

The Strong Delusion

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As we approach the End of the Age, many people are being restored back to the Hebraic Roots of the faith. It is exciting to watch as the scales fall off of the eyes of our brethren as they embrace a return to the First Century ways of the early Believers! People are returning to the ancient paths! People are starting to walk the way Yeshua walked!

They are honoring the seventh-day *Shabbat* again:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy” (Exodus 20: 8-10).

They are studying Torah on a weekly basis:

“For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath” (Acts 15: 21).

They are observing the Feasts of the Lord:

“These are the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them” (Leviticus 23:4-5).

They are practicing a sanctified lifestyle by following the commandments that will clean them up from the things of the world, including the dietary laws:

“But that we write to them that they abstain from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from *meats* strangled and from blood” (Acts 15: 20).

They are actively participating in the prophesied “restoration of all things.”

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time” (Acts 3:19-21).

However, whenever a wonderful move of God is at hand, the enemy always works overtime to see who he can deceive and devour. How much more so should we be on guard now, during this amazing time of restoration, when the Father is beginning to regather the whole House of Israel from the four corners of the Earth and restore us all to a Torah foundation?

The Deception

What is the principal deception that will nullify all the good intentions of the person who believes that Yeshua is the Messiah, believes that the whole House of Israel is being regathered, and believes that the Torah’s commandments help us to be set-apart from the world? The number one deception seen in Scripture is termed the **strong delusion**, and the most horrifying reality about it is that *God Himself* sends this delusion at the End of the Age—Satan only uses it to his advantage!

“[A]nd with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false” (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

Here is the question of this age: How can a person, who is coming back to the Hebraic Roots of the faith and being obedient to the commandments, be swept away by the end-time strong delusion that appears to be for only unrighteous people who are perishing? Could such a person be unrighteous who is seemingly practicing “righteous living”?

The answer is very simple and yet so profound that it usually escapes even the most serious “Believers.” The answer is simply that **“they refuse to love and accept the truth that would save them”** (NLT). But isn’t salvation easy? Don’t you just ask Yeshua into your heart because you believe He is the Messiah?

The Answer

To find the answer to the question we must figure out what the “love of the truth” actually is. It is simply, yet profoundly, receiving the Divine *agapē* love that the Father uses by His Holy Spirit to bring us to the point of desiring—above all else—to discover the truth concerning ourselves so that we can be saved. We have to earnestly, with our whole hearts, come to the point of being broken before God to such a degree that we finally realize that nothing we can do will make us righteous. We discover that although made in the image of God, we have also inherited the nature of our fallen ancestor, Adam. We have to come to the point of realizing just how much of a sinner we are! Unfortunately, this gospel of salvation is really not preached from Christian, *or* even Messianic pulpits today. The key, to understanding what the “love of the truth” is, is to come to grips with who we are as individuals before God. As Yeshua so directly told Nicodemus, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God...Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?” (John 3: 3,10).

What is the key ingredient that so many of us overlook? We have to truly understand why we need to be saved! We have to truly come to terms with the bare fact that we are sinners and that we deserve to be forever separated from God. We have to come to the realization that we do not have the power to even see the Kingdom of God in our natural state. We have to come to terms with the fact that we cannot keep the commandments of the Torah perfectly. In fact, we must realize that we have always been commandment breakers! We have to truly come to the end of ourselves and to have our hearts broken concerning ourselves, so that we can honestly proclaim ourselves to be the sinners that we are! We have to come to the end of ourselves with godly sorrow and repent of the sins that we do indeed know we have committed. We have to grasp hold of the reality that Messiah Yeshua not only died in our place to cover us with the sacrifice for sin, but also we have to die to ourselves before we can lay claim to this sin covering. We have to die to our pride, our independence, our self-justification, our self-righteousness, or self-esteem—in essence, we each have to die to ourSELF.

My friends, this message of salvation is rarely preached or taught anymore. It is not a popular message, but it is the message of the cross. However, it is the message that was first delivered to the saints by Yeshua and was proclaimed by all of the Apostles. It is called **the gospel of salvation!**

“Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Yeshua, the Messiah appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until *the* period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time” (Acts 3:19-21).

Personal Testimony

I was raised in a fairly typical Christian home. I went to Church and Sunday School. I sang in the church youth choir. I was active in the Youth Group during high school—I was even its president for two years. I believed Jesus (Yeshua) was the Messiah. I believed everything that I had been taught about Him that was contained in the Apostles’ Creed that we repeated every Sunday. I had asked Him into my heart at a young age. **I had even said “the sinner’s prayer.”** Good Heavens, my grandfather was even a minister! Yet I was completely and hopelessly lost. I was perishing. I was not born again—and I didn’t even know it. I, myself, was under the strong delusion! I was under the delusion that I did not have to deal with being a sinner, specifically. I was too young to do that! I was under the delusion that I could believe in Jesus, but not have to repent. I was under the delusion that as a young child I could make a “decision” that dealt with sin, yet I was too young to understand what sin was. I stayed in this state of delusion until I was 30 years old.

