

The Foundation for the Great Deception

Luke 21

ETS: Jesus warned His followers about deception surrounding His second coming

ESS: We need to know what to expect to avoid deception

OSS: I want people to understand what Jesus second coming will involve

PQ: Are you ready for the return of Christ?

UW: Deception

WE

What **details** do you know about the Return of Christ?

- Do you know the **geographic location** where the **TRUE Messiah** will return?
- Do you know the **signs** that will accompany **TRUE Messiah** return?
- Do you know whether the **TRUE Messiah** will return **bodily** or **spiritually**?
- Do you know the **events** that must occur **BEFORE** the **TRUE Messiah** returns?
- Do you know **WHAT** the **TRUE Messiah** will do **WHEN** He returns?
- Do you know **WHO** the **TRUE Messiah** returns with?

WHY should study Bible Prophecy?"

Avoid Deception

Turn to Luke 21

Luke 21:8 Then he said, "Watch out that you are not **deceived**. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Don't follow them.

Remember, **Satan** is a LIAR and he is the **Master Deceiver!**

- He knows that humanity is looking for a Savior so...
 - Why not deploy many **counterfeit saviors**?
 - Why not deploy the ultimate **counterfeit savior**?

What is this coming deception?

The Great Deception: The Messiah Has Arrived

Matthew 24:23-24: "If anyone tells you then, 'See, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Over here!' not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders *to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.*"

All three monotheistic religions *are looking for a **Messiah** to descend!*

- The **Jews REJECT Jesus** as their Messiah but are waiting for the “**TRUE**” **Messiah** to return
- The **Christians ACCEPT Jesus** as their Messiah and are waiting for **His return**
- The **Muslims REJECT the Jewish Jesus** as their Messiah, but they are waiting for the **TRUE JESUS, a Muslim Jesus** to come -- **NON-JEWISH Jesus!**

One of the “**Signs and wonders**” may be that this False Messiah will **DESCEND** from the clouds,

- This may be **FAKED** using technology OR,
- It may be a supernatural event
 - We know that Satan will empower **false messiahs** and **false prophets** with “**Signs and wonders.**”

What is this coming deception?

**The Great Deception:
Deceives Unbelievers**

Atheists, agnostics, and the non-religious make up about **1.9 billion people** in the world.

Whatever you think about COVID-19, the pandemic demonstrated that many **people and businesses** will follow whatever the government leaders tell them to do.

- If the religious “Experts” are proclaiming that Jesus has arrived
 - If unbelievers see “**signs and wonders**” on their TV’s
 - If unbelievers see a UNITED call to follow this man. MANY will follow him

What will the **Muslim Jesus** call people to do?

- According to **Revelation 13**, the “**second beast**” (aka **False Prophet/Muslim Jesus**) will...
 - **Compels** the earth and those who live on it to worship the Anti-Christ
 - **Perform** miracles, signs and wonders
 - **Tell** people to make an image of the Anti-Christ
 - **Compel** people to receive the Mark of the Beast/Anti-Christ
 - Without this mark, you won’t be able to “Buy or sell”

We saw this occur on a **micro-level** during COVID-19
“New York City will become the first U.S. city to require proof of vaccination for a variety of activities for workers and customers — indoor dining, gyms and movie theaters — a move intended to put pressure on people to get vaccinated, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced on Tuesday.

Unbelievers will not hesitate to **The Mark** so they can **buy, sell, travel**, etc.

- Just as we say during COVID-19, many businesses may **REQUIRE** employees to get the mark!

The Great Deception: Deceives the Religious

Cosmic Chess: Satan moved the Canaanites into the Promised Land territory, he repeated the tactic by moving Islam into that same area.

- Just like before, Satan is doing all he can to **PREVENT** the coming of Jesus!
 - **Map of Canaanites**
 - He **failed** at **stopping** the **first coming of Christ** so now he is trying to **prevent** the **second coming of Christ**.

Bible Prophecy is centered in the Middle East!

- Jerusalem is in the Middle East (Israel)

MAP of Muslim Control

- All these countries are **Muslim**, except Israel!
 - Coincidence? **NO!** (Remember our **COSMIC CHESS** Illustration!)

