

# Who has bewitched you

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## **Seducing spirits and doctrines of demons**

**1Ti 4:1** – ‘But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful (seducing) spirits and doctrines of demons.’

It is astonishing to consider that in the latter days the church community is going to have to deal with seducing spirits and doctrines of demons coming to influence what we believe and think about God. Obviously they won't present themselves as seducing spirits bringing doctrines of demons but, like Satan, will present themselves in a favourable light. They will especially appeal to our sensuality, that is, what appeals to and feels good to the flesh. Paul warned the Corinthian church in 2Co 11:13-15 concerning this danger to the faith. ‘For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles (messengers, sent ones) of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose ends will be according to their works.’

Both the apostle Peter and Jude warned the church, scattered abroad, of the influence of false prophets and false teachers, who would come speaking a false gospel that appealed to the sensuality of their hearers and even denying the Lordship of Christ.

**2Pe 2:18** – ‘For speaking out arrogant words of vanity (great swelling words of emptiness) they entice (allure) by fleshly desires, by sensuality.’

**2Pe 2:2-3** – ‘Many will follow their sensuality and because of them the way of the truth (The blood sprinkled way of Christ's offering and suffering journey) will be maligned; and in their greed they will exploit you with false words.’

**Jud 1:4** – ‘For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of God into licentiousness (lewdness, debauchery, sensuality, sexually immoral) and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.’

We also see the dynamic of false teachers at work in Paul's address to the Galatian church where he refers to them as being ‘bewitched’.

## **What does it mean to be bewitched?**

Twice the word ‘bewitched’ is mentioned in the New Testament. The first is in Galatians and the second is in the Book of Acts.

**Gal 3:1** – ‘You foolish Galatians who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?’

'Bewitched' (*baiskaino*)- Primarily, 'to slander, to prate about anyone' then 'to bring evil on a person by feigned praise, or mislead by an evil eye, and so to charm, bewitch' (English word 'fascinate' is connected), is used figuratively in Gal 3:1, of leading into evil doctrine.' (Vines Expos Dict)

One translation says concerning Gal 3:1, 'O foolish Galatians! Who has been fascinating you.'

**Acts 8:9-11** – 'But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished (bewitched) the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." And they heeded him because he had astonished (bewitched) them with his sorceries for a long time.'

'Bewitched' – (*existemi*) – Is rendered 'bewitch'. It does not mean 'to bewitch' as in the case of the preceding verb, but 'to confuse, or amaze'. (Vines Expos Dict.) SC 1839 says 'to be amazed out of one's senses'.

### **A case study from life**

Many years ago a young lady was about to be married to a man who had formerly left the church, and had now returned. On the surface he appeared to be making all the right responses. Although pastorally wanting to see this man established in the faith and believing the best for him, deep down I felt there was something shallow concerning the reality of his own relationship with the Lord and their relationship as a couple. As the relationship developed my reservations concerning the motivations of the relationship would not go away. I grew more worried for their future, especially for the young lady, as I felt she was being charmed by this man. A fortnight out from the wedding I had opportunity to talk to the young lady and, amongst other things asked her, are you sure about your choice and had she noticed that there were some alarming gaps in his character and maturity. I especially drew her attention to a lack of substance in the man's character that, I believed, would impact upon the marriage. Although recognising certain shortcomings, she assured me that she loved this man and wanted to marry him. His charm made her deaf to wise counsel and blind to the truth of who he really was. After they married it wasn't long before cracks began to appear in their relationship. And then after one year had transpired the young lady came around to see us in a distressed state, informing us that her husband had been unfaithful to her. On one hand this was very upsetting but on the other hand I was not surprised. With encouragement from those who pastorally cared for her, the young lady sought to see the marriage recovered, but within six months she discovered her husband was again unfaithful to her and that was the end of their marriage. Sadly her resultant shame and disappointment caused her to walk away from the fellowship of the Lord. After the second indiscretion she confided in me that the concerns I had expressed prior to her being married were indeed true, but even despite that, she would have still gone ahead with the marriage because, and I quote in her own words, 'I was fascinated and infatuated by him.' Although she didn't realise it at the time, in being fascinated by him she allowed

herself to be mesmerised by his charm and thus bewitched by him. This story could be told a million times over by many men and women.

