

## FELLOWSHIP NOTES ~ Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> 2024



### Part 2: “Deceptions and Delusions”

#### What is Discernment?

“Biblical Discernment is the ability to judge or distinguish between two things using the wisdom of God’s Word.” ~ Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

#### God’s Process for Spiritual Discernment:

- Step 1. Test all things – 1 Thess. 5:21a
- Step 2. Hold on to what is good – 1 Thess. 5:21b
- Step 3. Stay away from every kind of evil– 1 Thess. 5:22

#### Truths Under Attack:

1. The truth that \_\_\_\_\_ – John 14:6;  
Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9-10
2. The truth that Israel is still God’s covenant people and \_\_\_\_\_ –  
Jeremiah 33:19-26; Psalm 105:7-11
3. The truth that in order to be prepared we must \_\_\_\_\_ –  
Matthew 16:1-4; Rev. 1:3
4. The truth that when Jesus returns, we need to found \_\_\_\_\_ –  
Luke 12:35-44; Matt. 6:33
5. The truth of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church  
– 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, 5:9-11; John 14:6

For the latest updates on happenings in Israel and prophetic content go to - [www.beholdisrael.org](http://www.beholdisrael.org) (Amir Tsarfati)



# Growth Groups Study Guide for the Week of February 18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

## Reminder:

- Our annual Men's & Women's Summits are coming up on February 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> and February 29<sup>th</sup> – March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Registration is open online or on the Fellowship APP. Scholarships and Carpooling is available. Stop at the Summit Table in the lobby or call the church office to learn more.
- Our special guests next Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> will be Pastor Phil Winfield, Senior Pastor at Grace Church in Des Moines, and the Higher Power Quartet. Invite someone to join us for this special Sunday.

## Group Discussion:

What part of Bible prophecy is comforting to you and what part confuses you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Digging Deeper:

1. READ Matthew 24:3-8. Why does Jesus say to "watch out"? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the signs that Jesus says will precede the final events of the end times and do you feel we are seeing at least some of these now? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. READ 2 Timothy 3:1-5. What does Paul tell Timothy people will do or be like in the last days? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel we are seeing some of these signs? Why or Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. READ 2 Timoth 4:3-4. What does Paul tell Timothy will also be significant about the last days? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. On Sunday morning we identified 5 truths that are under attack by our enemy who is an expert at deception and delusions. For the remainder of our time, we're going to focus on two of those five: the truth that Israel is still God's covenant people and cannot be replaced, and the truth of the pretribulation rapture of the church.

Read together each article that is attached. As you read highlight important truths/questions you may have/points you would like to discuss. Then discuss together each of the articles and why these truths are so important today.

## Wrapping Up / Closing in Prayer

Since the enemy is adept at deception and delusions, it highlights the ongoing need for discernment by all of us who know and love Jesus Christ. Remember, we must test all things, hold on to what is good, and stay away from every kind of evil. In prayer ask the Lord to help you do that this week.

## What is Replacement Theology / Supersessionism?

Replacement theology (also known as supersessionism and fulfillment theology) essentially teaches that the church has replaced Israel in God's plan. Adherents of replacement theology believe the Jews are no longer God's chosen people, and God does not have specific future plans for the nation of Israel. Among the different views of the relationship between the church and Israel are the church has replaced Israel (replacement theology), the church is an expansion of Israel ([covenant theology](#)), or the church is completely different and distinct from Israel ([dispensationalism/premillennialism](#)).

Replacement theology teaches that the church is the replacement for Israel and that the many promises made to Israel in the Bible are fulfilled in the Christian church, not in Israel. The prophecies in Scripture concerning the blessing and restoration of Israel to the Promised Land are spiritualized or allegorized into promises of God's blessing for the church. Major problems exist with this view, such as the continuing existence of the Jewish people throughout the centuries and especially with the revival of the modern state of Israel. If Israel has been condemned by God and there is no future for the Jewish nation, how do we explain the supernatural survival of the Jewish people over the past 2,000 years despite the many attempts to destroy them? How do we explain why and how Israel reappeared as a nation in the 20th century after not existing for 1,900 years?

The view that Israel and the church are different is clearly taught in the New Testament. Biblically speaking, the church is distinct from Israel, and the terms *church* and *Israel* are never to be confused or used interchangeably. We are taught from Scripture that the church is an entirely new creation that came into being on the day of Pentecost and will continue until it is taken to heaven at the rapture ([Ephesians 1:9–11](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13–17](#)). The church has no relationship to the curses and blessings for Israel. The covenants, promises, and warnings of the Mosaic Covenant were valid only for Israel. Israel has been temporarily set aside in God's program during these past 2,000 years of dispersion (see [Romans 11](#)).