Muslims are looking for “**Jesus**” (their version) to **descend**

- **Support** the **Mahdi**
- **Encourage** the world to worship the **Madhi**
- **Call people** to **turn** to **Islam**; reject Christianity

Christians, *who know Bible prophecy*, will **recognize** this man as the **False Prophet**

- **Rev. 13:11** “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon.
 - The “**Beast**” is symbolic language John is using to describe the **False Messiah/Prophet**

What are the “**two horns**”?

- The “**two horns**” is **symbolic** language John is using to describe, I believe, the merging of **Catholicism and Islam** in this man!
 - In other words, he will bring **Christianity** and **Islam** together

Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are the only three **monotheistic** religions

- ALL THREE are looking for a **Savior** to **descend!**

World's largest religions:

- **Christianity:** 2.4 billion
- **Islam:** 1.9 billion
- **Hindu:** 1.6 billion
- **Buddhism:** 550 million
 - **TOTAL:** Almost 6.5 billion people of the 8 billion on our planet
 - If you add the additional 1.9 billion unbelievers, you have 7.4 billion people

NOT EVERYONE will accept this False Messiah, but it is safe to assume **most** of the world's population **will** accept him and obey his message to follow after the Anti-Christ.

OBJECTION: Christians will not accept this False Messiah!

2 Thessalonians 2:3 “Don't let anyone **deceive** you in any way. (notice Paul is warning against **deception** about Christ's return too!) **For that day** (i.e., the return of Jesus and “our gathering to Him” **vs. 1**) **will not come unless 1) the apostasy comes first and 2) the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”**

**Foundation for the Great Deception:
Cultural Christianity**

Let me define terms

- When I say “**Christian**”, I am talking about people who “**identify**” as a Christian
 - Those who identify as “Christian” would be in this “RELIGIOUS” Group.

There are supposedly **2.4 billion “Christians”** in the world

- Many people identify as “Christian” because they were **baptized** as a **baby** into the church.
- Many people identify as “**Christian**” because they **occasionally attend a “Christian” church**.
 - You can call this group “**Cultural Christians**”

Recently, there was an interview of one of the most famous **atheists** alive today: **Sir Richard Dawkins**, also known as one of the so-called “**four horsemen**” of the **New Atheists** wrote...

- “The God Delusion” and other books
- He has debated Christian “Apologists”

Sir Richard Dawkins shocked many people when he proclaimed that he now identifies as a “**Cultural Christian**.”

Dawkins noticed that Islamic Ramadan lights were replacing Easter lights in the United Kingdom, where he lives.

- Concerned that Islam is overtaking the United Kingdom and erasing their culture , Dawkins recently stated **“I call myself a cultural Christian. I’m not a believer, but there’s a distinction between being a believing Christian and being a cultural Christian. ... I love hymns and Christmas carols, and I sort of feel at home in the Christian ethos. ... We [in the U.K.] are a “Christian country” in that sense.**

Dawkins then stated that he’s “horrified” to see Islamic holidays and mosques taking the place of Christian feasts and cathedrals in Europe.

- Dawkins said **“If I had to choose between Christianity and Islam, I’d choose Christianity every single time. It seems to me to be a fundamentally decent religion in a way that I think Islam is not.”**

Many prayed the “Sinner’s prayer” **not out of conviction or in repentance** but because their friends were **“Doing it”** or they were **pressured** to **“go forward”** by their **parents, peer pressure, a love interest, etc.**

- They often become the **“cultural Christians”**

The famous evangelist **Billy Graham** once stated on national television that he **believed 85% of church attendees were “on their way to hell.”**

- Billy Graham has no way of knowing if that is accurate because he could not see people’s hearts, but from his decades of observation, it was clear to him that many, if not the majority of people, who identify as “Christian” are Christian in NAME ONLY!
 - They **do not produce “the fruit of the Spirit”**
 - They do not have a **clear answer** as to how they became a follower of Christ.

The book of **2 Corinthians** was written for a Christian church that was carnal.

- They were known for **fighting** amongst themselves
- They tolerated **immorality**
- They were divided **internally**
- They took each other to **court**
- Their worship **services** were **chaotic**
- People **boasted** about their **spiritual gifts** and downplayed other gifts

Paul writes and states in **2 Cor. 13:5** “**Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Examine yourselves. Or do you yourselves not recognize that Jesus Christ is in you?— unless you fail the test.**”

- Peter wrote in **2 Peter 1:10** “Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election...”

How do you know you are going to heaven?

