

# Super-heroes and Super-heresies

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“Would you ever consider altering your genetics?”

It was late in the afternoon when I popped the question to my unsaved friend. It was a complete change of subject, but she was used to that. We've known each other a long time.

She fingered the stem of her glass and glanced at me sideways. “I don't think I understand,” she replied. “Do I need to?”

“I mean, would you ever knowingly choose to do anything at all that would change your body's DNA structure from what it is now to something else?”

She flushed and set her jaw. Her gaze narrowed as she stared at some vague point above my head. Uh oh! I was familiar with *that* look.

After a few awkward moments, she mechanically answered, “Uh, no...no, I don't think so.” She was lost in a new train of thought, and she was uncomfortable. I decided to drop the subject.

Despite our enduring friendship, my friend and I are polar opposites politically. Name any platform of the far left, and she's likely to be an ardent supporter. She's been in a quiet fury ever since November 8, 2016. Her rage is palpable whenever she's part of any conversation where the parameters of the discussion unmask her preferred talking points.

We are also light years apart spiritually. I know this because we've had candid talks. They are easier to navigate than our political discussions. But as a result, she knows the gospel, although she refuses to believe it. She also knows she may wake up some day to a world where I, and many others have suddenly disappeared. I've told her this, and she thinks I'm nuts.

I've watched my friend over the past couple of decades or so that we've known each other. She's changed a lot during that time, and I regret to say I feel I know her less now than I once did. I have no desire to embarrass my friend, but my relationship with her illustrates some real problems that many of us encounter with unsaved dyed-in-the-wool liberals, regardless of our genuine friendships with them.

She's joined virulent women's marches and she owns a funny-looking pink hat. She's swooned at several Obama rallies, and she's protested at several Trump rallies. She's shouted at people who question global warming, she's railed against the “Jewish occupation.” She's cursed plans for energy independence, she's berated the “racism” of our country's border laws, and she has opposed all uses of the phrase “Radical Islamic Terrorism.” And I've only scratched the surface of her evolving attitudes and behaviors.

All things considered, my friend is utterly lost.

When I look at her, I see someone who is likely to miss the Rapture because she is unrepentant. She has made consecutive choices to resist the truth of God's Word. I also see someone who has spurned patient reason and wise counsel, and who has swallowed the fallacies of globalism "hook, line, and sinker."

Unless God intervenes, her fate seems set. I have prayed for my friend multiple times, but she's a perfect picture of one who has "...refused to love the truth and so be saved" according to 2 Thess. 2:10.

But it's the verse after that one that has me thinking these days. If my friend misses the Rapture and transitions into a world where millions of people have just disappeared, then chances are good she's going to receive God's "powerful delusion so that [she] will believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:11).

She's exactly the sort of person that would fall for it. She refuses God's truths, but she believes all the lies on this side of the Rapture that prop up prized liberal positions: global warming, conservatives-are-bigots, capitalism-is-bad, abortion, socialism, globalism, fascism, and other mindless "isms." She trusts "fake news," so she's stopped using common sense. She's conditioned to buy into the greatest lie of all time that will be foisted upon this God-rejecting world.

But what will this "powerful delusion" be? Does the Bible tell us, or are we left wrestling with clues? Let's take stock of what we *do* know about it, and we'll begin with the obvious points.

First, **God is behind it.** This is according to 2 Thess. 2:11, but it's really according to the whole Word of God. Nothing happens without God's sovereign control, and the text here says "God will send them a powerful delusion." It's pretty straightforward.

It also has clear precedent. God "hardened Pharaoh's heart" so that He could divinely judge Egypt (Exodus 7:3-4). He's going to send this forthcoming "powerful delusion" so that "...all will be condemned who have not believed the truth..." (2 Thess. 2:12). Whatever's coming, it amounts to God's divine judgment against a prescribed population, and as things stand now—that includes my friend.

