

The Great Deception

By Gerry Watts

This is a simple step-by-step study on the subject that all followers of Jesus Christ should be aware of - the Great Deception, or as some versions have it, the Great Delusion. We'll let the scriptures do the talking for the most part, and you'll be amazed at what is revealed concerning these last days.

Firstly, let us begin with the words of Jesus Himself, which He gave in answer to the disciples questions about the destruction of the temple, the end of the age, and Christ's return.

"Beware that no one is deceiving you. For many shall be coming in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ!' and shall be deceiving many."

(Matthew 24:4-5)

For false christs and false prophets shall be roused, and they shall be giving **great signs and miracles, so as to deceive, if possible, even the chosen**. Lo! I have declared it to you beforehand."

(Matthew 24:24-25)

The main thing that Jesus warned His followers about was deception. In the last days, many shall arise in the Name of Christ claiming to be 'anointed ones' (that is, christs or messiahs), and some will even claim to be The Christ or Messiah Himself! Others will claim to be prophets, speaking out God's words to the people, claiming unique messages from God. And of course, they will try and substantiate their claims from Scripture, claiming 'It's in the Bible' - but they will be false imposters!

But even the teachings and traditions of men can be formulated or ordered into a system of deception, where the real underlying truth of the Original words of God are obscured and, at worst, twisted beyond recognition via Bible translation and interpretation! This method of false teaching by craftiness can keep believers as immature children, being thrown around like boats on the sea, being blown here and there by every change in the wind of man's teaching. As we mature in the truth, ridding ourselves of false teaching, we become grounded on the Rock.

"...that we may by no means still be minors, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice (*being unpredictable, making sudden changes, sleight*) by **craftiness** with a view to **the systematising (or methodical approach) of the deception**."

(Ephesians 4:14)

The Rabbinic Judaism of Jesus' day had this problem of human tradition and the teachings of men being raised above the actual truth of God, nullifying the Word of

God to those under these traditions. Christendom has the same problem, so the believer must be aware of this and search out the truth for him or herself.

"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men...You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions...Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down."

(Mark 7:8-9, 13 NIV)

Now one of the most important things that Jesus revealed in the earlier texts above is that these false anointed ones and false prophets shall be giving great signs and miracles. These great signs and miracles will appear to be so genuine that even the true chosen ones of God, the Body of Christ Ecclesia, will have to think twice about the testimony of these imposters! The main reason for giving these signs and miracles is to deceive the chosen ones - if that were possible!

The truth is that the true followers of Christ, the chosen ones, cannot be totally deceived by these imposters because the true witness of the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit within, as well as a good understanding of the Scriptures, will reveal the truth. Yet these signs and miracles will be so convincing that it will cause even the chosen ones to sit up and take notice.

All of these events were leading to the Great Apostasy and the Great Deception that unveils the greatest false anointed one of all - the Antichrist or literally the replacement Christ or Messiah, also known as the Wild Beast and the Man of Lawlessness. Here is what Paul says about the era of this man of lawlessness, which shall occur before the Day of the Lord.

"No one should be deluding you by any method, for, **should not the apostasy be coming first and the man of lawlessness be unveiled**, the son of destruction, who is opposing and lifting himself up over everyone termed a god or an object of veneration, so that he is seated in the temple of God, **demonstrating that he himself is God**? Do you not remember that, still being with you, I told you these things?"

(2 Thessalonians 2:3-5)

So before the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ (that is, His glorious return) can occur, the great falling away from the truth, the Apostasy, will come first. Now notice carefully here that before a departure from revealed truth can occur, the truth has to have been already revealed! So this is not just about a falling away from Judaism, revealed in the Old Testament (the Hebrew Scriptures), **this is about a mass falling away from the truth of the New Testament (the Greek Scriptures) concerning the teachings of Christ and the apostles! It is an apostasy from the truth of the whole Bible!**

As Paul warned Timothy,

"For the era will be when they will not tolerate sound teaching, but, their hearing being tickled, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accord with their own desires, and, indeed, they will be turning their hearing away from the truth, yet will be turned aside to myths."

