

GOD SHALL SEND THEM STRONG DELUSION

TEXT: II THESSALONIANS 2:1-12

Introduction:

1. Last Wednesday night we started here in II Thessalonians 2, one of the most important chapters regarding Bible prophecy.
2. This chapter describes the great apostasy of the last days -- the "falling away" (2:3). In fact, the Greek word translated "falling away" is *apostasia*, from where we get our English word "apostasy."
3. Verse 7 says, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." It will continue working till the arrival of the antichrist, "that man of sin...the son of perdition...that Wicked (one)" (2:3-8).
4. Presently, the mystery of iniquity, this spirit of antichrist is being restrained by the Holy Spirit, working through New Testament churches. But when the church is "taken out of the way" at the rapture, "then shall that Wicked (one) be revealed" (2:7, 8).
5. Meanwhile, the Bible teaches that demonic activity will increase, and things will get worse and worse as we draw near to the fulfillment of these prophecies.
6. First Timothy 4:1 says, "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."
7. The apostle Paul said in II Timothy 3:1, "This I know, also, that in the last days perilous times shall come." The Greek word translated "perilous" means, "hard to take, hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous, harsh, fierce, and savage."
8. Webster's Dictionary defines the word "perilous" as "dangerous."
9. In Matthew 8:28, the same word is translated "perilous" is translated as "exceedingly fierce," and is used to describe demonic possession.
10. Satan and his demons are dangerous, harsh, fierce, savage, and "exceedingly fierce."
11. They fiercely oppose the Gospel. And they are masters at brainwashing people. First Timothy 4:1 says they are "seducing spirits." They seduce, deceive, and eventually destroy.
12. We can easily understand how Satan and his demons can deceive people, but II Thessalonians 2:11 says, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion..."

I. UNBELIEF AND DISOBEDIENCE LEADS TO DECEPTION (2:10).

1. Second Thessalonians 2:10 tells us why sinners are deceived -- "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."
2. According to the Bible, there will soon come a day when millions of lost sinners will be deceived into following the antichrist. Jesus said, "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" (John 5:43).
3. This horrible deception will get worse and worse as we get closer to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today there are billions of people deceived by television, Hollywood, false religion, evolution, communism, psychiatry, rock music, drugs, the occult, etc. The devil has countless ways to deceive (cf. II Cor. 4:3, 4).
4. Notice: the devil "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not..." (II Cor. 4:4). Sinners are spiritually blind! And the greatest deception of all is that sinners can get to heaven without faith in Jesus Christ. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thess. 2:10).
5. Sinners love their sin, but they do not love God. Second Timothy 3:4 says they are "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."
6. I heard an interesting story about a country boy walking down the road, followed by a pig. It was an unusual sight to see a boy walking down the road followed by a pig.
7. A man was passing by and he noticed the pig following the boy, and so he said to the boy, "How do you get that pig to follow you?"
8. And the boy said, "I do it with a bag of beans. I drop a bean here and a bean there and a bean there, and the pig comes along and he follows me, eating up the beans."
9. And the man said, "Where are you taking the pig?" And the boy said, "To the slaughterhouse."
10. And that is how Satan works. He deceives sinners by giving them a few beans here and there, meanwhile he is leading them right to the very gates of hell!

II. GOD FINALLY SENDS THEM A STRONG DELUSION (2:11).

1. Sinners keep saying "no" to God, and "no" to the Lord Jesus Christ, and "no" to the Holy Spirit, "and for this cause" ("because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" -- 2:7), "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie..."