That leads me to a second aspect of this "powerful delusion:" **It's a supernatural display;** something much more than tsunamis and tornadoes. Just as God judged Pharaoh and the rest of Egypt with miraculous events, so I believe this "powerful delusion" will also incorporate displays that are unnatural, unearthly, and altogether paranormal.

This is also plain in the text; 2 Thessalonians 2:9 says this will be a time where the world sees "...every kind of power, including miraculous signs and lying wonders." Satan has an agenda here, and he's going to employ counterfeit miracles to wow the masses and fool an unregenerate world. We can look back to Egypt again where Pharaoh's magicians emulated some of Moses' miraculous signs in order to dupe Pharaoh.

Third, I believe this “powerful delusion” **comes after the Rapture**. Paul develops Thessalonians chapter 2 under the topical truth of “...our being gathered to Him” in the first verse. He subsequently reassures his readers they are *not* in the day of the Lord, a horrific time in the future which I believe the totality of scriptural evidence argues comes *after* the Rapture.

It’s not my intent here to explain all the sound biblical reasons which support a pre-Tribulation Rapture. Plenty of people have already done that very well. That said, I feel this third point is supported by the arrangement of this portion of 2 Thessalonians. It is *after* Paul discusses the Rapture and the day of the Lord that he raises the topic of this “powerful delusion. No details are ever left to chance in God’s Word.

The last obvious point I want to draw attention to is this “powerful delusion” is **associated with the Antichrist**. Specifically, the Antichrist is “revealed” as part of this delusion. With the greater body of Scripture weighed, this may have as much to do with the events surrounding the Antichrist’s true “coming out” around the midpoint of the Tribulation as it does with his earlier political debut on a global stage.

The Bible teaches that Satan will be highly-invested into this “man of lawlessness.” The devil will strategically employ a no-holds-barred choreography of supernatural phenomena which will deceive the world into believing they’ve finally found the one who can lead them into their long-awaited utopia.

So let’s summarize these obvious points in a few coherent sentences:

To bring divine judgment on those who have refused and mocked the gospel, God will give Satan latitude to deceive the post-Rapture world on a massive scale. Since he persists in the belief he can defeat God’s plans with his own, Satan will introduce supernatural “signs and wonders” into the sphere of natural human experiences. These preternatural events—while extremely convincing—will still be shams. However, they will be effective in persuading the masses who have already rejected the truth, and this population will support the antichrist’s claims and fall into step with his agenda.

If that’s all true, and I believe God’s Word means what it says, then there are some resultant implications that must be considered. To illustrate, if a flood destroys a property and sweeps away a home, we can assume the family that lived there will be looking for different housing. We may learn nothing specific about that family after the flood, but that’s still a reasonable conjecture.

In the same vein of reasoning, there are sensible assumptions which follow the obvious truths we just extracted from 2 Thessalonians. And since human nature has remained consistent throughout history, here’s one of them: **Someone is going to have to explain the Rapture.**

Remember, it’s the folks that already refused to believe the truth that got left behind. Many of them, just like my friend, will have plainly heard the gospel and even something about the Rapture. But many of those will *still* refuse to believe the truth even after God miraculously removes His Church from the earth.

It's the same sinful stubbornness that will prevent some people from repenting even after enduring God's Tribulation judgments (Rev. 9:20-21; 16:9; et al). Again, they'll *know* the truth. They'll know God's behind it all, and they'll know they should repent (Rev. 14:6), but they'd rather curse God instead.

For people who willfully persist in these types of choices, an "alternate explanation" for the Rapture will be propagated. This lie will seem reasonable to foolish minds, and as "seeing is believing" has always been the standard by which most people are persuaded, this lie is probably one which is heard *and* seen.

This is a perfect time for this great deception, and the obvious points of 2 Thessalonians conform well to this premise. That raises the next sensible assumption which is **Satan's "miraculous signs and lying wonders" will build on current ideas.**

We did not land on the moon right after the invention of flight. Planes had to be designed which could fly faster and further, and an entire space program had to be developed. It took time and process for our nation to collectively believe they could put a man on the moon.

