

Visions of a False Prophet *Prophetic Deception in the Last Days*

By Norm Franz

As we continue to shine the light of God's Torah on modern day prophets, we are reminded that false prophets will arise from within today's church just as they did in ancient Israel (2 Pet. 2:1-3). Their activities include, but are not limited to, teaching false doctrines, sensuous living, financial exploitation of the sheep, and the misuse of prophetic gifts all in the name of Jesus (Yeshua).

In this report, we will explore how to identify rebellious and false prophets who use imaginary dreams and visions to promote false doctrines that mislead God's people (Jer. 23:16). We will also address today's overemphasis on prophetic signs and wonders and why this phenomenon ultimately causes many in the church to fall away from the faith (2 Thess. 2:3-11).

It must be noted that Ascension Ministries believes in prophets and prophetic ministry (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18). Therefore, our purpose is not to disavow the supernatural work of God's Spirit among the nations, but to help the body of Messiah properly apply His Torah in a manner that rightly divides true prophetic ministry from that which is false.

Foundations of a False Prophet

Most false prophets do not start out giving false prophecies, or by having illusory dreams and visions. Their journey of deception begins when they start believing that their religious traditions and doctrinal agendas supercede God's commandments. In other words, putting tradition over Torah

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Partners' Update

Let this year be a year for raising your level of understanding and celebration of God's appointed feasts (Lev. 23). You can start with Passover, which is coming on April 2. An exciting way of doing this is to share the Passover Seder with family and friends. Whether you celebrate it in your home or attend someone else's, I believe that this year is a year for expanding the kingdom of God in this area.

In order to help you keep the feasts at their appointed times, we have enclosed a Jewish (biblical) calendar. This calendar lays the lunar calendar of the Bible over the solar calendar of the world in a way that allows you to simultaneously use both.

Please consider this our way of saying thank you for your faithful support of this ministry. Your prayers and financial support are helping us to expand our teaching outreach to the nations in a greater way this year. Development of our new website is coming along well, and it promises to be a unique and exciting experience.

Your support is also helping us to develop an international community of prophetic forerunners, who are dedicated to preparing the way of the Lord. Our goal is to provide educational and pastoral support for those who are coming out of the Greco-Roman form of Christianity and returning to the Hebraic roots of the Christian faith.

Without your support we could not touch the nations with God's Torah the way that we do. Thanks again and Shalom!

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provides the platform for false prophecy, because it eliminates God's eternal plumb-line of truth which is the foundation for judging all prophetic ministry.

The Apostle Paul addresses this heretical practice in his letter to the Colossians, when he warns the church to be on guard against those who substitute their man-made doctrines in place of the Torah based doctrines of Messiah:

“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.” (Colossians 2:8^{NAS})

Terms “philosophies”, “empty deceptions” and “traditions of men” are references to man-made religious doctrines that people put above God's commandments. Yeshua (Jesus) first identified this practice among the Pharisees and rebuked them for using it to put the people in bondage:

“And He said to them, ‘Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men. He was also saying to them, ‘You nicely set aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.’” (Mark 7:6-9^{NAS}).

Destroying the Law

It must be noted that Yeshua (Jesus) never taught against God's Torah. He only taught against man-made pharisaic law that was being touted as God's Law. Unfortunately, like the Jewish Pharisees, there are many Christian Pharisees in the church today who substitute their man-made laws (i.e. doctrines of men) in place of God's Laws (Torah).

In Hebraic circles, this is known as “destroying the Law”. This practice produces false teachings, that lead to false prophecies, that lead to false dreams and visions, that lead to false signs and wonders, and so on. Simply put, once the keystone of truth is set aside, it opens the door for every type of falsehood imaginable to invade a person's ministry.

False Dreams and Visions

The rebellious prophets of ancient Israel regularly prophesied false dreams and visions that transgressed the character and nature of God and His word. This pattern of ministry is revealed through the Prophet Jeremiah who said:

“I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy falsely in My name, saying, ‘I had a dream, I had a dream!’ *How long?* Is there anything in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood, even these prophets of the deception of their own heart, who intend to make My people forget My name by their dreams which they relate to one another, just as their fathers forgot My name because of Baal?” (Jeremiah 23:25-28^{NAS})

Here, we see that giving false dreams and visions is equal to forgetting God's name. That's because God has “*magnified His word above all [His] name*” (Ps 138:2^{KJV}). Therefore, when someone misrepresents (i.e. falsifies) God's word in any way, it is equivalent to forgetting His name.

In Paul's dissertation about substituting God's Laws with the “*traditions of men*”, he goes on to explain how Gnostic Christians used mystical angelic visions as a tool to capture people's imagination and lead them astray into false doctrines:

“Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind...” (Colossians 2:18^{NAS})

Gnostics taught that salvation was found in a mystical knowledge of God that came through esoteric revelations of the Spirit. Because many of their doctrinal revelations allegedly came through angelic visions, they asserted that their teachings were higher than God's written word — which at that time was the Torah. Consequently, if their visions disagreed with God's Torah, their visions won out because the messages were delivered by angels.

Unfortunately, these same angelic visions, and the Gnostic doctrines they carry, are manifesting in many segments of the church today.