You see, as a child I knew the difference between right and wrong, and good and bad, for I had inherited that trait from my ancestor Adam when he ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In fact, I was a very good child! I was very careful to do all that I was told, but I did not have a handle on what sin was. Knowing that you are a sinner with a black sinful heart,

especially when you are a “good person,” really does not happen until you leave your childhood years. It is then when we arrive at the time that we go from childhood to young adulthood that our black heart starts to get exposed to ourselves. Rebellion is the first area where sin usually manifests itself, because it so often just stays in the heart and grows in the darkness of it. We no longer really wish to please our parents or our teachers as we did when we were younger. We want to experience life for ourselves and try the things that we know are “bad.” We, who still appear outwardly “good,” are now hiding secret sins of rebellion, lust, and covetousness—even though we may know better than to actually act upon these new desires. We know we shouldn’t be thinking these things, but we can’t help ourselves.

When I came to this new reality about my heart and its dark secrets around the age of 13-14, it never occurred to me that I needed to turn to God with sorrow that only He could cause me to understand, *and then* to repent of my sins and receive the atoning sacrifice of Yeshua to give me the blood covering that was required by the Torah. **It never occurred to me, because I had been told that I was already covered!** So there I was, lost in my sin, yet being deceived myself that I was “okay.” Yet I knew that I had lost my childhood innocence. **Deep in my sinner’s heart, I knew I was not saved!**

I can remember as a teenager reading 1 Corinthians 13 over and over again hoping that I would somehow get peace. I would read Psalm 100 in the same way. I would read the “red words” of Yeshua from my Bible, hoping that I would feel like I did as a child again. I knew instinctively that I wasn’t clean, yet the Christians around me told me I was a fine Christian girl.

I am sorry to report that I stayed in that dreadful state of delusion until I turned 30 years of age. My problem was that, even though I knew I was a sinner, I could not admit it to God. I did not want the relationship with Him that would make me so transparent that I would have to come to the end of Margaret. I did not want Him first in my life, because I was first.

But God in His infinite mercy, goodness, and grace intervened with a problem that would shake up my life. He had a wonderful plan for my life that would allow me to see that, no matter what I did, I was now going to have to come to terms with being a failure. My late husband, Kim, and I went through the loss of the family business which resulted in us losing everything except our house. I was finally faced with the reality that nothing I could do could fix the problem. I had to finally face the fact that I had put myself first in my life, but that I was a failure. I had to face the fact that I had spent my whole life daily breaking the First Commandment, “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **Your shall have no other gods before Me**” (Exodus 20:2-3). I was devastated with the reality of this sinner called Margaret who had never truly understood who her God was! All I wanted was to desperately get right with Him! I fell on my face before God and cried out for mercy.

I finally realized that I was separated from Him, I didn’t know Him, and I didn’t love Him—even though I thought I knew and believed everything about Him. I got real about Margaret with the God of Israel. I confessed and repented of every secret sin I could think of. I begged Him to cover me with the blood of Yeshua. And finally and miraculously, I knew I had gotten through to my Heavenly Father after all of those years of knowing that we were estranged. His overwhelming presence was felt all over me in such a supernatural way that I would no longer question if I were forgiven or not. I knew I was forgiven, cleansed, and restored back to God. I was filled with such love for Him and my brethren that I didn’t know existed. I was never to be the same again. I finally understood what grace was. I was finally born again!

The most amazing part of finally having this assurance of my salvation is that I truly was a changed person. I no longer would walk in self-justification, but I would walk in Divine *agapē* love. I loved others because He first loved me—and I expected nothing in return for loving others. I knew, that in and of myself, I was nothing. It was only He in me that was anything. As Paul says, “the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, **which is Messiah in you, the hope of glory**” (Colossians 1:26-27). I experienced the greatness of this mystery!

The Solution

So how do we make sure that we do not fall under the “strong delusion” that God Himself will send to those who do not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved? We go to Him and make sure that we truly have put Him first in our lives and we get honest about our fallen humanity and our sin. If we are truly born again and walking in the power of His Holy Spirit, then any deception will not overpower us. We will not believe the lies that will one day come from the antimessiah and his system. We will thank the Father daily for choosing us to be part of His restoration of all things. We will cling to Yeshua the Messiah and His atonement for our sins—the good news:

“But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah” (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

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