(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

One of the most diabolical myths that entered the pages of Scripture (or more accurately, versions of Scripture) and the teachings of Christendom, which is in accord with the desires of the masses, and is completely opposed to sound teaching, is the doctrine of Eternal Hellfire or Torment. The cold, hard heart of man wants believers to be saved forever, while the rest are damned for all eternity. How unloving and selfish! This subject is addressed in detail in the article *Is There Really a Hell?*

Notice that Paul didn't say that they would have no knowledge of Scripture but that they would turn their hearing away from the truth and they will not tolerate sound teaching. He also said of these wicked imposters,

"...being led by various lusts and gratifications, always learning and yet not at any time able to come into a realisation of the truth."

(2 Timothy 3:6-7)

The foremost lust is **the fondness for money**. We don't have to look too far even today to see these lusts in action - and I'm referring to the Church or Christendom! Christian TV and most Christian ministries are virtually obsessed with money, even if it's disguised as going to a good cause! This is often a smoke screen to hide the lusts and greed for fame and fortune, where they appear devout or godly. Of course, this has been a continuing problem within the powers of Christendom and the Holy Roman Empire since the 5th century AD.

"Now know this, that in the last days perilous periods will be present, for men will be selfish, fond of money..."

(2 Timothy 3:1-2)

"For a root of all of the evils is the fondness for money, which some, craving, were led astray from the faith and try themselves on all sides with much pain. Now you, O man of God, flee from these things..."

(1 Timothy 6:10-11)

"...the worry of this eon and the seduction of riches are stifling the word, and it is becoming unfruitful."

(Matthew 13:22)

"If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing...who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain."

(1 Timothy 6:3-5 NIV)

"...having a form of devoutness, yet denying its power."

(2 Timothy 3:5)

"Yet wicked men and swindlers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

(2 Timothy 3:13)

This Apostasy, or departure from the truth, had already begun in the first century AD, and there were many Jewish false messiahs and false prophets who arose in the era before Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed, but it gained momentum in the Church in the centuries that followed. It was early in the 4th century that the apostasy began to emerge in full force, when the Roman Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the religion of the Empire. This led to the merging of paganism and Christianity, forming a religious hybrid. This eventually led to the Bishop of Rome becoming the Pope and the emergence of the Holy Roman Empire of Christendom that dominated Europe and much of the East for over 1000 years.

Many signs and miracles occurred during this era to deceive many into believing the dictates of the Emperors and the Church. Constantine himself had numerous visions and signs that he took to be supernatural and God-given. This Apostasy then led to the emergence of an Antichrist kingdom headed up by the man of lawlessness, seated in the (spiritual) temple of God, the Church - the Vicar of Christ, the Pope. The Holy Roman Empire of Christendom became the image of the Beast of the imperial Roman Empire.

"For the secret of lawlessness is already operating."

(2 Thessalonians 2:7)

"...so that he is seated in the temple of God, **demonstrating that he himself is God?**"

(2 Thessalonians 2:4)

"And it is deceiving those dwelling on the earth because of the signs which were given it to do in the sight of the wild beast, saying to those dwelling on the earth to make an image to the wild beast which has the blow of the sword and lives." (Revelation 13:14)

The power of Lawlessness has a secret, and this secret is to disguise itself as godly, righteous and Biblical. This is exactly how the powers of Christendom have worked, and still do work.

"For such are false apostles, fraudulent workers, being transfigured into apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is being transfigured into a messenger of light. It is no great thing, then, if his servants also are being transfigured as dispensers of righteousness - whose end shall be according to their acts."

(2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

"Not everyone saying to Me 'Lord! Lord!' will be entering into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who is doing the will of My Father Who is in the heavens. Many will be declaring to Me in that day, 'Lord! Lord! Was it not in Your Name that we prophesy, and in Your Name cast out demons, and in Your Name do

many powerful deeds? And then shall I be saying to them that 'I never knew you! Depart from Me, workers of lawlessness!'"

(Matthew 7:21-23)

"Now, by the method by which Jannes and Jambres withstand Moses, thus these also are withstanding the truth, men of a depraved mind, disqualified as to the faith. But they shall not be progressing more, for their folly shall be obvious to all, as that of those also became."

(2 Timothy 3:7-9)

Both Paul and Jesus were saying that many within the Church will use false miracles and healings, trickery and deceit, to withstand the truth and lead people astray, in the same manner as did the Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres, who sought to copy the signs of God being done through Moses in the court of Pharaoh.

