

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### **The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity**

#### **III. The Latter Era Of The Divided Kingdom, 2 Kings 2:1-27:41**

##### **H. Effectively Guarding Ourselves From Deception**

###### **(2 Kings 5:20-27)**

Introduction: (To show the need . . . )

We live in a world of deception, and we need to understand how to overcome it. We illustrate as follows:

(1) On the secular stage, Alice Bailey who wrote 24 books, claimed to have done so "under the direction of a spirit guide," and one of her devoted followers was Robert Muller who won a contest in 1948 on "how to govern the world." (Brannon Howse, The Coming Religious Reich, 2015, p. 2, 5) Mr. Muller eventually became "assistant secretary general" at "the United Nations" and helped develop "The World Core Curriculum" that America and many other nations have "incorporated into their educational systems," Ibid., p. 5. Muller's system showed up in the "America 2000 program of President George H. Bush, Goals 2000 of President Bill Clinton, No Child Left Behind of President George W. Bush" and the "Common Core of President Barak Obama," Ibid., p. 5-6.

In other words, what many people do not know is that the United States' public education system has been impacted by demonic influence through a long line of various parties.

(2) In religious circles, Rick Warren, author of The Purpose Driven Life, in a forum where he met with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, has stated "that the only way a global peace could happen on planet earth in the future would be for all faiths to work together and do good together." (Ibid., Howse, p. 9 citing Roger Oakland, "Globalization: A Special Report," <http://www.understandingthetimes.org/commentary/c86.shtml>)

Thus, what many may not know, an evangelical pastor whose book has sold 30 million copies (Ibid., p. 8) violates Galatians 1:8-9 that directs believers to part company with those who hold to a false gospel.

(3) At the grassroots level, "(e)ven the most honest among" the general public "practices deception, with various studies showing that the average person lies several times a day." ("Deception," [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com))

If lying and deception is common among the general public, deception is something we all face every day.

Need: *So we ask, "If strong deception abounds in today's world, what does God want us to do to overcome it?!"*

- I. 2 Kings 5:20 records how Elisha's servant, Gehazi, became self-deceived into thinking that it was God's will that he run after the departing Naaman to acquire his reward when just the opposite was true:**
  - A. In 2 Kings 5:15-16 when Naaman tried to get Elisha to accept Naaman's reward for healing him of leprosy, Elisha's servant Gehazi would have witnessed his master take an oath in God's name not to accept the reward.
  - B. However, in 2 Kings 5:20, Gehazi himself took an oath in the Lord's name to do just the opposite of what he had witnessed his master Elisha do -- to run after Naaman and accept some of his reward!
- II. 2 Kings 5:21-27 then records how Gehazi applied his oath and how God severely punished him for it:**
  - A. When Gehazi ran after Naaman and caught up with him, he deceptively told Naaman that Elisha had just been visited by two men of the school of the prophets who were in material need, that Elisha was now requesting some of Naaman's reward to be given to Gehazi toward meeting these prophets' needs, 2 Kings 5:21-22.
  - B. Naaman was eager to help, and he urged Gehazi to take more than he had requested, and Gehazi greedily agreed, and returned to hide the reward from Elisha before returning to his master, 2 Kings 5:23-25a.
  - C. Nevertheless, God had informed Elisha of Gehazi's actions, so when Elisha confronted him about it, Gehazi brazenly lied, claiming he had not gone anywhere, 2 Kings 5:25b.
  - D. Elisha then revealed how God had shown him that Gehazi had desired to acquire an expansive estate with the reward Naaman offered, what violated God's will under the circumstances so that Gehazi and his descendants would be plagued with the very leprosy that had infected Naaman, 2 Kings 5:26-27.
- III. However, NOTING the CIRCUMSTANCES of Gehazi's SELF-DECEPTION in his going from hearing Elisha take an oath in God's name to reject Naaman's reward to himself taking an oath in God's name to do just the opposite, we note how Gehazi COULD have AVOIDED his self-deception (as follows):**
  - A. Gehazi could have avoided self-deception by following his spiritual overseer and example, 2 Kings 5:20, 16:
    1. 2 Kings 5:20 repeatedly emphasizes the fact that Elisha was Gehazi's spiritual overseer and example:
      - a. Gehazi's name and title as "servant of Elisha" and Elisha's name and title as "the man of God" are used in close proximity to one another in the same verse to emphasize Elisha's spiritual headship over Gehazi.
      - b. Gehazi also calls Elisha "my master" in 2 Kings 5:20, further emphasizing Elisha's headship over him.

