

A Strong Delusion

July 18, 2020

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- *The strong delusion, since the beginning of time, is the denial of God's existence, His rule over all and His coming judgment coupled with the denial of our accountability.*

Proverbs 9:10 ESV

10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

Proverbs 16:6 ESV

6 ...by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil.

Judges 21:25 ESV

25 In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Jeremiah 9:1-24 ESV

1 Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

2 Oh that I had in the desert a travelers' lodging place, that I might leave my people and go away from them! For they are all adulterers, a company of treacherous men.

3 They bend their tongue like a bow; falsehood and not truth has grown strong in the land; for they proceed from evil to evil, and **THEY DO NOT KNOW ME**, declares the LORD.

4 Let everyone beware of his neighbor, and put no trust in any brother, for every brother is a deceiver, and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.

5 Everyone deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves committing iniquity.

"...over the last three years, she [Bari Weiss, New York Times journalist] says she has been 'the subject of constant bullying by colleagues who disagree with my views. They have called me a Nazi and a racist ... [and] publicly smear me as a liar and a bigot on Twitter with no fear that harassing me will be met with appropriate action. They never are.'"

"At the Times, she discovered that a 'new consensus has emerged in the press, but perhaps especially at this paper: that truth isn't a process of collective discovery, but an orthodoxy already known to an enlightened few whose job is to inform everyone else.'"

"The 'orthodoxy' to which Bari Weiss refers endorses a host of causes that evangelical Christians oppose on biblical grounds: abortion on demand, premarital and extramarital sex, same-sex and polyamorous marriage, gender fluidity, transgender locker rooms and sports participation, acceptance of pornography, euthanasia, and the list goes on. To speak biblical truth to these behaviors is to be branded as 'intolerant,' which is the cardinal sin of our culture."

"In recent years, the journalistic 'new consensus' has determined that such intolerance must not be treated objectively by the media, any more than we would want a newspaper to treat objectively 'both sides' of sex trafficking or the Holocaust." —Jim Denison, Denison Forum, July 17, 2020

"...an intellectual posture I call 'secular gnosticism.' It assumes a position of cultural privilege on what counts as knowledge and justified belief, though it is rarely doubted and thus rarely defended. For that reason, its believers do not subject their position, its presuppositions, and its sources of authority to the sort of rigorous interrogation they suggest the beliefs, presuppositions, and sources of authority of religious believers should undergo." —Francis J. Beckwith, Secular Gnosticism and the New York Times, Sep 2, 2011

"Chris' [Cuomo] leadership is a combination of edgy advocacy and human interest. He challenges the bureaucracy and holds those in power accountable. He blends journalism with public service, facts with raw and real-life implications." —Betsy Myers, Chris Cuomo Is Also Teaching Us About Leadership, Thrive Global, April 6, 2020

Romans 1:18-32 ESV

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools,

23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

24 Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves,

25 because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;

27 and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

29 They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips,

30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

32 Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Isaiah 5:20-21 ESV

20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!

A Fiery Test

Jeremiah 9:1-24 ESV

6 Heaping oppression upon oppression, and deceit upon deceit, THEY REFUSE TO KNOW ME, declares the LORD.

7 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: "Behold, I will refine them and test them, for what else can I do, because of my people?"

- refine (tsaraph) *fuse metal, smelt, melt, purge away, refine, test, try, prove*
- test (bachan) *examine, try, prove, test, make a trial*
- *Before reaching an apex of judgment, God brings fiery trials to:*
 - *give one more chance for repentance*
 - *to prove what is in the hearts*

Deuteronomy 8:2 ESV

2 And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

"A total of 82 percent of Americans confess a belief in God, with most of them (80 percent) saying they believed in God before the pandemic and 2 percent saying their belief in God developed after the pandemic, according to the survey by the University of Chicago Divinity School and the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research."

"Among Americans who believe in God, 63 percent agree with the statement that 'God is telling humanity to change how we are living' (31 percent agree strongly and 31 percent say they 'somewhat' agree with the statement)."

—Christian Headlines, Majority in U.S. Believe 'God Is Telling Humanity to Change How We Are Living' Through COVID-19

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 ESV

9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false,

12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

An Apex Of Judgment

Jeremiah 9:1-24 ESV

8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow; it speaks deceitfully; with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor, but in his heart he plans an ambush for him.

9 Shall I not punish them for these things? declares the LORD, and shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this?

- *To say that God does not bring judgment on nations for their sin, and that God does not bring judgment through natural disasters, wars, conflict, poverty and hunger, is to deny that the Bible is true and is the very fruit of the great delusion.*

Jeremiah 9:1-24 ESV

10 "I will take up weeping and wailing for the mountains, and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness, because they are laid waste so that no one passes through, and the lowing of cattle is not heard; both the birds of the air and the beasts have fled and are gone.

11 I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a lair of jackals, and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant."

12 Who is the man so wise that he can understand this? To whom has the mouth of the LORD spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and laid waste like a wilderness, so that no one passes through?

13 And the LORD says: "Because they have forsaken my law that I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice or walked in accord with it,

14 but have stubbornly followed their own hearts and have gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them.

15 Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will feed this people with bitter food, and give them poisonous water to drink.

16 I will scatter them among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will send the sword after them, until I have consumed them."

17 Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider, and call for the mourning women to come; send for the skillful women to come;

18 let them make haste and raise a wailing over us, that our eyes may run down with tears and our eyelids flow with water.

19 For a sound of wailing is heard from Zion: 'How we are ruined! We are utterly shamed, because we have left the land, because they have cast down our dwellings.'"

20 Hear, O women, the word of the LORD, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth; teach to your daughters a lament, and each to her neighbor a dirge.

21 For death has come up into our windows; it has entered our palaces, cutting off the children from the streets and the young men from the squares.

22 Speak: "Thus declares the LORD, 'The dead bodies of men shall fall like dung upon the open field, like sheaves after the reaper, and none shall gather them.'"

The Only Hope

Jeremiah 9:1-24 ESV

23 Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches,

24 but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."

Jeremiah 31:27-34 ESV

27 Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast.

28 And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD.

29 In those days they shall no longer say: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

30 But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

31 Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,

32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.

33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."