Contrary to replacement theology, dispensationalism teaches that, after the rapture ([1 Thessalonians 4:13–18](#)), God will restore Israel as the primary focus of His plan. The first event at this time is the tribulation (Revelation chapters 6–19). The world will be judged for rejecting Christ, while Israel is prepared through the trials of the great tribulation for the second coming of the Messiah. Then, when Christ does return to the earth at the end of the tribulation, Israel will be ready to receive Him. The remnant of Israel who survive the tribulation will be saved, and the Lord will establish His kingdom on this earth with Jerusalem as its capital. With Christ reigning as King, Israel will be the leading nation, and representatives from all nations will come to Jerusalem to honor and worship the King—Jesus Christ. The church will return with Christ and will reign with Him for a literal thousand years ([Revelation 20:1–5](#)).

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament support a premillennial/dispensational understanding of God's plan for Israel. The strongest support for premillennialism is found in the clear teaching of [Revelation 20:1–7](#), where it says six times that Christ's kingdom will last 1,000 years. After the tribulation the Lord will return and establish His kingdom with the nation of Israel, Christ will reign over the whole earth, and Israel will be the leader of the nations. The church will reign with Him for a literal thousand years. The church has not replaced Israel in God's plan. While God may be focusing His attention primarily on the church in this dispensation of grace, God has not forgotten Israel and will one day restore Israel to His intended role as the nation He has chosen ([Romans 11](#)).

## What is the Difference Between the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ?

The rapture and the second coming of Christ are often confused. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether a scripture verse is referring to the rapture or the second coming. However, in studying end-times Bible prophecy, it is very important to differentiate between the two.

The rapture is when Jesus Christ returns to remove the church (all believers in Christ) from the earth. The rapture is described in [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#) and [1 Corinthians 15:50-54](#). Believers who have died will have their bodies resurrected and, along with believers who are still living, will meet the Lord in the air. This will all occur in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye. The second coming is when Jesus returns to defeat the Antichrist, destroy evil, and establish His millennial kingdom. The second coming is described in [Revelation 19:11-16](#).

### The important differences between the rapture and second coming are as follows:

- 1) At the rapture, believers meet the Lord in the air ([1 Thessalonians 4:17](#)). At the second coming, believers return with the Lord to the earth ([Revelation 19:14](#)).
- 2) The second coming occurs after the great and terrible tribulation (Revelation chapters 6–19). The rapture occurs before the tribulation ([1 Thessalonians 5:9](#); [Revelation 3:10](#)).
- 3) The rapture is the removal of believers from the earth as an act of deliverance ([1 Thessalonians 4:13-17](#), [5:9](#)). The second coming includes the removal of unbelievers as an act of judgment ([Matthew 24:40-41](#)).
- 4) The rapture will be secret and instant ([1 Corinthians 15:50-54](#)). The second coming will be visible to all ([Revelation 1:7](#); [Matthew 24:29-30](#)).
- 5) The second coming of Christ will not occur until after certain other end-times events take place ([2 Thessalonians 2:4](#); [Matthew 24:15-30](#); Revelation chapters 6–18). The rapture is imminent; it could take place at any moment ([Titus 2:13](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [1 Corinthians 15:50-54](#)).

### Why is it important to keep the rapture and the second coming distinct?

- 1) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, believers will have to go through the tribulation ([1 Thessalonians 5:9](#); [Revelation 3:10](#)).
- 2) If the rapture and the second coming are the same event, the return of Christ is not imminent—there are many things which must occur before He can return ([Matthew 24:4-30](#)).
- 3) In describing the tribulation period, Revelation chapters 6–19 nowhere mentions the church. During the tribulation—also called “the time of trouble for Jacob” ([Jeremiah 30:7](#))—God will again turn His primary attention to Israel ([Romans 11:17-31](#)).

The rapture and second coming are similar but separate events. Both involve Jesus returning. Both are end-times events. However, it is crucially important to recognize the differences. In summary, the rapture is the return of Christ in the clouds to remove all believers from the earth before the time of God’s wrath. The second coming is the return of Christ to the earth to bring the tribulation to an end and to defeat the Antichrist and his evil world empire.

