

FOLLOWING THE KING – SERMON 9, PART 1

THE KING AND THE END OF THE AGE – THE DECEPTION **AGENDA**

Matthew 24:1–14 (NKJV) - Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

The Signs of the Times and the End of the Age

³Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines,

pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

INTRODUCTION – THE KING WHO WALKS OUT AND LOOKS DOWN THE AGES

There’s a moment in Scripture that chills me every time I read it. Jesus, the Glory of God in human form, walked out of the Temple for the last time. The disciples looked back in awe. They saw marble walls gleaming in the sun. They saw gold and splendor. They saw permanence. But Jesus saw a tomb. He said, **“See, your house is left to you desolate.”** And He walked away. The Glory left religion.

Ezekiel saw it centuries earlier. The prophet said the glory of God lifted from the Temple and stood over the Mount of Olives. Now here it is again. The Glory leaves the house of man's religion and walks across the Kidron Valley to the Mount of Olives.

The disciples, still impressed with structure more than substance, said, "Lord, look at this Temple! Look how strong, how beautiful, how massive!" Jesus turned and said, "Do you not see all these things? Not one stone will be left upon another."

Forty years later, Rome set it on fire. The gold melted between the stones and soldiers tore them apart to get it out. Jesus' words were fulfilled to the letter. But **He wasn't only talking about architecture - He was talking about systems.** He was saying, "Everything man builds without Me will fall." That day, He left the Temple. But one day soon, He will come back to the Mount.

So, as Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him **privately. Matthew says they asked Him three questions — not one.**

Matthew 24:3 (KJV) "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

Let's pause there for a moment, because those three questions unlock everything that follows.

1. The first question was, “When shall these things be?”

- They were asking about the destruction of the Temple. Jesus had just told them, “Not one stone will be left upon another.”
- That prophecy was fulfilled exactly forty years later when Rome set Jerusalem on fire and the Temple fell.
- **So that first question points to a past judgment - the collapse of the old covenant system.**

2. But their second question was, “What shall be the sign of Thy coming?”

- The Greek word is *parousia* - meaning *the arrival or appearing of a king*.
- This looks forward, not backward. They were asking about His **return in glory** - when He would come again as the reigning King.

3. Then the third question: “And of the end of the world?”

- The word *world* there is not *kosmos* (the planet), but *Aion* - *the age*.

- They were asking about the **end of man's age** and the **beginning of God's Kingdom age** - the close of history as we know it and the dawn of His eternal reign.

So, in one conversation, the disciples were asking about **three timelines: (PUT all this up on one screen)**

1. **The destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70).**
2. **The Second Coming of Christ.**
3. **The end of the age and the judgment of nations.**

Jesus' answer, beginning in verse 4, weaves all of that together like mountain peaks on the horizon - some near, some far, all connected by one prophetic line. But what's fascinating is this: **Before Jesus ever gave a single detail about earthquakes, wars, or the end of the age - He opened His mouth with a warning.**

"Take heed that no one deceives you." (Matthew 24:4)

He could have started with destruction, but He started with deception. He could have talked about calamity, but He talked about clarity. Because the greatest danger of the last days would not be the fall of a temple - it would be the falling away of truth.

He could have talked about wars, earthquakes, or famine. He could have given timelines or charts. But the first words out of His mouth were these: **“Take heed that no one deceives you.” That tells me that the greatest danger in the last days is not destruction. It’s deception.**

The first sign of the end is not chaos in the world. It’s confusion in the church.

Before the antichrist stands on the world stage, deception will already be standing in the pulpits.

So tonight, we aren’t studying headlines. We are confronting a spirit. We are exposing the **Spirit of Deception.**

TRANSITION TO POINT ONE - Jesus said, “Take heed.”

- The Greek word means **open your eyes wide**. Stay awake. Be alert. Don’t drift.
- That’s His first command for the last days. Why? Because deception does not announce itself. It imitates.

Jesus is warning us that this end-time deception is not coming to oppose the Kingdom - It comes to impersonate it.

It will look like revival. It will sound like truth. But it will carry death beneath the surface. So, let's pull the mask off this thing. Let's talk about how the spirit of deception really works.

