

THE TWO SINNERS INVOLVED IN THE SIN OF DECEPTION

by Peter John Peters

Hebrews 12:1 says: "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." The cloud of witnesses are those men and women of faith that the Hebrew writer had just listed in Hebrews chapter 11. There is one man though, who should have been and could have been in that Faith Hall of Fame of Hebrews eleven, but he was entangled in a sin that so easily entangles God's people. It is the sin of deception, which is a two party sin. There is the deceiver and the deceiver, but most have been deceived (by that great deceiver – Revelation 12:9) into believing the deceived to be a victim rather than a sinner.

The man that could have been in the Faith Hall of Fame is the young prophet of I Kings chapter thirteen. *"Now behold, there came a man of God from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD, while Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, 'O altar, altar, thus says the LORD, 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.' Then he gave a sign the same day, saying, 'This is the sign which the LORD has spoken, 'Behold, the altar shall be split apart and the ashes which are on it shall be poured out.' Now it came about when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Bethel, that Jeroboam stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, 'Seize him.' But his hand which he stretched out against him dried up, so that he could not draw it back to himself. The altar also was split apart and the ashes were poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and said to the man of God, 'Please entreat the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.' So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored to him, and it became as it was before. Then the king said to the man of God, 'Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.' But the man of God said to the king, 'If you were to give me half your house I would not go with you, nor would I eat bread or drink water in this place. For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.' So he went another way, and did not return by the way which he came to Bethel." (I Kings 13:1-10)*

We see from verse one that the young prophet was a "man of God" and that he lived his life according to the word of God; for it says he came "by the word of the Lord". We see he was a man of conviction and courage willing to face the devil himself, which in this case was the pompous, arrogant, God-defying king. The prophet was such a man of faith he was willing to be a martyr, if need be, in carrying out his job of prophesying against sinful government, i.e., the king. He was a man of power and was able to heal thru prayer. He was a humble man and a man that could not be bought or sold. When offered a reward and a banquet in his honor at the king's palace, he turned it down.

In summary, he was a man of God lead by and doing what the word of God said. A man of faith, power, courage and conviction, yet humble. He could not be bought or

sold, **but he could be deceived.** It was deception that brought about his death and demise. He was obedient in many ways. Perhaps in all ways but not in the way of deception.

As we read the story we tend to think of him as a victim. A victim of deception and see the bad guy in the story as the deceiver, but the Bible story tells us it was the deceived i.e., the young prophet that God destroyed and not the old prophet who was the deceiver.

As the story goes... *“Now an old prophet was living in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the deeds which the man of God had done that day in Bethel; the words which he had spoken to the king, these also they related to their father. And their father said to them, ‘Which way did he go?’ Now his sons had seen the way which the man of God who came from Judah had gone. Then he said to his sons, ‘Saddle the donkey for me.’ So they saddled the donkey for him and he rode away on it. So he went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak; and he said to him, ‘Are you the man of God who came from Judah?’ And he said, ‘I am.’ Then he said to him, ‘Come home with me and eat bread.’ And he said, ‘I cannot return with you, nor go with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place. For a command came to me by the word of the LORD, ‘You shall eat no bread, nor drink water there; do not return by going the way you came.’ And he said to him, ‘I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’ But he lied to him.”* (Kings 13:11-18)

In this article we’ll not discuss much about the old lying, deceiving prophet except to say he was obviously quite convincing. This Bible story has a sad ending, for God killed the young prophet and let the old lying preacher go to lie and deceive another day. The reader should read the rest of the story as given in I Kings 13:19-34.

We may view the young prophet as a victim. A victim of deception, but God viewed him as a disobedient man. You see he disobeyed a command, i.e., he got entangled in a sin that is easy to get caught up in. The command he disobeyed (and suffered the consequences of) is the same one God’s Christian Israel people easily disobey today. The command is given in Ephesians 5:6 – **“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”** The command is also seen in II Thessalonians 2:3; *“Let no one in any way deceive you...”* And again in I John 3:7 – *“Little children let no one deceive you...”*

The scriptures clearly teach that we are not to let ourselves be deceived. To disobey the command is a sin which, as we see in II Kings 13, carries serious consequences. Notice the Bible tells us **“Let no one deceive you.”** The truth is when we are deceived we let it happen. This preacher over the years has been very guilty of this sin and he has repented of it (and been forgiven) but in honest reflection of the past he has to admit **he let himself be deceived.** This is what the young unknown prophet did. He let himself be deceived.