2. Notice it is God who will send this "strong delusion" (2:11). Their fate is the just and deserved punishment for their wilful and deliberate rejection of God's grace and mercy.
3. John 3:19 says "men loved darkness rather than light," and so God sends them further into darkness, and despair, and confusion, and spiritual blindness.
4. Just as "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2:7); in like manner, this delusion is already in operation. We see it today with the growing acceptance of the so-called "gay movement," (book called *Strong Delusion* by Joe Dallas).
5. While Iraq is being overrun by blood-thirsty terrorists, who are chopping off heads, looting banks, and have now laid siege to Iraq's largest oil refinery, our president was in Manhattan last night at a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) fundraiser.
6. Most Americans are already under a strong delusion, but it is going to be much worse after the rapture.
7. God sends sinners a strong delusion, but He does not send them error. The principle (taught all throughout the Bible) is that since sinners deliberately choose falsehood (false religion, evolution, homosexuality, etc.) in direct defiance of God's Holy Word, God subjects them to the power of the error they have chosen for themselves.
8. Proverbs 5:22 says, "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins." In other words, sinners get trapped by their own sins.
9. The next verse says, "He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray" (Pro. 5:23).
10. This strong delusion is the inward working of the inevitable consequences of error. We see it in the life of Balaam; we see it with Pharaoh; we see it with Judas Iscariot, etc.
11. We see it in the life of King Saul. First Samuel 16:14 says, "But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him."
12. We read repeatedly in the book of Exodus that the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart.
13. Sinners reject the truth, and after a while, God hardens their heart and gives up on them (cf. Romans 1:24-28).
14. Sinners fall under the influence of an evil power working within them, which leads them further and further away from the truth

of God's Word. Since they deliberately reject the Gospel, God uses their choice of evil as the instrument to punish their sin.

III. SINFUL MEN LIKE TO BELIEVE LIES (2:11b)

1. Our Lord said the devil "abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).
2. Revelation 21:8 says "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
3. Men habitually lie and they believe lies, and they repeat lies, and this "strong delusion" involves believing a lie (II Thess. 2:11).
4. What is this lie? In this context, Paul is referring to the lie of the antichrist (cf. 2:4).
5. We can trace this all the way back to the serpent's lie in the Garden of Eden, when he told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4).
6. After getting caught, Eve said to God, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:13). And he has been beguiling people ever since!
7. This is Satan's lie that men do not need to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they do not need to obey God, that they do not need to worry about the coming judgment, there is no hell, etc.
8. People who go to séances and contact demons are told by these lying spirits that there is no such place as hell, that you do not have to believe in Jesus Christ to be saved, etc. This is the devil's "lie" (2:11).
9. People can hear the same lie from pulpits all over America.
10. The lie takes many different forms, but it all boils down to a rejection of the Gospel.
11. Twice God says men perish because they reject the truth (2:10, 12).
12. Notice the contrast: "believed not the truth" (2:12), -- they rejected the truth..."but had pleasure in unrighteousness {they love sin}" (2:12).
13. Sinners have no pleasure in God's Word or in Bible preaching or in attending church services.
14. Sinners take "pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thess. 2:12) -- in the dirty jokes, in the vulgar trashy movies and television programs, in the drinking parties, in rap and rock "music," etc.
15. God has been patient; and God has been longsuffering. God has given sinners many opportunities to repent.
16. Only judgment is left for them. "That they all might be damned who believed not the truth..." (2:12).
17. The Greek word translated "delusion" is *plane*. It means "to wander," or "to cause to wander," "to lead astray," and "to deceive."

18. Our English word "planet" comes from this Greek word *plane*. In ancient times, the astronomers looked up in the sky and saw that some stars seemed to wander, to move around, so they called them "planets."
19. What a vivid description of lost souls! They wander here and there, to and fro, seeking some thrill, some worldly pleasure, till it is too late and they die and go to hell.
20. Jude 13 says they are "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

CONCLUSION:

1. The headlines of yesterday's newspaper was about a magazine editor's six-year-old daughter killed at a Father's Day barbecue in the Hamptons when she darted in front of a car outside their summer home.
2. She was hit by the car about 11 AM. The article referred to Sunday as "Father's Day," but did not mention it was the Lord's Day. If this family was in church on the Lord's Day that little girl would still be alive.
3. The driver and his wife told the *NY Post* that they had been returning from their weekly trip to the local King Kullen supermarket.
4. The weeping wife said, "Ten seconds more in King Kullen, and she would have been across the street already."
5. And if this couple went to church on Sunday morning instead of grocery shopping at King Kullen that little girl would still be alive.
6. It is very sad that sinners would rather have a barbecue or go shopping at King Kullen than go to church to worship God (cf. 2:10-12).