

THE TIME OF THE DIVIDE IS HERE

YOU WILL EITHER INCREASE YOUR FAITH OR LOSE IT COMPLETELY



Before we get into the details of this Bible study article, have a look what the angel told John would happen in the last days, before the entire revelation events take place. This is spoken at the end of the book and the angel summarises what he has shown John. Note the use of the word **still** in connection with two groups of people he that is unjust and he that is righteous:

And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust **still**: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy **still**: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous **still**: and he that is holy, let him be holy **still**. – **Revelation 22:10-11**

The Greek word for **still** is **ἔτι** (eti) and translates to “more”, as in a continuous action. In other parts of the New Testament, it is used to mean henceforth, longer, more, and yet. All of this shows an action that is going on. We can thus interpret the phrase “let him be unjust still” to mean “let him be more unjust” or “let him continue to be unjust”. Compare this to the last example, “let him be more holy still”. As we get closer to the end of the Church age, some will become worse in what they do, away from God, while others will become better and move closer to God. There is a divide that transcends race, gender, nationality, age, denomination, and political affiliation. Which one of these groups do you belong to?

2020: A DIFFERENT YEAR

None of us knew at the start of 2020 that this would be a year like no other. Never before has the world been shaken in such a way, and if we think things will improve, we need to look at the Word as our final authority. It is clear that things are only going to get worse. We already see the divide between groups growing worldwide. This website has no political affiliation and tries to focus primarily on the Word of God. However, since all of what is happening now has already been predicted in the Bible, when we look at both the Bible and the world together, the message is clear. The Word predicted it, and the actions of the world merely confirm it. An even bigger surprise is just around the corner that will most definitely turn out to cause absolute chaos worldwide: the rapture of the Church.

A WARNING ABOUT LEGALISTIC OBSERVANCE

The starting point of the message is taken from John Chapter Four. Jesus is speaking to a woman and is guiding her onto the right path. Her arguments about history and the way her ancestors worshipped take a backseat when Jesus tells her this:

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. – **John 4:23-24**

Jesus tells her that there will be a time when the real believers will be worshiping even more passionately than ever. That the hour is now, means exactly that – there will be a time, now, when the true worshippers (not those who are Christians in name only, but those who call on the Name of the Lord and are saved by grace through faith) will worship the Father in spirit

and in truth. There are two important guidelines for worship here: we must worship in **spirit** and we must worship in **truth**. We worship Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is this same Spirit that allows us to know and understand the truth. The result is that we radiate a spirit of calmness and serenity amidst the calamity facing the world, and so are the light that others are desperately seeking right now when their lives are covered in darkness and turned upside down by recent events. To illustrate this, the following: In my workplace there are people from different nationalities and religions. Since February of this year, things have changed drastically. Many of my colleagues are panicking. Yet, many of them have asked me why I can be so quiet and relaxed despite the apparent uncertainty and anxiety many of them are going through. My answer is that my future is not in the hands of politicians and the decisions of men, but in a firm faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ. This is the message that many do not want to, but should, hear!

The woman at the well told Jesus that her ancestors said that they had to worship on this mountain, referring to the mountain just outside of Sychar, where she went to draw water. She continues that they were told that the Jews had to worship in Jerusalem. The problem with this point of view is that it is legalistic, and Jesus came to free us from the legalistic requirements of the law. We are now free to worship anywhere, as long as we worship in spirit and in truth.

A life lived worshiping in spirit and in truth leads to the person living the rest of their life in the same way. We do not always see the actions of true Christian believers. They pray where no one else sees them. They intercede for others. They assist where they can. They go about their way being light and salt – beacons of hope and guidance for those who are still looking for the truth at this late hour, and salt that protects against rot. On the other side of the divide, however, are those who shy away from the light so that their works may not be exposed:

For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. – **John 3:20**

They perform their evil deeds where and when they can quickly run away and hide in the darkness. How is it possible that there can be such a divide among human beings, all created in the image of God and given the same opportunities? Paul addresses this in his letter to the church in Thessalonica:

For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. – **2 Thessalonians 2:7-10**

CHOOSING THE WRONG SIDE OF THE DIVIDE

The sad reality is that many people will eventually realise, too late, that they were wrong to not accept (receive) the gift of salvation (the truth), or decided to turn away from the faith, as the quoted text says: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. These are the ones who will

- *fall away* (from the truth they once knew – 1 Timothy 4:1-4). The phrase means exactly this: they once **stood** upright (most of them in faith, even as pastors and church leaders) but now and in future will **fall away** (a negative downward action) from the truth they once knew (2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2:1-3ff);
- *perish* (verse 10) and die in their sins although now they may still be physically alive. To perish means to be destroyed;
- *receive a delusion* (verse 11) so that their minds wander away from the truth; and
- *believe a lie* (verse 11) so that they get what they wanted.

