



Old Testament Reading – Proverbs 6:1-19

New Testament Reading – James 1:1-20

Victorious Christian Living “Lessons Learned Through Deception” Joshua 9:1-27

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In 2 Timothy 4:3-4, Paul prophesied a time when many who claimed to be true believers in Jesus Christ would turn away from the true gospel and embrace myths, fables, and legends. Paul said, **“Evil men and impostors’ would play a significant role in this future age of deception, growing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.”**

- This passage confirms the inevitability of the age in which we live today: the ‘age of deception,’ a period that will be followed by strong delusion and then depravity, from which there is no return.
- In his novel 1984, George Orwell warned his readers about a time of **“Universal deceit, when “telling the truth would be a revolutionary act.”**
- This quote underscores the weight of the sin of deception, for when the past is erased, the erasure is soon forgotten, and the lie becomes the truth.
- The biblical definition of deception is to mislead others by a direct falsehood, or a cunning, or crafty scheme; leading them to believe what is false, as if it were true, or to disbelieve what is true, even though it is absolute truth.

- Satan deceived Eve into questioning God's love for her by forbidding her to eat of the fruit that He knew would destroy that intimate relationship between them.
- Jacob deceived his blind father, Isaac, allowing him to receive the birthright and blessing intended for his brother, Esau.
- Delilah deceived Samson into revealing the secret of his strength.
- Ananias and Sapphira deceived their fellow believers about the amount they said they would give to help meet the needs of the new Christians.
- The Apostles Paul and Peter warned their followers about false prophets, false teachers, and deceitful works, who were out to intentionally deceive those new believers who had not developed the spirit of discernment.
 - They will introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and many will follow their destructive ways.
 - They will exploit you with deceptive words. As savage wolves, they will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and by speaking perverse things, they will draw the spiritually weak to abandon their faith in the Lord Jesus and follow their false teachers.
- According to 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, we are living in the age of deception as the world prepares for the arrival of the Antichrist, **the ultimate deceiver**, who will deceive the whole world with his unexplainable signs and wonders.

In 1 Corinthians 10:11, the Apostle Paul said, regarding the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, **"Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come."**

- The history of Israel is a life lesson for believers. It is a guide for our journey of faith from the day of our salvation, through the process of our sanctification, and into the oneness of our glorification, to hopefully, keep us from making the same mistakes as they did.

1. The Gibeonites Ruse – Joshua 9:1-6 – Vss. 3-4 – *"But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors."*

- The Canaanites were an immoral and idolatrous people; a people without conscience or compassion.
- They worshipped many false gods, and practiced sorcery and divination, witchcraft and spiritism; they cast spells, and sacrificed their children to the god of Molech. Their fertility cults included temple prostitution and other sexual rituals the Bible refers to as perversions, wicked and evil acts in which the ungodly participate today.
- Having heard of Israel's resounding victories at the Red Sea, the Jordan River, Jericho, and Ai, the Canaanites formed a large army to fight against Israel.
- However, knowing they would lose a military conflict, they sent a delegation of men to deceive Joshua and the Israelites into making a treaty of peace with them.
- The Gibeonites were dressed as though they had traveled from a distant country, but it was a scam to deceive Joshua.

2. The Israelite's Naivety – Joshua 9:7-13 – Vss. 11-13 – “Therefore, our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, ‘Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, “We are your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with”

- In Deuteronomy 7, God gave Moses specific instructions as to how the Israelites were to deal with the Canaanites.
- **“When the Lord your God delivers them over to you to be destroyed, do a complete job of it—don’t make any treaties with them or show them any mercy; utterly wipe them out. That is why he brought you out of slavery in Egypt with such amazing power and mighty miracles.”**
- Israel’s victories were to be a display of God’s mighty power and not man’s – i.e., God was USING Israel to accomplish His purposes, which means the Canaanites were God’s enemies, not just Israel’s.

3. The Israelites Regret – Joshua 9:14-25 – Vss. 16-19 – “After they had made a covenant with them, they heard that they were their neighbors who dwelt near them. Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim. But the children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel. Then all the rulers said to all the congregation, “We have sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel; now therefore, we may not touch them.”

- The Israelites did not consult with God, so they fell for the Gibeonites’ scheme. But they soon discovered they had been tricked. The Gibeonites survived to serve as slaves to the Israelites for generations, and the land of Gibeon was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin.
- Years later, King Saul broke that treaty and attacked and killed many of the Gibeonites. Years later, King David asked the Lord why He allowed a famine to come upon the land, and God told him it was because Saul put the Gibeonites to death. To end the famine, seven descendants of Saul were allowed to be put to death by the Gibeonites, and then God healed the land.

Satan attacks believers in two ways:

- **As a roaring lion** – 1 Peter 5:8 – frontal attacks that are easy to identify and avoid.
- **As a serpent** – Genesis 3:1-5 – subtle attacks that are not so easy to identify and therefore avoid – deception, distraction, despair, discouragement, doubt, delusion, disbelief, and disguise – even appearing as an angel of light.

With each victory comes the vulnerability of spiritual pride; assuming we no longer need the disciplines of discipleship, which means we just fell for Satan’s subtle lie, and opened ourselves up to an even greater attack of spiritual deception.