

## Beware

*Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves (Matt. 7:15).*

How many times have you heard the statement, “Buyers beware”? Warnings are given about the internet and how the thief will use various means to rob you of your identity, and/or wealth: regardless of how small or large it may be. There is a new danger associated the AI (artificial intelligence). The use of AI is evident if you spend any time in a browser, i.e., when you use a search engine one day the next time you open the browser you are likely to find articles, and/or a sales pitch to buy whatever product you had searched out the previous day. Commercials that warn against AI are prevalent, i.e., companies that that encrypt your data to track where you live, and where you spend your internet time. Phishing emails that “look legitimate,” i.e., coming from some trusted source (maybe your neighbor), that encourages you to “click the link below” to report some fraudulent transaction: only to find out the “link below” will connect you with a fraudulent transaction and ask for your email, login, or password information. It does not matter how often companies will warn their customers to “beware” of fraudulent emails, or websites that claim to have implanted malware on your computer and the only way to avoid losing all of your data is to “click the link below” or “call customer service” before it is too late and individuals panic and either “click the link” or “call customer service” and freely give sensitive information to a thief.

Let’s put this in a spiritual perspective: Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets.” The very warning indicates that false prophets exist, i.e., “Jehovah said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name; I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake I unto them: they prophesy unto you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own heart (Jer. 14:14). The sad part of it all is, as Jehovah said, “Jer. 5:30-31 - A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof? (Jer. 5:30-31): “my people love to have it so”!

Think about it: “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

How to apply “beware”: “Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of the mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). ret