But it does beg the question, 'What was the void in her that made her so vulnerable and gave opportunity for her to be charmed by someone and something that was unclean?' If we are not choosing the sanctification of our sonship as the will of God each day then Satan will quickly take advantage and fill the void with his lie.

### **Satan bewitched Eve with His charm offensive**

We recall, that when Satan came and seduced Eve with his twisted gospel, he did so as one who transformed himself into a fiery serpent or seraphim. He made himself to look like and speak like someone he was not. He appeared as one sent from God with a light and knowledge. Feigning praise upon her, he suggested her life would be 'like God' if she partook of the tree that Yahweh Elohim had told them not to eat of. Gen 3:1-6. Now in one sense that's not a bad proposition to consider; 'to be like God' is a good thing is it not? But this was the great con, the great lie! That Eve could have God's life apart from fellowship with Yahweh Elohim at the tree of life. Satan bewitched Eve with his 'charm offensive'. Charmed by Satan's lie and having tasted the fruit of his conversation, Eve then seduced her husband Adam to partake also, thus receiving self-verification of her choice. As a consequence, Adam and Eve were no longer able to meet, person to person, as two sons of God according to their sanctification, at the tree of life.

As a point of application, many relationships are based on the mutual attraction or charm of sex-appeal. If that relationship is not resolved to meeting as two sons of God at the tree of life then once the sex appeal fades all you have left is old age bickering. We have to realise that as Satan charmed Adam and Eve he has also charmed us. But, thank the Lord, He is ministering a word of present truth that is healing us from every contention, if we have an ear to hear.

We note that Satan has not changed his methodology. He is still continuing to transform himself as an angel of light by deviously pulling the wool over people's eyes and blinding them to their sanctification and participation with the Lord at the tree of life. He is still bewitching people. 2Co 4:3-4.

### **The bewitching of the church at Corinth by false messengers**

The apostle Paul is at pains to convince the church at Corinth that this is indeed the very thing that was happening in their midst. First of all, though, Paul points out to them the true goal of his ministry. 'For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.' 2Co 11:2. He then goes on to say;

**2Co 11:3** – 'But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived (beguiled) Eve by his craftiness (subtlety, cunning), your minds will be led astray (corrupted) from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.'

In this verse Paul explains how Satan came to Eve with a crafted word that was cleverly and skilfully constructed. In his presentation to Eve, Satan began to split hairs by making fine distinctions over what God had said and who said it. Notably, Satan subtly sought to create in Eve the idea that the Godhead could act independently of each other. He did this by the power of suggestion, noting that his suggestion was a blatant lie. This point is well made in the notes 'Restoration to the tree of life' by Victor Hall and I quote, 'The Devil said to Eve, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' Gen 3:4-5. As we have previously considered, it was not *Elohim* who said that they shall not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was *Yahweh Elohim* who said that. Gen 2:16-17. Satan falsely declared that the Father's creative initiative was the expression of His own identity and life, apart from the fellowship of Yahweh. Moreover, he denied that the fellowship of headship was the order of life through which Adam and Eve had their expression.'

A critical point to consider is, what was the void in Eve that allowed Satan to entice and take advantage of her in the manner that he did? I believe a key point, and the Holy Spirit has been purposely drawing our attention to this in recent times and that is, we must choose the sanctification of our sonship each day. Apparently Eve did not choose her sonship and therefore her role as a helper to Adam. As a consequence she was spell bound by Satan's alternative conversation. She was bewitched by the wisdom from beneath and lured into eating at the table of demons. Jam 3:14-17.

We also know that Adam did not choose the sanctification of his sonship and as a result failed to guard the garden and his house from this devilish intruder. Gen 2:15 records 'And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and guard and keep it.' (Amp). In allowing the enemy to break into his house Adam was wilfully disobedient to the word God had spoken to him.

Earlier Paul had written to the Corinthians in his first letter concerning their fellowship at the agape meal.

**1Co 10:20-21** – 'I do not want you to have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table (the agape meal at the tree of life) and of the table of demons.'

