

Matthew 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Analysis

False prophets appear harmless (sheep's clothing) but are destructive (ravering wolves). They infiltrate the flock, speaking pleasant lies rather than hard truth. Jesus warns vigilance—not everyone who claims to speak for God actually does. Test the teachers; examine their fruit.

Historical Context

Israel's history included many false prophets who told people what they wanted to hear (Jeremiah 23). The early church faced false teachers promoting legalism (Judaizers) and libertinism (Gnostics). Every age faces wolves in sheep's clothing.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What false teachings are popular today that sound good but contradict biblical truth?
2. How can you develop discernment to recognize false teachers while remaining humble and teachable?

Interlinear Text

Προσέχετε δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ψευδοπροφητῶν οἵτινες

G4337

Beware

of

G3588

false prophets

which

G3748

ἔρχονται πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐν ἐνδύμασιν προβάτων ἔσωθεν

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δὲ εἰσιν λύκοι ἄρπαγες

Beware they are wolves ravening

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Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:1 (Prophecy): Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Matthew 24:11 (Prophecy): And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Colossians 2:8 (Parallel theme): Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Revelation 19:20 (Prophecy): And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Jude 1:4 (Parallel theme): For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Micah 3:11 (Prophecy): The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.

2 Peter 3:17 (Parallel theme): Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.

Luke 6:26 (Prophecy): Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

2 Timothy 3:13 (Parallel theme): But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Ephesians 4:14 (Parallel theme): That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;