THE SPIRIT OF DECEPTION – HOW IT OPERATES

1. It begins with mixture.

- The serpent didn't say, "God is wrong." He said, "Did God really say?" He twisted truth just enough to plant doubt.
- Deception rarely denies Scripture. It distorts it. It turns the clear into the cloudy, the absolute into the optional.

The devil doesn't need you to reject the Word. He just needs you to reinterpret it until obedience becomes opinion.

Transitional statement: That's the first step. It mixes truth and lies until your ears can't tell the difference. But then, it moves deeper. Once you question the Word, you'll start chasing experience.

2. It hides behind miracles.

- Jesus warned, “False prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

Supernatural activity is not proof of divine authority.

- Pharaoh’s magicians duplicated Moses’ miracles. They could turn rods to serpents and water to blood. But they couldn’t stop the frogs they summoned. They had power, but not purity.

We are living in a generation that chases the spectacular but ignores the spiritual. We run after the supernatural and forget the supernatural must still submit to Scripture. **God does miracles to reveal Himself. The devil performs them to replace Him.**

Transitional statement: Once the spirit of deception gets you addicted to the miraculous, it will start feeding you a new message. It will tell you that the old gospel is outdated. That holiness is heavy. That truth is too tight. That’s where the next layer begins.

3. It markets itself as progress.

- The new deception doesn't come wrapped in rebellion. It comes wrapped in relevance.
- It sounds modern. It sounds compassionate. It sounds reasonable.
- It tells you we've outgrown conviction. It says, "We don't repent anymore, we reimagine." It says, "We don't carry our cross, we live our truth." It says, "We don't obey, we explore."
- It calls sin a struggle, and conviction hate. It replaces conviction with conversation and truth with tolerance.

But hear me: **God does not evolve with culture. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The message that saved the early church is the message that will save the last church.**

Transitional statement: And if deception can't dilute the Word and can't distract you with signs, it will go for the final blow. It will whisper the oldest lie of all: "You don't need a King. You can be your own."

4. It ends in mutiny.

- **Every deception ends with the same goal: dethrone Christ and enthrone self.**

- It doesn't say "There is no God." It says, "You are god." That's the voice of hell from the beginning. "You shall be as gods."

Its self-exaltation dressed up as spirituality. It wants the crown without the cross, the kingdom without the King. That's why deception is so dangerous. Because it feels empowering. It sounds spiritual. But it leads to hell.

Transitional statement: This is how it works. It starts by mixing truth. It hides behind miracles. It sells itself as progress. And it ends with rebellion. But I want to show you what that looks like right now in our world, because it isn't coming someday. It's already here.

THE CURRENT AND COMING DECEPTION

We're living in an hour where the lines are blurring faster than people can see them. The spirit of deception has found new tools. It's gone digital. It's gone global. It no longer needs a false prophet with a pulpit. It has platforms, screens, and algorithms.

It whispers through influencers. It preaches through music. It disciples through entertainment. This generation is being taught to believe in spirituality without

submission, identity without truth, love without holiness, and freedom without boundaries. **That's not freedom. That's bondage dressed up in self-expression.**

Technological deception – The Rise of Artificial Religion

- Jesus said knowledge would increase. Daniel prophesied it.
- We are drowning in information but starving for wisdom.

Now we stand on the edge of a new Tower of Babel - Artificial intelligence that mimics omniscience.

- **AI can simulate sermons, prayers, and even prophets. It can write scripture-like text and speak with human emotion, but without a human soul.**
- It is already creating *AI churches*, digital priests, and algorithmic worship experiences that remove the need for repentance, relationship, or the real presence of God.

There's coming a day when the false prophet will merge technology and theology.

Revelation 13:14–15 (KJV) - “And deceived them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles

which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.”

This is one of the most chilling prophetic images in all of Scripture. John saw a living image - something man-made yet animated with false life and given authority to speak.

When you connect that vision with today's rise of artificial intelligence, synthetic voice replication, and digital avatars, it paints a prophetic picture that feels closer than ever before a technological idol capable of global communication and control, demanding worship, and punishing dissent, exactly as Revelation foretold.

The image that speaks in Revelation may not be a statue at all - it may be a synthetic intelligence that claims to be divine.

- A counterfeit voice declaring, “*Bow, connect, submit.*”
- And the world will love it, because it feels spiritual, efficient, and inclusive. But the spirit behind it will not

be holy. It will be the spirit of antichrist - truth without a pulse, power without purity, and light without life.