The ultimate imposter was the Man of Lawlessness, who took the place of God, altered His laws, and ruled with ruthless power and authority over the populace of the Church and the world.

"And I perceived one of its heads as if it had been slain to death, and its death blow was cured, and the whole earth marvels after the wild beast."

(Revelation 13:3)

"And it is exercising all the authority of the first wild beast in its sight, and making the earth and those dwelling in it to be worshipping the first wild beast, whose death blow was cured. And it is doing great signs, that it may be making fire, also, descend out of heaven into the earth in the sight of mankind. And it is deceiving those dwelling on the earth because of the signs which were given it to do in the sight of the wild beast."

(Revelation 13:12-14)

As I watched, this horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom...

...He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.

But the court will sit, and his power will be taken away and completely destroyed forever.

(Daniel 7:21-22, 25-26 NIV)

But Paul had said that there will come a time when they shall not progress with their deceit any further, for, in the same way as Moses shamed Jannes and

Jambres, these imposters shall be exposed as the tricksters that they are by the true prophets and followers of God, who shall perform the real stuff, like Jesus Himself and the Apostles. This has occurred through the demise of the Empire of Christendom, and the exposure of its leaders as false shepherds, through the spiritual revival of God's people. Ultimately, the falsehood and injustice of Christendom's leaders will be judged.

..whose presence (*the man of lawlessness*) is in accord with the operation of Satan, **with all power and signs and false miracles** and with every seduction of injustice among those who are perishing, because they do not receive the love of the truth for their salvation. **And therefore God will be sending them an operation of deception**, for them to believe the falsehood, that all may be judged who do not believe the truth, but delight in injustice."

(2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)

So as Paul says above,

"And therefore God will be sending them an operation of deception."

This working of deception or delusion is the power of Satan on earth, the great Deceiver, '**with all power and signs and false miracles** and with every seduction of injustice among those who are perishing.' The deception and seduction has already been immense, and all those on the earth once 'believed the falsehood' of the Man of Lawlessness (and many still do) - except for those who are chosen to belong to the Lamb in the coming kingdom of the true King of kings, the true Anointed One of God.

There have been, and still are, many antichrist's who seek to replace the true Christ with a different one, ultimately denying the real One. There are many religions and sects that are offering the world a counterfeit messiah or prophet, some claiming to base their beliefs on the Bible, as well as additional 'holy books.'

It is evident that we are still in the aftermath of the Great Apostasy and its man of lawlessness, and today things are even more deceptive in some respects, due to increasing prosperity and blessing, and the emergence of modern technology and entertainment.

So be watchful. Be sober - and be warned.

It would appear as though apostate Christendom shall have its headquarters in Jerusalem, in league with apostate Judaism, and even a liberalised Islam! Even now, the European Christian satellite television channels of God TV are based in Jerusalem, generally pumping out the false 'health and wealth gospel' around the globe. Numerous other Christian ministries are based in Jerusalem allied with modern Judaism. Not all of these ministries are necessarily teaching complete error, but most are being seduced by Secret Babylon. They may be preaching and prophesying and doing 'miracles' in the Name of Christ, but the Spirit of the true Father of ALL is nothing like the hellish God of Christendom.

Modern Christianity, particularly the 'Charismatic' brand, is obsessed with money and riches, positive thinking and motivational speaking, emotionalism and religious entertainment. It is a huge business machine. It is enamored with so-called 'miracles and healing' which are usually performed by showmen who are no different from the psychics and magicians of the world. It teaches that the Church is going to take over the world for Christ and assume her place of wealth and power which is her God-given right! The Church at large is truly caught up in the Great Deception!

Somehow this new Christendom, both Protestant and Catholic, shall merge with Judaism and a liberalised Islam, as well as other religions, as the basis of a world religion of peace and security. The deception of Satan will be immense through the manifestation of false signs and miracles that will seduce the whole world into believing the lie of a counterfeit kingdom of peace. This is Secret Babylon!

"...for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."

(1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 NIV)

To learn more, see the article *Who is Secret Babylon the Great?* and the section *The Great Prophetic Plan Revealed*.

Scripture quotations are taken from the Concordant Version unless stated otherwise.