“Do not listen to the words of the prophets... They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD.”
— Jer. 23:16

And just as it was in ancient Israel, most of the messages (doctrines) within these dreams and visions run contrary to the Letter and the Spirit of God's word. Consequently, they are more imagination than revelation, which ultimately leads God's people away from the New Covenant model that writes His Laws (Torah) on the hearts (Jer. 31:31-33).

This is part of the end time phenomenon, where many people in the church abandon the truth of Torah and turn to esoteric fables that make them feel good:

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” (2 Timothy 4:3-4 ^{KJV})

Simply put, when God's gauge for judging truth is dismissed as having “passed away”, it leads to deception. If this heresy is not corrected among those involved, they run the risk of falling prey to the most dangerous of false prophets who perform lying signs and wonders in the name of Jesus.

Lying Signs and Wonders

Many of God's people mistakenly judge a prophet based on the accuracy of their prophecies and/or the performing of signs and wonders. Unfortunately, false prophets have always used true prophecies, as well as signs and wonders, to deceive God's people.

For example, all of Balaam's prophecies in the Bible were true. In fact, he gave the only Messianic prophecy in the entire book of Numbers (Num. 24:17). However, Balaam is considered to be a false prophet in both the Tanak (Old Testament) and the Apostolic writings of the New Testament.

But if Balaam's prophecies were all true, then why does Scripture label him to be a false prophet? It's because Balaam counseled Balak on how to get Israel to transgress God's Torah so that the curse which results from breaking the commandments would come upon them (Num. 31:16). In other words, accurate prophecies are not the acid test for determining a true prophet, but obedience to God's Laws is what separates the true from the false.

This foundational principle for identifying true verses false prophets is given through the Prophet Moses who said:

“If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,’ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.” (Deuteronomy 13:1-4 ^{NAS})

From the Hebraic perspective of Scripture, when a person knowingly disobeys God's commandments and teaches others to do so; it is the equivalent of going after other God's. This practice is also described as hating God, because “*Those who hate the LORD would pretend obedience to Him*” (Ps. 81:15 ^{KJV}; see also Ex. 20:5-6).

In other words, God is telling us that we are not to listen to a prophet who gives true prophecies and/or performs signs and wonders, but then turns around and teaches that it is alright to transgress God's Laws. That's because the precedent for determining a true prophet is not whether his prophecies come true, or by the signs and wonders he performs, but on whether or not he keeps and teaches God's commandments.

Yeshua (Jesus) uses this principle as the foundation of His discourse about false prophets in the last days:

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophecy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’” (Matthew 7:21-23 ^{NAS})

“Behold, these caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD...”
— Num. 31:16

The Greek word for “lawlessness” is “anomia” from “anomos”, and it describes those who are “not subject to the Law of Moses” (i.e. God’s Torah). Consequently, prophets who prophesy and do miracles in Jesus’ name, but then teach and preach that God’s Torah has passed away are guilty of practicing lawlessness (a.k.a. Torahlessness), which is where most of the prophets are today.

The Man of Lawlessness

In the last days, Yeshua said that false Messiahs and false prophets will use signs and wonders coupled with the preaching of a Torahless Gospel to deceive even the elect (Matt. 24:24).

This process prepares the way for the “man of lawlessness” (antichrist), “whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” Scripture goes on to say that this causes many of God’s people to fall away from the faith and succumb to a “strong delusion” and “believe what is false”, because “they did not love the knowledge of the truth” (2 Thess. 2:3-11).

In view of the fact that “Torah is Truth” (Ps. 119:142), the foundation of their delusion is based on their love for signs and wonders rather than a love for the truth of Torah. Therefore, just as it was in Yeshua’s day, much of the end time church becomes “an evil and adulterous generation [who] seeks a sign” (Matt. 12:38-41) rather than to know and love God by keeping His commandments (Ex. 20:5-6; John 14:15; 1 John 2:3; 5:3).

By not allowing God to write His Torah on their hearts, the last generation church allows their hearts to grow up in a Torahless (lawless) state. Hence, when the “man of lawlessness” comes, they are easily deceived into believing that he is the Messiah, because they are of the same Torahless heart and mind.

This is the “mystery of lawlessness (iniquity) that is already at work” (2 Thess. 2:7), but God is exposing this deception and calling the church to repent and return to the ancient paths of His Torah (Jer. 6:16).

May we all continue to write God’s Laws on our hearts, as together we prepare the way of the Lord. **TER**

“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect”

— Matt. 24:24

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“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.’”

The Spirit of Elijah

Scripture indicates that, in the last days, God is going to pour out the forerunner spirit of Elijah upon His people to prepare them for Messiah’s return. This anointing calls the Body of Messiah out of Babylon and guides them back to the ancient paths of God’s Torah. This awakening appears to be God’s final move that brings the “restoration of all things” and releases Yeshua (Jesus) to return for the bride who has made herself ready. The Elijah Report is a part of that end time voice, and we hope that you will join us.

The Elijah Report is published by Ascension Ministries and distributed to our partners worldwide. Editor and Publisher: Norm Franz; Associate Publisher: Ken Graham; Contributing Editors: Pastor Bob Hill and Pastor Mark McLellan.

The Elijah Report publishes factual information that is related to Bible prophecy and events that mark the end of the age and the return of Yeshua HaMashiach (Jesus Christ) of Nazareth. Information and opinions are designed to prepare the way of the Lord and to make ready God’s people for His return (Mal. 4:4-6; Luke 1:17).

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