In the same way, the world you and I live in right now is cozying up to some strange ideas. These ideas have been gathering force over time, and they've now gained considerable support. Here are a few of them which may play a role in this upcoming "powerful delusion:"

**WE ARE NOT ALONE.** Christians already know this. According to the Bible, we are surrounded by "principalities and powers in heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). These intelligent entities strive against us and seek to disrupt God's intentions. These are fallen angels and demons, and God's Word is clear they wish to destroy us.

The unredeemed world sees it differently. They are convinced that aliens from other planets exist, and one day we will make contact with them. Furthermore, there are many who believe these aliens are a superior race of beings who will infuse humanity with new wisdom and enlightenment when they arrive. Some people believe these aliens put humans on planet Earth. This leads to the second idea which is gaining support and energy in the world today.

**WE MUST EVOLVE.** A popular bumper sticker states, "Evolve or die." It's a marketing spin on Darwin's concept of "survival of the fittest," and according to some opinions, this applies to people too. Evolution teaches that less capable variants of a particular species are removed through natural selection. They eventually disappear while the stronger and more capable ones remain.

It's easy to see where this could lead. The people that subscribe to Darwin's ideas, and who believe those ideas apply to you and I, are already obsessing over "humanity's next evolutionary leap." It will not be difficult for proponents of this view to believe that *they* are the "fitter and stronger" form of *homo sapiens* since they still remain after the Rapture. It was all those fuddy-duddy Christians that were removed.

WE MUST BE RESCUED FROM OURSELVES. This is the deep-seated fixation among secularists that we are doomed to destroy ourselves unless there is outside intervention.

Christians say, “This is true. We need Jesus Christ. He came to die for sinners (Rom. 5:8) and to deliver people from the righteous wrath of God. Jesus gives us eternal hope outside the bounds of this fallen world and beyond a creation that groans under the effects of sin (Rom. 8:22).”

But the unregenerate world doesn’t believe in Jesus Christ any way, shape, or form—remember? They choose a spin which places duty into their *own* hands. That’s why they tout global warming, population control, carbon credits, re-useable grocery bags, cloth diapers, and bicycles.

The common thread underlying their passions goes something like this: “We are destroying our planet, and humanity is threatened with extinction. Unless something radically changes, we’re toast.”

The unregenerate world is prepping for a savior, but not one “acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). They don’t want God’s only Son who was sent into this fallen world so that we might live through Him (1 John 4:9).

Instead, they want flash and dash, and a whole lot of muscle and hustle. It’s no coincidence that superhero movies dominate the box office these days. From Captain America to X-Men, and from Wonder Woman to Guardians of the Galaxy, the masses are being subtly indoctrinated to the idea that we need a champion – a “superhero” – to save the world.

That raises a legitimate question. What does Marvel Comics have to do with the marvelous commentary of the Scriptures?

More than you may realize. I think it leads to our last sensible assumption from chapter two of 2 Thessalonians which is **the days of Noah are indeed returning**. Jesus stated this in Matthew 24:37, and we must soberly consider why He picked that specific time of history to describe a future time when He would return.

The world in Noah’s time was an unusual place according to Genesis 6:1-4. It was a time when the supernatural was blended with the natural. Fantastic “heroes and men of renown” existed alongside normal people. They performed tremendous feats, and the world was deceived by them. People rejected the truth, but believed a lie, and Satan did everything he could do to prevent God’s plan from being fulfilled. In other words, this part of the past was a lot like what the future is going to be like.

All the ingredients are present for an encore of Noah’s time. Transhumanists believe we are already living in the fifth epoch. That’s what they call the next stage of evolution when human intelligence merges with technology. If movies are your reference point, think *Robocop*, *The Terminator*, or even *Avatar*.

