

EARNESTLY CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH –Aug. 2024

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In recent days, many in the press have said they are incensed over having been deceived by the current administration over the apparent cover-up of the President's obvious ill-health, as clearly revealed in his recent horrendous debate performance. They claim to be very offended by such a scripted level of deceit. Sadly one wonders if this is mostly feigned outrage because it has been so obvious for quite some time for anyone with any discernment. However there is such a thing as being self-deceived because one wants to believe the lie that is told.

- Eve found the serpent more trustworthy than God, not because of its credentials, but because the serpent said what Eve wanted to hear. – (Unknown Author)

The devil is VERY GOOD at what he does. And what he does very effectively is DECEIVE PEOPLE.

Revelation 12:9 (NKJV)

9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (emphasis mine)

But one reason the devil is so successful is that people prefer a LIE to the TRUTH. The devil enamored himself in glory with the idea that he could take over God's position. Talk about a wrong calculation! That is where pride will take you! The original sin was PRIDE and it was rooted in SELF-DECEPTION. He believed the lie because he wanted to believe the lie. And what was the result? Jesus said: "***I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.***" (Lk. 10:18)

Satan not only deceived himself but ever thereafter, he has been on a mission to deceive everyone else. And he has been quite successful. He was able to deceive one-third of the angels into following him (cf. Rev. 12:4) and then to effectively deceive the entire world of mankind (Rev. 12:9). Jesus defined him as "a liar and the father of it" (Jn. 8:44).

Deception is a terrible thing that often causes irreparable harm! When Satan will be brought down to the lowest PIT, those whom he joins there will look on him with amazement.

Isaiah 14:15–17 (NKJV)

15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.

16 "Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms,

17 Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'

In HELL Satan will be exposed as the nothing that he is! Those in hell whom he deceived will be shocked and amazed at his state of humiliation and lack of power. In his puniness, they will wonder how this creature could have brought such havoc upon the whole world! Deception is an awfully powerful thing to which depravity is most vulnerable. We are prone to believe our own lies (self-deception), we are prone to believe the devil's lies, and we are prone to believe the world's lies. And the reason for this is because, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). At the Second Coming, Jesus will bring judgment upon the unbelieving world because, "they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2:10). John 3:19 says, "this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light".

Abraham Lincoln famously said, "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time." I would add, you can't fool God at any time and the day of accountability is coming!

Thot: Deception has speed, but TRUTH has endurance!

Earnestly Contending, Pastor Dwight J. Oswald