2. Accordingly, Gehazi was responsible as the spiritual subordinate to Elisha to *follow* his **master's example** not to receive Naaman's reward, what would have avoided Gehazi's later self-deception and sin!
- B. Gehazi could have avoided self-deception by heeding Elisha's reasons for refusing Naaman's reward, v. 16:
  1. Gehazi was required to follow his master Elisha's lead in glorifying God as the Master of them both:
    - a. Elisha's oath in God's name to refuse Naaman's reward had been prefaced by his remark that he "stood before" the Lord, referring to his standing before his Superior, his Master, the Lord God of Israel.
    - b. Gehazi should thus have realized that if his master Elisha was subject to God as God's servant, then Gehazi was also subject to God, that to obey God, he should refuse Naaman's reward like Elisha had done!
  2. Gehazi should have heeded Elisha's concern that God and not Elisha receive the glory for healing Naaman:
    - a. Elisha's refusal to take Naaman's reward arose from his desire that his Lord be honored for the healing.
    - b. Gehazi should have thus realized that he along with Elisha was responsible to honor God before Naaman by refusing the reward lest receiving Naaman's reward detract from God's glory in Naaman's viewpoint!
- C. Third, Gehazi could have avoided self-deception by obeying Scripture on heeding a true prophet like Elisha:
  1. Deuteronomy 18:18-19 told Israel's people to heed the words of His prophets in accountability to the Lord.
  2. To discern who was a true from a false prophet, Deuteronomy 18:20-22 revealed that true prophets had a perfect track record on their predictions where false prophets would fail to have a perfect record.
  3. Since Elisha had a perfect track record as a prophet, God via Deuteronomy 18:18-22 held Gehazi directly responsible to align his words and actions with Elisha's words and actions in refusing Naaman's reward!

***Lesson:*** By (1) not following Elisha, his spiritual overseer and example, by (2) not heeding Elisha's reasons for refusing Naaman's reward and by (3) not heeding Scripture regarding a credible prophet like Elisha, Gehazi deceived himself into taking some of Naaman's reward, resulting in the Lord's severely punishing him.

***Application:*** (1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we guard ourselves from being deceived (a) by following the lead of our spiritual overseers and examples, (b) by paying attention to their reasons for the stands they take and (c) by heeding Scripture on all matters. (d) May we [in the dispensation of the Church era] also by faith rely on the discernment-providing Holy Spirit for discernment as is taught in 1 John 2:20, 27.

**Conclusion:** (To illustrate the message . . . )

Many of us have attended religious services where the presiding minister has led those present to say the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father") and often also the Ave Maria ("Hail Mary") prayer to Mary, but even many evangelicals do not discern that Scripture and the will of God greatly oppose both prayers used this way! We explain (as follows):

(1) When Jesus gave the Lord's Prayer to His disciples in Matthew 6:9-13, He prefaced it by telling His disciples **NOT** to pray using "meaningless repetition" like the pagans who thought they would be heard "for their many words," Matthew 6:7 NASV. Nevertheless, in violation of Jesus' preface, the Lord's Prayer itself has often been made to become a "meaningless repetition" as ministers direct people to say it as a ritual in many a religious service!

(2) The Ave Maria was formed by the Roman Catholic Church out of the Creed of Chalcedon that was made in 431 A. D. The ancient Church was then rightfully countering the Nestorian heresy that claimed Jesus was two persons and not the Biblical view that He is one Person with two natures, one human and the other divine. The Creed of Chalcedon was thus authored to assert that Jesus was "(b)orn of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God **according to the manhood.**" (Lorraine Boettner, Roman Catholicism, 1978, p. 133-134)

However, in forming its Ave Maria, the Roman Catholic Church **omitted** the "according to the manhood" phrase to claim that Mary is "Mother of God" and add that she is "full of grace" to promote hyperdulia, the worship of Mary, Ibid. This was a theological disaster: to address Mary in prayer as "Mother of God" and not qualify that term is to pray to the goddess Mary and make Jesus' deity begin when the goddess Mary conceived Him as in polytheism!

**Scripture** clarifies the truth: (a) John 1:14 ESV states: "(T)he **Word** [i.e., **God**; John 1:1] **became flesh** and dwelt among us, and we have seen **his** [one Person] glory . . . as of the **only Son** of the **Father, full of grace and truth.**" We thus overcome deception to (i) improve the Creed of Chalcedon's stand against the Nestorian heresy by suggesting that it read "Mother of **One Who is both God and man,**" (ii) to counter the "Mother of God" term in a prayer, (iii) to counter the Ave Maria claim that **Mary** is the one who is "full of grace" by asserting it is **JESUS** Who is "full of grace and truth" and (iv) to counter hyperdulia. (b) In addition, 1 Timothy 2:5 claims there is **one** Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, **not** Christ Jesus **and Mary**, so we oppose the use of Ave Maria prayer!

**May we trust in Christ for salvation. May we overcome deception by following proven overseers and examples, by paying heed to their reasons for their stands and by heeding Scripture as our final authority.**