# **Strong Delusions (II Thessalonians 2:1-12)**

# The Antichrist

"Now, brethren, **concerning the coming of our Lord** Jesus Christ **and our gathering together to Him**, we ask you, **not to be soon shaken** in mind or troubled, either **by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us,** as though the day of Christ had come. **Let no one deceive** you by any means; for that Day will not come **unless the falling away comes first**, and **the man of sin is revealed**, **the son of perdition**, who opposes and **exalts himself above all** that is called God or that is worshiped, so that **he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God**." II Thessalonians 2:1-4 NKJV

#### II Thessalonians 2:1-4

*"Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken* in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by

*word or by letter, as if from us,* as though the day of Christ had come." II Thessalonians 2:1-2 NKJV

#### <u> ...as though the day of Christ had come! </u>

- And with these eight words we encapsulate the overarching purpose of this second letter to the Thessalonians.
- I wish you to go back to the teaching on Chapter 1,
   <u>Manifest Evidence</u>, and focus in on the introduction.
- The very reason he so quickly followed up his first letter with this second letter is because these durable disciples in Thessalonica were still under heavy persecution, and their understanding was that the suffering would end when the Day of the Lord had come. And they had incorrectly believed it had!
- Their concern was not even so much that the day had come and gone and that they had missed it, but that it was now present and there was nothing more to expect from God regarding vindication and rewards for His faithful followers, as they continued to suffer persecution.
- Even before he corrects the record, Paul reassures the Thessalonians that God will indeed avenge them and judge those who were troubling them. He reminds them of His previous visit and the details of what he actually

shared about how the day of the Lord would arrive and what it would look like.

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- And here we see Paul reiterates that the second coming of the Lord coincides with the Rapture of God's elect.
- The rapture does not take place at some secret coming seven years earlier (as if at the beginning of the events recorded in the Book of Revelation). The rapture takes place at the last trumpet blast before the bowls of (God's) wrath are poured out on the pagan world that remains after the rapture.
- As we will see, Paul's understanding is completely consistent with what Y'shua taught on the Mount of Olives when asked, *"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"* Matthew 24:3 NKJV
- See <u>Prophetic Education</u> for an in-depth sermon on Matthew 24-25.
- See <u>Caught Up Together</u> (I Thessalonians 4:13-18) for an in-depth sermon on timing of the rapture.
- *"Let no one deceive* you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin

*is revealed, the son of perdition,* who opposes and *exalts himself above all* that is called God or that is worshiped, so that **he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that** *he is God*." II Thessalonians 2:3-4 NKJV

# ...as though the day of Christ had come and our gathering together to Him!

 Don't be fooled as if it happened already because certain things must happen first, before Christ can return and rapture His church.

# <u>Let's call these the legal prerequisites for the second</u> <u>coming</u>

- **Mathematical Control Falling Away** (the Great Apostasy)
- The Antichrist is Revealed (sits in the Temple and Claims to be God!)

# **<u>M</u>** The signs of the second coming and the end of the age

- *"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"* Matthew 24:3 NKJV
  - Again, see Prophetic Education for an in-depth sermon on Matthew 24-25.
- Here I will touch on the high points for clarity and to show that what Paul was sharing with the Thessalonians was 100% consistent with the words of Y'shua.

# 4 of 24

### **When will these things be? (Matthew 24:3-13)**

- **What signs should we look for?** 
  - The disciples want to know what indicators they should be aware of that Y'shua will return and when all the temple destruction will take place.
  - ☑ Y'shua gives them an overview of the end-of-the-age.
    - First, be careful that no one deceives you about the end of the age.
      - Bad eschatology: Church doctrine is loaded with various positions about "end times."
      - Many of them use the "rapture" of the church, God's people getting "caught up" into the air and whisked out of tribulation, as the inflection point.
      - Various End Times Positions: (not intended as a deep dive).
        - ☑ Pre-tribulation rapture
        - ☑ Mid-tribulation rapture
        - ☑ Post-tribulation rapture
        - ✓ Pre-wrath rapture
        - A-millennial (no literal millennial kingdom)
        - ☑ No Rapture

- Errors abound in all of these "positions" because they fail to take certain key elements into consideration when building their model.
  - When you become an expert at what is authentic, the counterfeits are easy to spot.
  - You need not become an expert on each counterfeit if you are an expert in what is true!
  - Note: that is how bankers are taught to spot counterfeit money—become an expert in what is real!
- ✓ FYI: a few key elements you should become expert in that are missing in whole or in part from each of the erroneous end-times models...
  - They are not Torah-centric (drawing patterns of prophecy from narratives in the Torah) like the story of Joseph!
  - They do not take the Biblical Feast cycle and calendar into consideration as God's prophetic timeclock.
  - They ignore super-patterns in the Scriptures like the "journey and the destination" (captivity-wildernesspromised land), and birth to adulthood, infancy to maturity, sinner to saint.