The first, fall away, is clearly illustrated in Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man
that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly,
nor standeth in the way of sinners,
nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. – **Psalm 1:1**

The righteous man does not

- **walk** in the presence of the ungodly;
- **stand** in the way of sinners; and
- **sit** in the same place as unbelievers.

Notice the divide here. It addresses the man who does not do three things because he walks in faith. It also implies what happens to the man who does not walk in faith.

To **walk** is mostly a positive and continuous action. As one gets tired, the natural instinct is to stop, to stand still and be passive; and when you cannot stand anymore, you eventually sit down and become completely passive.

This very person who is not blessed, may have been a believer too, but because he does not continue to **walk** (continue to grow in faith as a believer), he **stops** (gives up on his faith and turns away from it) and eventually **sits** (joins the scornful, the unbelievers). How sad. There are many such people in our time today. I do not believe that all unbelievers today have been so from their birth. There are many that once were believers like you and me but who have given up along the way. They are among the ones who are part of the falling away Paul describes. There is not even a safe middle path to follow. You will either continue in faith and meet Jesus in the air one day, or you will fall away from the faith and meet the antichrist once he is revealed, after the rapture of the Church, according to 2 Thessalonians 2:7, should you still be alive at the time.

THE GREAT APOSTASY

The Cambridge Dictionary defines **apostasy** as the act of giving up your religious or political beliefs and leaving a religion or a political party. Many Bibles add the title **The Great Apostasy** to the heading for 2 Thessalonians 2. Headings like this were not in the original text but they sum up the piece following when Paul calls it the great *falling away*. Other writers focus on this as well, especially Peter. It is evident that Paul and Peter spent time together and, in a way, Peter was influenced by Paul's teaching. Thus, in 2 Peter 2 we see Peter's warning about the rise of false teachers that would lead the flock astray.

Can it really be true that the falling away will include so many people who previously professed to be Christian believers? Indeed. The rot and turning away from the faith start mostly in the circle of believers, the church. Why? Because the foundation of the Christian faith starts in the church, and it is from this faith that many will fall away. This is supposed to be the sanctuary, the place of safety. Not only are many of these people Christians, they are the leaders – pastors, overseers, and elders! Paul and Peter constantly teach about this. In his writings, Paul warns his protégé, Timothy, to be on the lookout for these people (2 Timothy 3) and Peter addresses this even more thoroughly in 2 Peter 2. He mentions three areas these false teachers will be known for: their **doom** (2 Peter 2:4-11); their **depravity** (2 Peter 2:12-17); and their **deceptions** (2 Peter 2:18-22).

2 PETER 2

There are few writers who so directly show what is going to happen in the last days. When we look at Peter's second epistle, we need to understand that this was his last writing. He knew that he was going to die soon (1 Peter 1:15). When a person is about to die, surrounded by loved ones, the person's last words carry a lot of weight – we are all eager to hear the last words spoken as a message of hope for us before the person passes away. Peter uses his remaining time to write a last letter, warning people about the deception that has already taken place (2 Peter 2:1). He says that the same will happen in the near future to the people of his day as well as in the far future, where we are today. He makes it very clear that from the start, there have been deceivers who brought false teachings (destructive heresies) into the early church. It was happening in his day; and it happens in our day.

DOOM OF THE FALSE TEACHERS

In verse two he describes that many people will follow the way of these heretic teachers and blaspheme the truth (Contrast this to John 4:24 – to worship in truth.). These teachers will exploit their followers with deceptive words (2 Peter 2:3). Look at the strong language Peter uses here – exploit and deceptive – he certainly does not tone down his message. He warns that these people will follow the same path as all the unbelievers before them and then cites a number of Old Testament examples – angels; the ancient world; and Sodom and Gomorrah. These people are doomed (verse 9) but at the same time the righteous among them are delivered out of temptation. The sad reality is that not only are the false teachers doomed, but their followers, the flock, who did not heed the true Word of God, are doomed as well.

DEPRAVITY OF FALSE TEACHERS

Peter really lashes the false teachers and for a good reason. We need to understand that from the beginning of the Church age, the true teachings of God-fearing men like Peter and Paul were scorned. Just have a look at the fifth chapter of Acts to see how the falling away started

then already (Acts 5:36-37). Peter has first-hand knowledge of the destruction false teachers bring, undoing the good work of God's workers. He was also a witness to the life of Jesus and to see how the Saviour's message was twisted afterwards by false teachers must have caused a lot of pain and anger. He refers to them as natural brute beasts that deserve no more than to be caught and destroyed (verse 12). They speak evil (blaspheme) of things they do not understand and will perish (die) in their own corruption. Why do they not understand? Because they do not have the leading of the Holy Spirit. He calls them spots and blemishes (verse 13) and even while they dine with you, they are planning your downfall, without any regret or shame (verse 13).

