

Section Two: The Kingdom of God on Earth (Present)

Category B: Rapture – Kingdom Intelligence Report #1

Topic: The Certainty of the Event

Jesus, in response to a request from His disciples, provides them and us with a scenario of what it would be like in the last days, at the end of the Church Age. That description is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew 24:1-31; and it is not a pretty picture. The chief characteristic of this time will be that of **deception**. Jesus warns His disciples, and by application, every follower of His ever since, about falling prey to the false teaching of the last days which would result in many being misled (Matthew 24:5). This deception will have its source in false prophets who will ascend into prominence, at the forefront of end-time contemporary culture, with a persuasiveness that will impose a strong delusion on many. Perhaps the most significant warning issued by our Lord in His Olivet Discourse, as it pertains to this unique time of duplicity, is found in Matthew 24:24 –

“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.”

For many years, I believed the expression “if possible,” in regard to the misleading of God’s elect, was equivalent to “impossible.” This is no longer my view. I now consider the term “if possible” to be synonymous with “more than likely!” There is no stronger Biblical support for the end-time deception of Christians, than Jesus’ warning issued in Matthew 24:24-25, coupled with that of Paul in 1 Timothy 4:1. Together, these harbingers have become a present tense reality, as a fulfillment of Bible prophecy, occurring right before our eyes. Tragically, the most recent and bizarre evidence of the many who will be misled, consists of the doubt and denial surrounding the blessed event which will bring the Church Age to a close. In contrast, the Apostle Paul provides the believers in Thessalonica with a powerful affirmation of the incredibly dramatic phenomenon which will usher every Christian into the Lord’s presence, expressed in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 –

“For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

The deception plaguing and discouraging the Thessalonian church was that the dead in Christ would somehow not be partakers in the Rapture. Paul wrote what he did in order to provide that particular group of Christians with a strong measure of comfort and reassurance. What should this passage mean for us in these last days? Simply this. The Church Age will come to a sudden and miraculous conclusion, in a manner described above by Paul; in spite of what last days false prophets may be telling us to the contrary. **We can be absolutely 100% certain of that!**