- For timeline predictors, they focus on external events in the world, rather than the Christlike transformation of God's people.
- Y'shua continues with the topic of deception with regards to the end of the age:
  - Many people will be fooled by frauds who say they are the Messiah.
  - There will be many international conflicts, large scale and small, and many more threats of conflicts. This must happen, so don't be worried about them.
  - ☑ There will be food shortages, crop destruction, plagues, and earthquakes throughout the world.
  - ☑ These crises are just the beginning of the sad times.
  - ☑ At the very end everything that can be shaken will be shaken! (Hebrews 12:25-27)
- Those who follow Y'shua will face great trials and persecution, and will even be handed over for execution.
  - ☑ They will be hated all over the world because they identify with the name of Y'shua.
  - Many so-called followers of Christ will be very insulted by how the world views Christianity and they will ultimately want no part of it.

- ☑ This insights the Great Falling Away!
- They too will turn on true Christians because, in reality, they detest all that the true faith represents and what it requires, and they despise all those who hold to its fundamental, inflexible, uncompromising principles.
- ☑ Why? Because they were never real Christians—but cultural Christians.
  - Cultural Christianity, other than erroneously containing "Christian" in its description, is not Christian at all! It encompasses all... people, movements, local and national churches, church brands and their charismatic leaders ...all who are part of the— false gospel-light, grated entertainment, tent-meeting-revival, feel-good, self-help, inspirational-speaker, prosperity-gospel, godis-your-personal-genie-in-a-bottle, don't talk about sin and repentance because you will make people feel bad and you will lose you members—church.
  - ☑ This is NOT the Church. The Church is BY DEFINITION the BODY of CHRIST!
- ✓ False prophets and pseudo-pastors without any true prophetic oversight have dominated the church for centuries and are easily fooled and they fool others easily.

- ☑ The true love of God will be missing from fake-Christians and a lawless church.
- However, those who are evaluated at the end, who turn out to be authentic Christians, are the ones who are really saved.

#### The End (Matthew 24:14)

- In order for the end to come, the gospel of the kingdom must be preached to the whole world to serve as the distinguishing testimony of the true, mature, and prepared Church.
  - "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14 NKJV
  - ✓ See <u>Prophetic Education</u> for an in-depth look at what the gospel of the kingdom is and what is meant by "the end."

### Matthew 24:15-28)

- ☑ Prophetic Discernment
  - If anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. Don't be fooled!
  - See, I have told you beforehand!
    - ✓ Y'shua then rewinds and gives a summary of the end-ofthe-age events.

- First is a reference to the prophecy of Daniel that refers to the end and takeover of the Jewish temple service by the Antichrist and pagan practices—an utter abomination.
- ☑ To what is Y'shua referring?
  - ☑ Daniel 9 prophecy
    - "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."" Daniel 9:26-27 NKJV
- During that time the people of Judea must flee to the mountains in a state of emergency.
  - It will be the greatest persecution of God's people in human history (past, present and future considered).
  - It will become known as the great tribulation.

- The books of Daniel and Revelation will elaborate on this seven year period.
- Prophetically, and as we will even be able to extrapolate from this chapter (Matthew 24), it corresponds to the second seven-year period of Joseph's ministry (the seven years of famine).
  - That is why good eschatology must be Torah-centric and follow the patterns in the Old Testament narratives!
- If God does not supernaturally intervene in the events of that time, no one would survive, not even a single Christian, but He will for the sake of His church!
  - Leave your homes quickly; take nothing with you; and don't go back to retrieve anything you think you need.
  - If you are out working, do not go home first for a change of clothes.
  - It will obviously be even more difficult if you are pregnant or nursing babies when you have to escape so quickly.
  - It will also be more challenging to escape if the weather is cold, rainy, or snowy, or if the moment you must run is on the Sabbath—because it's clearly

more difficult to do anything quickly when you are in full-rest mode.

- In that time of panic and crises, it will be very tempting to look to anyone who can save you and, because of that, false christs and false prophets will spring up everywhere looking to take advantage of those in full panic mode.
  - It will be tempting to follow them as they will be very convincing with their persuasive words and seemingly supernatural abilities.
  - Plus, others will be their advocates trying to convince you they are authentic. Don't buy in!
  - They will seem so legit that even Christians will be tempted to believe they are the real deal.
  - ✓ That is why Y'shua is warning them ahead of time to be on the lookout.
- Trust Me, Y'shua says, when I return it will look very specific. What do I mean by that?
  - There are very specific things that must have taken place before I will come back.
  - ✓ If those things have not occurred yet, then there is no way I can return.

- ☑ So, no matter how convincing it looks, it can't be Me if what needs to happen first has not happened yet.
- Hint: I'm telling you what some of those things are right here in Matthew 24! Pay attention.
- ☑ For instance:
  - The Gospel of the Kingdom must have been preached to the whole world as a witness before the end can come.
  - Has the Gospel of the Kingdom been universally defined?
  - Has it gone to the whole world? (Clearly it could not have been if it is yet undefined by the the Church at large).
  - ☑ Has the end come as prophesied in Matthew 24:14?
- One additional note from the final words of the Old Testament—something that corresponds to the final Passover and the revealing of the Sons of God something that clearly MUST OCCUR BEFORE the return of Christ.
  - "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet <u>Before</u> the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their

fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse." Malachi 4:5-6 NKJV

- These are just a few clues that will tell you if Y'shua can legally return, plus there are more specifics coming in Matthew 24.
  - Pay attention so you are not one of those who gets fooled.
  - There will be so much bad doctrine around these events in the church over the next 2000 years, that it will get increasingly more difficult to sort out the the truth.
  - ☑ That is why you must be discerning.

