only last three and a half years, as it has already been recorded in Daniel's prophecy¹²¹. He will rebuild Solomon's Temple (Temple Mount) which had been destroyed, where he will also be enthroned. (Temple Mount is not of course the Temple of Resurrection; [read also [here](#)]).

Saint John the Damascene (AD 680-784) includes a small chapter referring to the figure of the Antichrist in his "Dogmatics" (i.e. in his work "*Detailed description of the Orthodox Church*"). In this chapter he underlines (among other things) that a necessary precondition for his coming is the (completion of the) preaching of the Gospel to all nations. The Antichrist will be born out of wedlock and raised in secret. He will be roused suddenly and seize all authority. In the beginning he will feign sanctity but later his hatred against the Church will be revealed. His false miracles will deceive only those of a spiritually unsound and unstable mindset. He will be enthroned on the Temple of Jerusalem; not the Christian one but the Judaic one. Enoch and Elijah the Tishbite (also spelled *Elias the Thesbite*) will be sent forth in order to preach against him and they will be put to death by him. [Ed. Note: *Afterwards, however, God will raise them as a sign for all people.*] Then the coming of the Lord from heaven will follow. And Saint John concludes: "*Hence, let no one wait for the Lord to come from the earth, but from heaven, as He personally assured us that He would*"¹²².

Finally, we note an important piece of information that has been recorded (together with many other things) by Andrew of Caesarea (6th century) in his memorandum on the Book of Revelation: the Antichrist will hail from an area east of the land of the Persians¹²³.

Of course, the "Antichrist" topic contains many other facets which unfold from the pages of the Holy Writ and of the Patristic texts: the tyrannical sovereignty of the Antichrist, his fierce persecutions against the Church and the preservation of many faithful (Orthodox) Christians through intensive prayer and martyred self-exile (not of course through militant resistance)¹²⁴, his inability to save his followers from hunger and the natural catastrophes that will follow their apostasy from the real God, the confinement of his tyranny to three and a half years, but also the final and eternal perdition of the Antichrist himself, of Satan, of the false prophet and of all those who became convinced by their words, and who will be thrown to the river of fire; all these are events that cannot be further analysed here since we aim at brevity, and for this reason we refer the reader to the already cited holy texts in the footnotes.

Conclusion

If the aforementioned expectations of the New Agers become interpreted on a rationalistic basis, with a logic that does not believe, then they will only be considered within the framework of utopian desires of aspiring world rulers. However, after

¹²⁰ Matthew 24:16

¹²¹ Daniel 7:25. 12:7. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis of the Illuminated* 15:9. 11. 12. 15. 16. PG 33:880C. 884B-885C. 889A-893A

¹²² *Detailed description of the Orthodox Church* 4 (26) 99 PG 94:1216A-1217C

¹²³ Andrew of Caesarea, *Interpretation on Revelation* 51, PG 106:368C

¹²⁴ As indicated in verse Rev. 13:9 where Christians are urged to follow a passive form of resistance, as is appropriate for times of persecution. Cf. P. Bratsiotis, op. cit. p.212

comparing what they have to say about the future regime with the prophecies of the Holy Apostles and of the Fathers, we are led to only two possible conclusions: **a) either that the New Agers, after having read the Christian prophecies, now attempt to make them come true (something quite impossible to believe) or b) that the prophecies, which were derived in the Holy Spirit and recorded thousands of years ago, describe the present-day preparations of the followers of the Antichrist based on the infallible uncreated foreknowledge of God, of which the prophesying Prophets, Apostles and Fathers partook and partake.**

Of course, we do not know **when** God will eventually allow the successful fruition of their plans; nevertheless, informing, spiritual vigilance and spiritual resistance are all necessary: *“The coming of the tyrant will be known to all those who have prudence and knowledge of God. However, it will not be easily discerned by those who are constantly preoccupied with everyday matters, desiring earthly materials. For the one who is constantly attached to everyday things, even if he does listen, he will prove without faith since he constantly avoids the one who speaks to him [about these important matters]. For this reason are the faithful Christians empowered to leave [for the mountains]: because they have denied all cares of this life”*¹²⁵.

¹²⁵ Devout Ephraim the Syriac, *On the Coming of the Lord* 3, op. cit. p.197