Like Eve, the Corinthian church was unwittingly coming under the spell or the hypnotic effect of the false teachers, who like Satan, had transformed themselves into messengers of light but in fact were teaching a lie. Our minds become corrupted when we begin to think and believe something other than what the Lord believes for our lives. Because the church at Corinth began to bear beautifully with and give ear to the false apostles, they began to receive another Jesus, a different spirit and a different gospel.

**2Co 11:4** – 'For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.'

## **The issue of sorcery in our modern world**

There are two words in the New Testament that explain the nature of sorcery.

*'Magos' or 'Mageia'* – Primarily refers to the powers of magic, a magician. We note that magic is witchcraft and trickery.

*'Pharmakia'* – SC 5331- 'witchcraft, magic, the use of spells and potions of magic, often involving drugs.

Vines Expos Dict. - English word pharmacy. It primarily signified 'the use of medicine, drugs, spells'; then, 'poisoning' then, 'sorcery', mentioned as one of the works of the flesh. In sorcery, the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers, with the provision of various charms, amulets, etc., professedly designed to keep the applicant or patient from the attention and power of demons, but actually to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer.

There are a lot of alternative medical and health therapies that, at their heart, are nothing more than magic and sorcery. Many are based in occult practices. They play on the quest of people to find an answer to issues whose underlying root is primarily spiritual. At best they may provide a temporary band aid. Some years ago a Christian lady began work in the office for an alternative health practitioner and was asked to mix certain potions together and in the process chant over them. This chanting over them was supposed to cause unclean or evil spirits to depart from those that received the potions. Thinking this rather strange and then after coming to talk with us, she resigned from her job. There is a cost to following the Lord.

## **The sorcery of fortune and destiny (fate)**

Many in Christendom eat and drink at tables of their own devising, serving the idolatrous pursuits of their own religious dreams and delusions. The prophet Isaiah addresses this issue of sorcery when he says;

**Isa 65:11** - 'But you who forsake the Lord, who forget My holy mountain (the city set on a hill – the bride city), who set a table for Fortune, and who fill cups with mixed wine for Destiny (fate or luck).'

Fortune (Gad) and Destiny (Meni) were pagan deities. Fortune and Destiny is a gospel of signs and wonders, of following your dreams. This gospel is widely accepted and preached in the Evangelical/Pentecostal Christian community. It fosters the belief that you can be whatever you want to be, in other words, follow your dreams. It is opposed to the way of the cross and the gospel of sonship which sanctifies you to who the Father has named you to be. Isaiah goes on to paint a striking contrast between the culture of the Lord's table and the idolatrous tables of Fortune and Destiny that those who forsake the way of the cross dine at.

**Isa 65:12-15** – 'I will destine you for the sword, and all of you will bow down to the slaughter. Because I called but you did not answer; I spoke, but you did not hear. And you

did evil in my sight and chose that in which I did not delight. Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, My servants will eat, but you (who eat and drink of Fortune and Destiny) will be hungry. Behold, My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty. Behold, My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame. Behold, My servants will shout joyfully with a glad heart, but you will cry out with a heavy heart and you will wail with a broken spirit. You will leave your name for a curse to My chosen ones, and the Lord will slay you. But My servants will be called by another name.'

### **The fear of the Lord keeps us from being charmed**

**Pro 31:30** – 'Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.'

The most telling description of the virtuous or worthy woman who is also prophetic of the bride city, is that she is a woman who fears the Lord. The fear of the Lord is her culture and thus the antidote to being charmed. The man or woman who fears the Lord delights in keeping the commandments of the Lord. This is how they praise the Lord. Ps 112:1 says, 'Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments.'

They are not charmed by another conversation that is alienated from fellowship at the tree of life. This is clearly evident with the worthy woman when the wise man further writes concerning the fruit of her life. 'Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.' Pro 31:31. Her fruit is her fellowship in the gates where she is fully known by the presbytery.

### **The love of the truth will save us from being bewitched by Satan's delusion**

**2Th 2:9-12** – 'The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, and that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.'

Only as we believe and receive 'the love of the truth' and respond with a 'love for the truth' will we be saved from the bewitching work of Satan upon the whole world. The 'love of the truth' will cause us to be sanctified by the Holy Spirit to our sonship as ones participating in the agape meal at the tree of life.