# **<u>Matthew 24:29-31</u>** <u>The Coming of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:29-31)</u>

- ☑ Prophetic Timing
  - Immediately after, then you will see!
- Immediately after the great tribulation
  - ☑ For all you pre-tribulation rapture fans, it's time to get off that ride!
    - ☑ It is only AFTER the great tribulation just described that He will return.
    - And this is what it will look like when that time comes.
      - It will be so dark as if there is no light at all, no sun, no moon, no stars.

- It will be as if nature itself has failed.
- ☑ Then He will break forth in the sky through that darkness, and His glory will light up the heavens.
- At that moment, every human still alive who ever denied Me will instantly regret they did. INSTANTLY!
- Then, at the sound of the last trumpet (after the great tribulation) He will rapture my church from the whole world.
- ✓ The last trumpet refers to the Feast of Trumpets (the first day of the seventh month on the Hebrew calendar)
  - It is the only feast that begins on the first day of the Hebrew calendar month.
  - You must watch for the sighting of the new moon on the first day of the month in order to declare that the feast has arrived.
  - Thus, it's the only feast that no one knows the day or the hour until it happens, so you much be sober and watching.
  - As Paul taught you in his first letter, in I Thessalonians
     5:1-11, we can know the times (time of the year) and seasons (feast seasons), but for this particular feast (which foreshadows Christ's return), we can't know the exact day or the hour)! However, because we are in the light we can

**be prepared!** (See <u>You Should Know Perfectly Well</u> for a complete teaching on I Thessalonians 5:1-11)

" "But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. For God did not appoint us to wrath, [see Bowls of Wrath Revelation 16:1-21] but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing." I Thessalonians 5:1-11 NKJV

- The Last trumpet (the last Feast of Trumpets) corresponds to Revelation and the collection of God's people before His wrath hits the earth!
  - *i* "but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets." Revelation 10:7
  - Then <u>the seventh angel</u> sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"" Revelation 11:15
  - "Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped." Revelation 14:14-16 NKJV
  - ✓ The last trumpet (He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect —Mat. 24:31) corresponds to: "Now this I say, brethren,

that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the <u>last trumpet.</u> For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." I Corinthians 15:50-52 NKJV (Read all of I Corinthians 15)
God did not appoint us to wrath...(I Thessalonians 5:9)
"Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth."" Revelation 16:1 NKJV
See the seven bowls of wrath in Revelation 16:1-21 (The

church is gone by this time because "God did not appoint us to wrath")

#### The Working of Satan

"Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the

18 of 24

lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason **God will** send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thessalonians 2:5-12 NKJV

#### II Thessalonians 2:5-12

- "Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming." II Thessalonians 2:5-8 NKJV
  - What is restraining the Antichrist from being revealed at the proper time?
    - At the proper time, God will allow the enemy to make his last stand.
    - The Antichrist (as a person) will be revealed.

- "Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us." I John 2:18-19 NKJV
- *"For many deceivers have gone out into the world* who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." II John 1:7 NKJV
  - The spirit of the antichrist is already at work in the world, but the person of the Antichrist will not rise until the very end when God allows it (by taking the Holy Spirit out of the way)!

#### **<u>Market Mystery of Lawlessness</u>**

- *"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness."* I John 3:4 NKJV
- *"…but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us*." I John 2:19
- ""Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord,

Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew** you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV

#### The lawlessness will escalate in the last days!

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"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" II Timothy 3:1-5 NKJV

- Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron," I Timothy 4:1-2 NKJV
- The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with

**all unrighteous deception** among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved." II Thessalonians 2:9-10 NKJV

- ✓ The Antichrist will come with power, signs, lying wonders, and unrighteous deception!
  - ""Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." Matthew 24:23-24 NKJV
  - "Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the sight of the beast, telling those who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the

beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. **He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,** and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666." Revelation 13:11-18 NKJV

*"And for this reason* God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thessalonians 2:11-12 NKJV

#### Given over to strong delusions...

- Hate the truth; believe lies; pleasure in unrighteousness!
   God has always handed over those who insist on their sins to their own sinful passions. When this happens at
  - the end in massive numbers it will be called the great falling away!
  - *"Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies*

### 23 of 24

among themselves, {26} For this reason **God gave them up** to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. {28} And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, **God gave them over** to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; " Romans 1:24, 26, 28 NKJV

# And to be clear the Y'shua's second coming will not occur until all these things have taken place!

*"for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,"* II Thessalonians 2:3 NKJV

### NEXT TEACHING

Obtaining Glory (II Thessalonians 2:13-17)