Are you producing a life consistent with the teachings of Jesus?

Are you keeping Christ’s commands?

WE ALL need to **examine** our hearts as to whether or not we are TRULY BELIEVERS!

- Do you believe Jesus is the Messiah?
- Have you humbled yourself before Him and asked Him to save your soul?
- Are you living for Him?

As the Anti-Christ and government begin persecuting Christians on a global scale, it will become less “popular” to be a Christian in the West!

- It is certainly not popular or desirable in most of the Middle East!
- We are beginning to witness in the WEST a “falling away” of cultural Christians.

I'm afraid that many who are Christian in "NAME ONLY" will accept the Mark if it means giving them the ability to "buy or sell" and protection from "persecution."

But Jesus' states in Matthew 24 seems to extend beyond CULTURE CHRISTIANS

- **Matthew 24:23-24**: "If anyone tells you then, 'See, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Over here!' not believe it. 24 For false messiahs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders *to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.*"

Who are the "Elect"?

- In Jesus' parable about the **Persistent Widow** in Luke 18, He asked this question: **Luke 18:7-8**: Will not God grant justice to his elect who cry out to him day and night? Will he delay helping them? 8 I tell you that he will swiftly grant them justice. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"
 - **CONTEXT**: Leading up to the **Second Coming of Christ** when the "elect" are suffering persecution.
 - WHAT do the Elect do when facing persecution? Persistently cry out to the

Lord. The “**Elect**” are those who “**Cry out to the Lord**”

- In **Romans 11**, speaking in the context of the persecution of believers under Nebuchadnezzar, Paul noted that the **Elect** are those **who would not bow the knee to Baal**.

The “**Elect**” are **true followers** of Christ.

*Jesus seems to indicate that the GREAT DECEPTION will be SO STRONG that even **true followers of Christ** may be DECEIVED by it—at least temporarily.*

HOW is it possible that **true believers** will be duped by the GREAT DECEPTION?

Great Deception Foundation: Antisemitism

Antisemitism **fueled the atrocities of Nazi Germany**, but what we are seeing now is not only occurring in Europe but GLOBALLY!

- **Global Antisemitism headlines (3)**

Unlike pre-1948, a **Jewish state** did not exist, but now a Jewish state exists

- Israel has been attacked numerous times since its founding

In **1967** Israel gained control of the **Golan Heights** and the **Gaza Strip** when it defeated Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.

- These two areas have become **sources of constant conflict** for Israel.

October 6th marked the **50th anniversary** of the **1973 Yom Kippur war** and **50 years later**, on October 7th, Hamas invaded Israel in the **greatest mass slaughter** of Jews since the Holocaust.

- Did you know the word “**Hamas**” is in the **Bible**?

The first instance is in **Genesis 6:11** “**Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with wickedness.**”

- The word translated as “**Wickedness**” or “**Violence**” is *Hamas in Hebrew*
 - Remember, Genesis 6 is the description of the world when the Nephilim are walking on the earth! **(PIC of the Word)**
- The word “Hamas” is translated into English as violence (39x), violent (7x), cruelty (4x), wrong (3x),

false (2x), cruel (1x), damage (1x), injustice (1x), oppressor (with H376) (1x), unrighteous (1x).

Initially, the global sentiment was **with Israel**, but NOW we are seeing a shift **AGAINST** Israel.

- Media organizations readily accept the casualty numbers given by **the Hamas Ministry of Health**, yet there are many reasons to believe these numbers are **over-inflated**.
 - These numbers are leading **academics, politicians, and political bodies**, to accuse Israel of **Genocide** which is now spreading to **protests** on college **campuses** against Israel. (If Israel wanted to kill all the people in the Gaza Strip, they have the air power to do so quickly.)
 - You've probably seen videos of Jewish students being **prevented** from entering buildings on these campuses.

Now that Israel is a nation, it is being accused of **colonization**

- Colonization is the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.

- Interestingly, the **Jews are the indigenous people** in the area with a history stretching back over 3,500 years!
 - But don't let facts get in the way of trying to destroy Israel!

*I don't see this **new wave of Antisemitism** slowing down*

How are the “**The Apostasy**” and Antisemitism connected?

Jewish Hope: A Jew will rule the world!

Christian Hope: A Jew will Rule the World!