Probably the worst accusation Peter makes against false teachers is that they have forsaken the right way and have gone astray (verse 15) and are empty wells (of no use as they do not contain the Living Water) and clouds in a tempest (of no use to provide welcoming rain, but destruction). They are doomed (their place has already been reserved) to spend eternity in blackness (away from the Light) forever. Unfortunately a number of simple believing folk went astray as well as a result of their false teachers.

DECEPTIONS OF FALSE TEACHERS

Peter continues his attack on false preachers and their message: they speak "great swelling words of vanity" (they are full of themselves); they allure (to make something appear attractive) through the lusts of the flesh (a distorted gospel that is not focused on satisfying God's purpose for our lives but rather the ourselves and our carnal desires), through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error (they drag believers away from the truth they adhered to previously). They promise freedom but they themselves are in bondage. Probably the worst accusation against them is this:

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. – **2 Peter 2:20-22**

This reference hardly needs any explanation but let us reduce it to a few words: they came to salvation and turned their backs on the sins of the world, but now they have turned their backs on their salvation and are worse off than before. The final remark against them is that the sin of turning against the Word of God after salvation is greater than not having been saved in the first place.

In chapter three, Peter reminds his readers to heed the words spoken by him and the prophets before him. He changes the focus about the coming last days, focusing not on the false teachers, but on people in general (scoffers – those who laugh and speak about a person or idea in a way that shows that they think that person or idea is stupid or silly). Indeed, today there are millions who laugh about the prospect of the Coming of Jesus. Those who laugh now include the false teachers. Many **modern preachers** do not teach the doctrine of the rapture anymore. In fact, most teach no doctrine at all. Peter admonishes his readers, believers that he calls his beloved (verse 8), to remember that God will make good on His promise and that the reason why Jesus has not returned yet is to give everyone a chance to repent. Will they all repent? Unfortunately not. Remember, the divide is here: you are either

for Him or against Him. There is no grey area. It is either white (the Light of salvation, and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ) or black (the darkness of damnation).

When we look at what has been happening worldwide for the past months, we see the rise of openly atheistic, satanic and demon-inspired masses who are ready to overthrow society and establish a satanic kingdom. The Bible is clear what these people will do and so there is no need to state it here. Again, this was predicted a long time ago. While most of them were never Christians to start with, the group now also includes many who previously professed to be believers in Jesus Christ and are so-called Christian leaders. These are the preachers Peter mentions that have departed from preaching the true gospel of salvation.

WHAT ARE YOU TO DO?

Much of what has been said so far revolved around the false teachers. That they have deceived many in the past, currently do so, and in future will do even more, is certain. Let us focus on the true believers. Remember what was said at the beginning of this Bible study – you, as a believer, have to **worship in spirit and in truth**. This is your guarantee against false teaching. There are three things that stand out here:

- you have to **worship**
 - faith without worshipping the one true God means nothing. Worship is to acknowledge Him as the only God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
 - your worship has to be in **spirit** – through the leading of the Holy Spirit; and
 - your worship has to be in **truth** – you have to rely on Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6).

- You have to ensure you are not entangled by false teaching. False teaching is everywhere today. It starts mostly in the “church” but not everyone who professes to be a Bible-believing preacher or teacher, is one.
 - Examine what you hear from your pastor and measure it against the Word of God. If what they teach is not in line with God’s word, they are wrong. Even Paul made this clear (Galatians 1:6-9);
 - Examine what you read and view online – not everything you see on YouTube is true. While I follow the teachings of many excellent and sincere Bible teachers on YouTube, I always sit with my Bible with me while I watch and listen to their teaching. That said, I appreciate the teaching of a number of Bible teachers on YouTube. I cannot mention their names here as I do not have their permission to do so but you can contact me through the website’s contact form, and I am more than welcome to share their names and channels;
 - Examine the news – many Christians say there is no point to watch the news. Do yourself a favour and watch the news. Then measure it against the Word of God;
 - Examine the Bible version you are using – today we have many versions of the Bible in English that simply do not teach the true Word of God. In short, if you are an English-speaking believer, get yourself a copy of the 1611 King James Version, also called the authorised version. Do not complain about what people see as archaic English. I would much rather read “archaic” English, than be misled by modern translations. I will write a follow-up article to this one so show just a few examples of how modern translations have stripped (words and verses removed) the true Word of God to suit the requirements of

our modern era. The Bible does not conform to you. You conform to the Bible.

SUMMARY

The divide is here. Which way are you going? Maybe Paul's words will guide you:

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates. – **2 Corinthians 13:5-6**

Examine yourself today; check what you believe and what you do against the Word of God. Paul trusts, and so does God, that we will not be found to be people of bad character (reprobates) but people of God who worship in spirit and in truth.