

How to Avoid Deception

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During a visit with Great-Uncle Grover years ago, our two young boys wanted to go outside and play. Uncle Grover said to them, “Be careful—there are a lot of skunks out there.” The boys soon went outside to play.

On our way home, I asked, “Did you see a skunk?” One of them replied, “No, we didn’t see any skunks, but we did see a black kitty cat with a white stripe on its back!”

The boys were unaware that they had seen a skunk. This is a story of mistaken identity—presuming the real thing to be something else. Many today grapple with this same issue on a much larger scale.

Satan, the father of lies and the great deceiver, would have us question things as they really are and either ignore eternal truths or replace them with something that appears more pleasing. He has spent millennia practicing the ability to persuade God’s children to believe that good is evil and evil is good.

The Lord has provided a way for us to resist challenges and temptations, many of which come as a direct result of the deceitful influences of the adversary and his attacks.

The way is simple. God communed with prophets in past ages and gave them commandments designed to lead His children to happiness in this life and glory in the next. God continues to give commandments to our living prophet today.

Obedience to commandments given to our prophet is a key not only in avoiding the influence of the deceiver but also in experiencing lasting joy and happiness.

However, the adversary seeks to trick you. He disguises the destructive consequences of illicit drugs or drinking and instead suggests that it will bring pleasure. He immerses us in the various negative elements that can exist in social media, including debilitating comparisons and idealized reality. In addition, he camouflages other dark, harmful content found online—such as pornography, blatant attacks on others through cyberbullying, and misinformation to cause doubt and fear in our hearts and minds.

May we recognize Satan’s deceptions for what they are. We must continue to be faithful and vigilant, for so is the only way to discern truth and to hear the voice of the Lord through His servants. As we obey the Lord’s commandments, we will always be led in the right way and will not be deceived. **NE**