Foundation for Apostasy Replacement or Fulfillment Theology

COSMIC CHESS: Satan has **planted a couple of seeds** in the church that have **produced fruit in the past** and is once **again producing fruit** that is leading many astray.

Let me try to summarize this teaching...

- The MAJORITY view of the END TIMES in the **Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Reformed** churches (including the

reformed Baptists) and MANY in the SBC (our convention) believe that the **CHURCH is ISRAEL**.

The BIG \$10 word for this belief is **Supersessionism**.

- It is the belief that the gentile church has superseded Jewish Israel in God's affections
 - The **main view** of **most** Pastors, Seminary Profs, and other leaders in Christian denominations is that the Old Testament promises to Israel are for the church.
 - **Ethnic Jews have no place in Bible prophecy**
 - God has **permanently rejected** the **Nation of Israel**
 - The **suffering of the Jews** is due to their crucifixion and rejection of Jesus
 - **Christ will NOT physically rule and reign in Jerusalem** on this earth and those passages that teach that are NOT to be taken literally.
 - The **land promises** given to Abraham's descendants, which have not been fulfilled, have been revoked by God because of Israel's unbelief.
 - They do not see **any significance to Israel's miraculous return in 1948** nor do they believe

the event occurring in Israel has any implication regarding Bible prophecy.

I am not saying that those who hold this view are NOT SAVED, this is not a Salvation issue, but this teaching, known as supersessionism, replacement theology, fulfillment theology, etc. *affects how people in the church view God's plan for Israel.*

- Those who hold this view, believe Jesus will return, judge the wicked, and believers immediately go to the new heaven and new earth.
 - They **DO NOT believe** Jesus will rule and reign on the earth for 1,000 years (Rev. 20)
 - They **DO NOT believe** Jesus will rule from **Jerusalem**
 - They **DO NOT believe a literal temple** (Ez. 40-48) will be built in **Jerusalem**.

They see all the prophecies in the OT about Jerusalem, a future temple, etc. as being symbolic of the church.

The Apostle Paul WARNED about this view in **Romans 11!**

PROBLEM: *There is a small step from claiming that God has rejected and cursed the Jews to hatred of the Jews.*

Phrase: “History REPEATS itself”

*HISTORY has proven that **this teaching** results in disdain for the Jews.*

This view, which is held by the **majority in the church**, has been the seedbed of Jewish hatred through the centuries BY THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Here are a few examples from “*When a Jew Rules the World*” by Joel Richardson:

- **A.D. 150** Christian defender, **Justin Martyr** argued that the **church was the new Israel** in his *Dialogue with Trypho*
 - If the church is the new Israel, that means that the **Jews are a false Israelite race!**
- A.D. 210 **Hippolytus** of Rome, the most important theologian of **the third century**, wrote a polemic called “**Treatise Against the Jews**”
 - He argued that the Jews **are responsible for the crucifixion** of Jesus and are cut off from God.
- A.D. 220 **Origen**, another **influence theologian**, wrote that the Jews have been “**Utterly cut off from God**”

Once the FOUNDATION from the leading church theologians was that God no longer had a plan for BELIEVING ETHNIC JEWS, THEN, “the Church”* became HOSTILE to the Jews...

- *When I say “**the church**” after **A.D. 330**, I am referring to the Roman Catholic Church and most of the **Protestant denominations** that split off from it in the 1500’s.
- The theologians whose writings and teachings became the foundation for the Catholic Church, did not interpret the Bible in a historical-literal fashion but interpreted **Scripture as allegories**.
 - Because of their attitude toward the Jews, they see the OT promises for Israel as being applied to the church, *they do not take them literally*.

As a result of these teachings....

- A.D. 306: **The Church Synod of Elvira** restricted interaction between Jews and Christians.
 - Christians were prohibited from marrying Jews or eating with Jews.
- A.D. 380 **John Chrysostom**, a well-known Christian preacher, claimed that because God so hates the Jews, Christians are “to hate them and long for their blood.”