It’s no longer science fiction. The “singularity” goal of transhumanists imagines people becoming “spiritual machines.” Transhumanists want to “resurrect” our minds onto

supercomputers, allowing people to be immortal. They imagine flesh and bone blending with machines and other technologies, and bodies which are resistant to disease. They want mankind's powers to be limitless.

Enormous budgets are being tapped to support their goals. Prominent transhumanists include notable entrepreneurs like Elon Musk and Peter Thiel who founded the Singularity University and the Future of Humanity Institute. Their ideas are embraced by public companies like Google, Apple, and Tesla.

Meantime, scientists are working overtime to blend the human genome with the DNA of animals. Real human-animal hybrids are already alive and well on terra firma, and if the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has their way, there will be many more. In August of 2016, the NIH proposed that the moratorium on taxpayer funding of certain human-animal experiments be lifted. We've reached a point where the egg cannot be put back in the shell.

As the unregenerate world supports the violation of God's laws and the rejection of His good news, the greater prophetic Scriptures provide tantalizing insights to consider alongside our 2 Thessalonians text.

As a case in point, the antichrist and the false prophet are "captured and thrown alive into the lake of burning fire" (Rev. 19:20) when Jesus Christ returns. They are the first two recipients of this eternal fate, and they are later joined by Satan who is similarly apprehended and put away for good in Rev. 20:10.

But if you blinked, you missed it.

All three: the antichrist, the false prophet, and Satan, bypass the great white throne judgment. It's this event in which faithless *humanity* from all the ages is tried by God before being tossed into the burning sulfur. Rev. 20:11-15 describes it, and a key point is nobody is overlooked.

Hebrews 9:27 prescribes this fate with uncompromising words, "Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment." In other words, if you reject Christ, you *will be* judged and sent to hell. No exceptions.

But the burning lake of hell was also intended for "the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41), or in other terms – unregenerate, evil, rebellious *non-humans*. Does....that....mean....the Antichrist....and the false prophet....are not....*human*? Could be. It could also mean they are not *fully* human.

Let's weigh this "not fully human" idea from a different vantage point. In Revelation 14, three angels fly through the heavens and loudly proclaim their divine messages to "all those that dwell upon the earth." It's the third angel's message in Rev.14:9-11 that announces if anyone worships the antichrist and his image and takes his mark, then they are condemned to the eternal lake of fire.

It's cut and dried. There's no going back on this one, and no one can repent once they take the mark. God's efforts to extend mercy and grace no longer apply to these individuals anymore. Put another way, those who take the mark of the beast are *already* judged.

I believe there's much more than a choice at play here—there's a change. I think this change ties into the same reason the Antichrist and the False Prophet bypass the Great White Throne judgment and are thrown directly into the lake of fire, instead.

I'll wrap things up by shooting straight here. I am one of many people who earnestly study the prophetic Scriptures while keeping an honest eye on our present times and trends. I therefore believe those who elect to take the mark of the beast will knowingly choose to change their body's DNA structure from what it is now—to something else.

They will be under enormous pressures to make this decision, not the least of which are basic reasons of personal welfare. The Bible makes this clear in Rev. 13:17. However, there will also be a desire to follow their leader, and to be invincible like him (Rev. 13:3, 4). I have little doubt that those who take the mark will be taking some element *of the Antichrist* in the process. Humanity will be persuaded that by doing so, they can evolve beyond what they have been to something more.

But this decision to take the mark of the beast will render anyone who does so as someone who is no longer 100 percent in the image of God according to Genesis 1:27. They would partly take on the image of the beast which may explain why they also become unredeemable. The mark is a mortal decision with irreversible consequences.

We can hardly imagine the turbulent era that lies ahead for the post-Rapture world. But I am fairly sure the persuasive deceptions and powerful delusions of that time will build generously on the godless ideas and passions that are taking shape even now.

Wherever the depravities of man can forge alliances with entities, technologies, systems, and ideologies that further distance him from his Creator, it is there that his dark heart is sure to go.