

Lying, Deceit, and Destruction

Harmony M.B.C., November 25, 2012 (Morning)

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2Thess. 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him,

2Thess. 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

- There was uneasiness, worry, unnecessary concern regarding the day of Christ among these people; (if you can get the Lord's people to thinking about Jesus coming and the main reason for His coming [them being caught up with Him] it solves a lot of worry).
- God's people make trouble for themselves when they listen to too much unscriptural religious talk
- We sometimes may think we get this visit by some spirit that tells us something different than we ought to be believing; sometimes we get such a visit by some spirit through the mouth of somebody who thinks they know more than the bible
- We sometimes hear somebody say something that sends us off on a tangent about the work or schedule of God
- We can mark it down that if we get to a place about the plans of God where we are feeling confused, perplexed, it is because some part of our perception about it was probably brought to us as a falsehood all dressed up.
- The Lord is the Master of truth, and if we want to get rid of confusion and doubt, we need to cross check everything by what He says.
 - ▶ **Mark 13** is a lengthy teaching by Jesus about this thing;
 - Many false Christs, Wars/rumors of wars BUT, the end is not yet
 - Nations and kingdoms pushing against one another, earthquakes in different places, famines and other troubles, but these are only the beginning of sorrows
 - Arrests of believers, abuses, opportunity to witness against national rulers, family members turning in their own to authorities, the gospel preached to all nations; THEN
 - When the "abomination of desolation" standing where he ought not, the time is at hand
 - He concluded by telling the apostles that no man knows the day, no, not the angels in heaven
 - ▶ Plenty of signs to think about, but no one can determine the hour, or even the day.
 - ▶ It doesn't mean that the Lord intends to blind us to the nearness of His coming, and Paul's exposition here is proof of that.
- Our 3rd verse takes up at about this point that Jesus made about the abomination of desolation:

II. **2Thess. 2:3** Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

- He gives us two signs that must come before the day of Christ
 - ▶ Falling away first

- Don't get the idea that these are profane infidels; at least not in the sense that we usually think of them. These are superficially religious people
- Ever notice how many people today are careful to identify with some religion?
- Religious convenience; religious political correctness.
- Falling away here is not a reference to giving up religion, but rather of morphing religion into an apostate religion that has taken everything divine out of God's religion and restructured it with human building blocks.
- 1Tim. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

III. **2Thess. 2:4** Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

- He gives us a description of the things that man of sin will act out.
 - ▶ Temple: Gr. Naos; same with 2Cor. 6:16 and Eph. 2:21 when referring to a church; not same as "hieron" Gr. word for temple when referring to the Jewish place of worship.
 - ▶ Nowhere in Christian scripture is the Jewish temple referred to as the temple of God; only in Jewish historical writings is it referred to that way
 - ▶ This word for temple also has a broad Greek meaning which refers to a generic temple or shrine - that is some revered place of worship
 - Suggestion: A world coalition of religions under a Chrislam umbrella, and having a central headquarters that acts as a center for worship for the new global religion?

IV. **2Thess. 2:5** Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

- We as the Lord's people forget spiritual lessons too easily

V. **2Thess. 2:6** And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

- Paul considers this second reminder to be an end to mystery, confusion, or doubt. They are to just look for these evidences, and when they happen, THEN they know that the kingdom of lies has begun on earth.

VI. **2Thess. 2:7** For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way.

- The so-called "mystery of iniquity" that is the spirit of antichrist has been at work on his project since Christ returned to heaven. But he is constrained, or held back, by a force that limits what the spirit of antichrist is able to do.
- Some scholars have concluded that this force is the Holy Spirit, and it may be. But, some have also concluded that the phrase "taken out of the way" means taken away from the earth. There are biblical evidences that this probably cannot be true:
 - ▶ 1) Jesus made a promise to His church "lo, I am with you always..." and based on what we read here, the church is still going to be here when the man of sin is revealed; His church is told to look for the public appearance of the man of sin as one of the two evidences. If the

Holy Spirit is taken off the earth, all believers must go with Him.

▸ 2) The Holy Spirit has always been on the earth in some capacity. It has been a different capacity or office depending on the business God is doing, and even the people involved.

- The Holy Spirit upon earth as co-creator in **Gen. 1:2**;
- His Spirit was striving with unregenerate mankind in the days of Noah - **Gen. 6:3**;
- Believers are possessed of the Spirit of God in O.T. times - **Gen. 41:38**;
- Holy Spirit gifts men with special talents in the O.T. - **Gen. 31-3**;
- The Holy Spirit inspires and empowers to prophesy - **Num. 11:29**;
- Holy Spirit comes upon certain men of Israel to make them judges - **Judges Chs. 3 & 6**;
- The Holy Spirit was present in the age of the patriarchs and we know that David requested that the Lord not take that Holy Spirit from him;
- He was on earth in a certain capacity before He came with power to the church on the day of Pentecost
 - ✓ Holy Ghost upon Simeon and revealed to him that he would not see death until he saw the Messiah - **Luke 2:25-27**;
 - ✓ He descended on Jesus at His baptism-**Mat. 3**;
 - ✓ He leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted-**Mat. 4**;

- So, if this scripture does refer to the Holy Spirit, we ought to be able to conclude that at this point, God might well stop the Holy Spirit's dispensation of controlling the movements of antichrist at this point; not leaving the earth; simply stopping one set of duties.

VII. **2Thess. 2:8** And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

- When this man of sin is released to reveal himself in full-blown power, acting like God, then Christ will come and destroy him with a word and with the glory of His presence.

VIII. **2Thess. 2:9** *Even him*, whose coming is after the **working of Satan** with all power and signs and lying wonders,

- We should note that the appearing and rise to power of the man of sin is a result of intensive work of Satan
- He will be using miraculous signs and showing wonders that are fabrications (lying wonders)

IX. **2Thess. 2:10** And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

- There is something else that will be a sign of his power and his total release at that time, and it shows itself in the children of the devil... it is here called "all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."
- This phrase is describing part of the working of Satan through the man of sin; he will have such an influence over humanity that he will literally show forth some of his power and capability through what THEY do.

- This phrase teaches us that in those who follow the devil there is a supernatural force at work manifesting unrighteousness...crookedness in them, to work out all the wickedness that Satan desires to manifest among men.
- The phrase teaches us that the very unrighteousness that fills them will be there because they are totally consumed with unrighteousness and want it to be that way.

X. **2Thess. 2:11** And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

- There is a limit that even the forbearance of God ends. We see such a situation in Genesis 6 (the flood), and **Genesis 18 & 19** (destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah).
- This is such a limit here in our text
 - Remember in **2Kings 6**, the king of Syria had a small army go to Dothan to capture Elisha, and when Elisha saw them, he asked the Lord to smite them with blindness...that is, the inability to understand where they were. He then told them that was not the place they wanted or the way, but follow him and he would lead them where they wanted to go. They followed him, and when he got them to Samaria where the king of Israel was, he asked the Lord to open their eyes, and they found themselves surrounded by the army of Israel. These men were deluded by the Lord!
- Now, the Lord doesn't have to do much for men who have embraced unrighteousness as a way of life to be deluded. The unrighteousness itself acts as a kind of deceiver.
- But these men are willing tools of the man of sin, because unrighteousness is their stock-in-trade
- When people get to the place that they structure their lives around unrighteousness, then they are at the stage to be consigned to a delusion by which they will believe a lie to their own condemnation.

XI. **2Thess. 2:12** That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- The purpose of God in this sending of delusion is clearly spelled out here
- This should stand as a warning to every human being regarding the pursuit of unrighteousness vs. listening to the truth.