Global economic deception – The Illusion of Peace and Prosperity

- Revelation says no man will buy or sell without the mark. That's not science fiction. That's the architecture of a system already being built.
- The world is moving toward digital currency, global banking unions, and AI-controlled economies.
- Economic crisis after crisis is driving us to centralization, one system, one source, one control point. **They call it convenience. But it's conditioning.**

The goal isn't prosperity; it's dependency. The world will trade freedom for comfort and sovereignty for security.

We are witnessing the setup for a system that rewards compliance and punishes conviction. If you won't bow to the narrative, you'll be labeled dangerous. If you won't worship the image, you'll be shut out of the system.

That's why Jesus told us, "Lay not up treasures on earth." Because one day, the economy of this world will turn

against the people of God. But those who follow the King are citizens of a Kingdom that cannot crash.

Digital identity deception – The Death of Reality

- We are entering an era where identity is programmable.
- Biometric surveillance, digital IDs, facial scans, and virtual personas are becoming the new passport to participation.
- We are being taught to trade authenticity for algorithmic approval.

Deepfakes blur truth. Avatars replace presence. Reality is being rewritten by technology that cannot tell the difference between good and evil.

The enemy is after identity because identity determines worship.

- If you don't know who you are, you won't know whose you are.
- And if he can redefine what it means to be human, he can redefine what it means to be saved.

Moral and political deception – The Religion of Tolerance

- The cry of the world is “peace and safety.” But it’s peace without repentance and safety without righteousness.
- We are watching the rise of a false peace built on compromise. It promises unity but demands silence. It calls evil good and good evil, just like Isaiah said.

Political correctness has become spiritual cowardice and many pulpits have surrendered the sword of truth for the comfort of applause. But truth that doesn’t confront error isn’t compassion, it is collusion.

Religious deception – The Gospel of Self

- There’s a new gospel spreading like wildfire. It’s not atheism, it’s “*Me-ism*.”
- It preaches, “Believe in yourself.”
- It quotes Scripture but edits the cross out of the message.
- It sells blessings without brokenness, purpose without purity, destiny without dying.

- It tells you that Jesus came to make you happy, not holy.

It's the gospel of likes, lights, and lifestyles - but it's powerless to save.

- The true Gospel says: “Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow Me.” Anything less is a counterfeit Christ.

Prophetic foresight – The Final Blend

- All of these streams - technological, economic, political, and religious - are merging.
- A system is forming that will unite the nations under the promise of peace and progress.
- But behind the unity will be control. Behind the compassion will be coercion.

Behind the brilliance of innovation will be the darkness of imitation.

The false prophet will use technology to speak. The beast will use economics to bind. Deception will use religion to blind.

We are watching the stage being set for a world that worships efficiency more than eternity. But while deception builds its empire, God is building a remnant. A people who love truth, not trends. Who will not bow to the image or sell out for acceptance. The counterfeit kingdom is rising, but so is the real Church.

TRANSITION TO FINAL WARNING

History has already shown us what happens when truth is replaced by tradition and comfort. The early church fathers saw it coming.

- **Irenaeus said, “Error never presents itself in its naked form, but in a dress that makes it appear more true than truth itself.”**
- **Athanasius fought heresy in his day and said, “They have the words, but not the meaning.”**
- **Paul said, “They will heap up teachers having itching ears.”**

Now here we are. We are watching the prophecy of Jesus unfold word for word. He told us, “Many will be deceived.” **He warned us because He loved us.**

THE DISCIPLE'S DEFENSE

How do we live in this hour without falling for it?

1. The Word must become your compass - Don't interpret Scripture through culture. Interpret culture through Scripture.

2. The Holy Spirit must become your counselor - You can't spot a lie if you don't know His voice.

3. The Church must become your covering. - Isolation is the devil's playground. Lone Christians get picked off.

4. The Cross must become your conviction - Die daily. Stay humble. Pride is the gate deception walks through.

We are standing where the disciples stood. The King is sitting on the mountain again, asking, "Will you see?" The question tonight is not, "Are you saved?" The question is, "Are you deceived?"

Love Truth!

Live Ready!

Follow the King!