RESULT in HISTORY: **The church persecuted the Jews**

- AD 388 – In this year, **Christians burned down a synagogue** in the city of Callincum with the **local bishop encouraging the burning.**
- AD 415 – **Cyril**, the *Patriarch of Alexandria* initiated a series of measures leading to the expulsion of every Jew in Alexandria.
- A.D. 415, **Augustine**, the most influential theologian in the Roman Catholic Church and its protestant offshoots, stated that the Jews are “**reprobated**” by God, in other words, cannot be saved.
- AD 418 – **Jerome**, the Latin Church Father, in speaking of the Jewish synagogues, used the most inflammatory descriptions imaginable: *“If you call it [synagogues] a brothel, a den of vice, the Devil’s refuge, Satan’s fortress, a place to deprave the soul, an abyss of every conceivable disaster or whatever you will, you are still saying less than it deserves.”*
- AD 489–519 Christian mobs destroyed numerous synagogues in the cities of Antioch, Daphne, and Ravenna.
- AD 535 – The **Synod of Claremont** decreed that Jews could not hold public office or have any form of authority over Christians.

We could spend the next hour documenting how THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH and its **Protestant offshoots** have persecuted the Jewish people throughout history.

Have you heard of the REFORMATION?

- This was led by **Catholic priests/theologians** (John Calvin, Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, et al.) who were trying to “**reform**” the **Roman Catholic Church**.
 - They **failed** and ended up **breaking away** and we get **Lutherans, Presbyterians, Anglicans**, and all the branches from them (Methodists, Episcopalians, etc.).
- While they returned to the Scriptural teaching of **salvation by faith alone in God alone**, and **Scripture only** (not church traditions), *they largely left Roman Catholic beliefs about the End Times intact—including teachings about the Jews.*
 - *BTW: Baptists are not Protestants; we did not come out of the Roman Catholic Church.*

Do you wonder why the **church in Germany** didn't stand **against Hitler** when he was mass murdering the Jews?

- If you were taught that **God has forever condemned and rejected the Jews**, you should have nothing to do with the Jews as a good Christian, etc. *you would not get in Hitler's way.*

- The largest denomination in Germany is Lutheran.
 - Did you know that Martin Luther became a raging ant-semite in his later years and wrote articles condemning the Jews?

REMINDER: I am **not saying** there are no true believers in the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, reformed, and other denomination Christian Churches, but what I am saying is the **underlying theology** held by pastors/theologians *affects how people in those churches view Israel.*

Increasingly, the narrative in the West is that the **Jews are colonizers, the land belongs to the Palestinians, and the Jews need to be defeated.**

- **Young people**, mainline denominations, and other Christian leaders seem to be buying into this narrative
- I believe we are starting to witness **many in the church turn against the Jewish people. (SHOW Headlines)** and ultimately a JEWISH Messiah!
 - That DOES NOT mean Israel can do no wrong
 - Remember, Modern-day Israel is a SECULAR state.

God is gathering the Jews for judgment due to their unbelief, but a remnant exists and when Christ returns the Jews who are still alive will accept Him as Savior (Zech 14; Romans 11, et. al) and Christ will rule and reign from Jerusalem.

The coming **FALSE MESSIAH** will **NOT BE A JEW**, which **will appeal** to the world, *including many in “the church.”*

The FALSE MESSIAH is the **Great Deception** and

- Since he arrives BEFORE Jesus descends
- Since many in the “Church” do not believe God has a plan for ethnic Jews
 - THEN, it stands to reason that many “in the church” may fall for this deception!

“The apostasy” is:

- Cultural Christians “Falling away” from the church due to its **growing unpopularity**
- **Some true Christians** will be deceived into following this False Messiah and the Anti-Christ because Israel does not matter, God has no plan for the Jewish people, etc.
 - I do think that this “**apostasy**” on their part **may be only temporary** because the **true believers** will **refuse** to take the **Mark of the Beast**.

Foundation for Apostasy Ignorance of The Second Coming

There is a difference between teaching Jesus will return and WHAT the return of Jesus will look like!

- The Return of Jesus will be MUCH MORE than a man floating down out of the sky
 - (Unfortunately, that is how most in the church conceive of the Second Coming so they will be easily deceived.)

In two weeks: What will the Second Coming of Jesus look like?

YOU

PQ: Are you ready for the Second Coming of Jesus?

- Are you Ripe for the **Great Deception**?
 - Are you “dulled” because you are **living in sin**?
 - Are you “dulled” because you are focused on the **worries** of this life and not on God?
 - How much time have you spent with God in prayer this week?
 - How much time have you spent in God’s Word this week?

Jesus' command: "Be on your guard!"

Jesus' command: "Be alert at all times!"

Paul's command: "Stand firm"