Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Last Day Deception
Scripture: Matthew 24
Code: BQ051812

And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one misleads you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ ” and will mislead many. (24:4–5)

The first birth pain to signal Christ’s return will be widespread deception by a proliferation of false Christs. There were false Christs, or Messiahs, before Jesus’ time, and there have been others at various times since, including many in our own day. But in the end times their number and influence will vastly increase.

Jesus is warning those who will be living during the end times, which will not include believers of the church age (who will either have died or been raptured before the Tribulation). The deception of those days will be intensified and escalated as never before, as the Holy Spirit withdraws His restraining power and lets all hell break loose. The evils, deceptions, sorrows, tragedies, conflicts, and animosities of those days will exceed all others the world has ever known.

Because deception will be at its apex, Jesus warns, **See to it that no one misleads you**. *Blep* (**see to it**) literally means simply “to see,” but was often used, as here, in the sense of “keep your eyes open,” or “beware.” In his parallel account Luke reports Jesus as saying, “See to it that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and ‘The time is at hand’; do not go after them” (21:8). Later in the discourse Jesus repeats the warning: “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or ‘There He is,’ do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect” (Matt. 24:23–24). Empowered by demons, the end-time false Christs will manifest supernatural powers that previous ones have not possessed.

As the number of deceivers grows, so will the number of vulnerable people who desperately look for answers to the overwhelming calamities that torment them (see 2 Pet. 2:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:13). The world will begin to disintegrate, suffering will become unbearable, and sin will reach its maximum potential. The moral and spiritual influence of the church will be gone, and even more significantly, the restraining power of the Holy Spirit will be removed (see 2 Thess. 2:7). The world’s systems and institutions will start to self-destruct from unbridled wickedness.

To take advantage of that desperate situation, an abundance of false and cleverly deceptive messiahs will arise, each claiming, **I am the Christ**. Their spurious gospels **will mislead many**, as they promise to deliver men from their problems and troubles. The epitome of that false group will be the Antichrist, the ultimate false messiah and deceiver. As Jesus Christ was righteousness incarnate, the Antichrist will be evil incarnate. In the book of Daniel he is called an insolent king, skilled in intrigue (8:23), a self-willed tyrant who magnifies himself above every god and speaks monstrous evil against the God of gods (11:36). Paul calls him the man of lawlessness and the son of destruction (2 Thess. 2:3), and in the book of Revelation he is called the beast (11:7; 13:1–10).

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