To not let yourself be deceived, first believe the truth of the scriptures that there are **many** deceivers who are trying to deceive. *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world...”* – II John 7 *“These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.”* – I John 2:26 (emphasis added). This concept is hard for the sheep mind to grasp so don’t try, just believe what our good Shepard has told us and be

aware or beware. *“Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing.”* – Matthew 7:15

I suspect that when the young prophet realized he had been lied to and deceived by the kindly, godly, persuasive, hospitable old preacher that he said what this preacher has often said or at least thought – **“I CAN’T BELIEVE YOU’D LIE TO ME AND DECEIVE ME.”** To say or think such a thing is to say or think that our GOD LIES TO US AND DECEIVES US for he has clearly told us to believe Him i.e. – that there are liars and deceivers.

Second, believe God’s word over the lies of man. And who is a liar? The Bible says all men are liars! – *“...let God be true, but every man a liar...”* Romans 2:4. When the word of God says one thing and someone teaches another thing, believe God. In the case of the disobedient prophet he was told by God one thing (I Kings 13:9) and told another thing by the lying preacher (I Kings 13:18). Had he just believed God he would not have sinned i.e. would not have been deceived. In the case of this Bible story, the lying preacher said an angel gave him further revelation, yet Galatians 1:8 says, *“But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed.”* (Had people believed this there would be no Mormon church today).

For the sake of illustration let’s consider an area where God’s people are easily deceived by lying preachers. There is an old joke about lawyers which goes like this – *“How do you tell when a lawyer is lying? When you see his lips moving.”* Well, how do you tell when a preacher is lying and deceiving? When what he says is contrary to what the word of God says.

CATEGORIZING DECEIVERS

The Bible teaches us there are many deceivers (II John 7) and many types of deception. In the I Kings chapter 13 story, the deceiver was a lying preacher who had his own agenda in mind rather than God’s. Acts 20:29-30 warns us of this category. The old preacher lied on purpose.

Another category is the one who doesn’t lie on purpose, i.e. the deceived. This is the one who was himself taught a lie and then in turn teaches it to others, and so it carries on generation after generation. It is like the story of the man who saw his wife cut the ends of the roast off before putting it into the roasting pan. When he asked her why she did so she said *“I don’t know--it’s just the way my mother did it.”* So he asked his mother-in-law why she did so and she responded she didn’t know but that that was the way her mother did it. So one day he asked the grandmother why she did so, and she responded by saying her roasting pan was too small.

Another category is the serpent, i.e., the snakes & sons of hell Jesus identified who purposefully put themselves up as religious teachers to purposefully keep people out of the Kingdom of God (read Matthew 23:13-33). These are the people who are of their father the devil, doing his desires. John 8:44 *“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.”* Of these the sheep often think or say *“I can’t believe there are such people who would do such a thing”,* and

when they do this they in essence call Jesus a liar and fail to obey the shepherd who told them to BEWARE. The sheep reason—"Well why would people do such a thing?", and then reject the Bible answer that the deceivers love doing it. "...*They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you.*" - II Peter 2:13.

Another category of liars and deceivers are those of certain ethnic groups. Recently this preacher read a newspaper article about the gypsy problem in Europe. It described gypsies practicing walking with a limp and a crutch to deceive people as they beg and steal. These people have been identified throughout the centuries as liars and deceivers and even poisoners and practitioners of witchcraft, and have been run out of country after country. I have personally known three gypsies in my life and every one of them were liars and deceivers. One was an accused practicing witch caught poisoning a child, who disguised herself as a Christian and was active in publishing a Christian women's magazine. Beware, the Bible warns that there really are ethnic groups who have a definite propensity to lie and deceive! Titus 1:10-13. "*For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of sordid gain. One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.'* This testimony is true. For this cause reprove them severely that they may be sound in the faith,"

Then there is the category of the antichrist, that is the ones who deny Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. "*Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.*" (I John 2) These are the people the Judeo-Christian church world call "God's chosen people" i.e., the Jews. The whole nation of God's people has been guilty of the sin of being deceived. Deceived into believing that the lying people of the synagogue of Satan (as described in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9) are God's chosen people. Such a national deception is fully described and illustrated in the story of the Gibeonites waging a war against Joshua and his army by using deception. This article does not allow a full discourse of that story found in Joshua chapter 9, but the summation of it is that an entire nation of people disguised themselves to be somebody they were not (so it is today with the nation of the Israelis that America sends billions to under the lying precept that they are Israelites and God's chosen people).

It is a marvel to this preacher that Christians (even ones he pastors) would go to the very people identified as antichrists, liars and deceivers, to learn about God's law, or the feast days or the Hebrew language.

Perhaps the worst category of deceivers is ourselves. The Bible tells us we can deceive ourselves. "*Let no man deceive himself...*" I Corinthians 3:18. Often we want to believe a lie. We want to believe all men are good and everything is beautiful in its own way, that we are all the same under the skin, etc., etc.

Upon reflection of the many times I sinned by letting myself be deceived, I see that I let it happen by wanting to think the best about the deceiver or ignoring obvious signs because the deceiver made me feel good or there was some personal or social advantage or benefit to me to be deceived or whatever. ("*...and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.*" Romans 16:18.) I, in essence, deceived myself.

SUMMARY

The sin of deception is interesting. It is a two-party sin involving the deceiver and the deceivee, neither of which will admit to their sin. Speaking before a large audience this preacher has asked how many deceivers, i.e. spies, were in the audience posing as righteous Christians. *“And they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so as to deliver Him up to the rule and the authority of the governor.”* Luke 20:20. Obviously, the deceivers never admit they are deceivers.

I’ve asked the same audience how many deceived people there were in the audience and just as obviously, no one admits to being deceived. How can they, if they are deceived? A deceivee does not know he or she is deceived, else they would not be deceived.

When a person realizes he or she has been deceived, then they are no longer deceived, but such a person needs to repent of having been deceived. They need to quit believing the sinner is just the deceiver and that they are just the victims.

As a closing illustration this preacher would like to relate a Bible study he once had with a friend. Some time back a dear old high school buddy came to visit me and I was delighted to learn he had been converted and was following our Lord Jesus Christ. I had always loved him and now loved him even more, knowing he loved the Savior who had forgiven me of my sins. It was, at first, a joy to have a Bible study with him as I wanted to show him the Bible teaching that we all must be baptized **for** the remission of sins. The instructions in Acts 2:38 is as clear and easy to understand as were the instructions given to the young prophet of II Kings 13. *Acts 2:38 KJV--38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* But my friend was using what is called a Ryrie Study Bible. The Ryrie Study Bible is evidently a popular Bible carried at Bible book stores, containing the study notes of a Charles Coldwell Ryrie, Th.D, PH.D. (I have since purchased one for my library and cataloged it under the heading of – FALSE PROPHETS). Mr. Ryrie has confirmed the truth of God’s word concerning false prophets, liars and snakes. (He is like a modern-day C.I. Scofield). (1) I noticed my friend would always read Mr. Ryrie’s notes for added revelation or understanding of the text. This is exactly what Mr. Ryrie tells the followers of Christ to do. The following is a quote from the Ryrie Study Bible by Mr. Ryrie:

TO THE READER

“The Bible is the greatest of all books; to study it is the noblest of all pursuits; to understand it, the highest of all goals. The Ryrie Study Bible is especially designed to help you achieve that goal.

Every time you read this Bible, whether carefully or casually, be sure to look at the notes at the bottom of the page. These are designed to illuminate and help you understand the verses you are reading.” (Emphasis added) (2)

So regarding the Bible text of Acts 2:38 where in God tells us to be baptized **FOR** the forgiveness of sins and then upon obeying that command one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, Doctor Ryrie told him, in the so-called illuminating study notes, that the baptism Peter spoke of is not FOR forgiveness of sins, because the word for means “because of.” God’s word told my friend water baptism was for the remission of sins but Dr. Ryrie told him: “*water baptism is the outward sign of repentance and remission of sin*” and that the remission of sins is “*not through the act of baptism (for may here mean “because of”...)*”.

Guess who my friend believed? The spokesman for God, i.e., the Apostle Peter or Dr. Ryrie? My friend even seemed to be offended when his friend Peter Peters suggested Dr. Ryrie to be a lying preacher snake of the category of II Peter 2:1 – “*But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies...*”

It seems people can accept in general terms the Bible concept of snakes, liars, and deceivers but get very offended when their pet snake is exposed. I think the reason is pride. We don’t like to or want to believe we have been deceived and would rather hold on to the deception than humbly repent of believing a liar and deceiver. We don’t want to believe the old grey-haired preacher snake we’ve come to love and adore and eat with would lie to us and deceive us.

In closing take seriously the command of our Lord: ***Ephesians 5:6 “Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”***

- (1) Cyrus I. Scofield, famous for the Scofield Reference Bible, has been exposed to be a lying, deceptive, immoral snake. Read the fully documented book entitled, [The Incredible Scofield and His Book](#) by Joseph M. Canfield. Available for a \$20.00 offering from Scriptures for America; P.O. Box 766; LaPorte, CO 80535.
- (2) Ryrie Study Bible, Moody Press, Page V

THREE MESSAGES ON DECEPTION by Pastor Peters

#939 *Deception & The Missing Sinner*

#941 *Deception & The Missing Sinner Part 2*

#943 *To Be No Longer Deceived*

These tapes are available for a \$5.00 offering (each) from Scriptures For America, PO Box 766, LaPorte, CO 80535.