

How to Protect Ourselves From Satan's Snares

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To some people he is just a comic figure, with two horns, tail and cloven hooves; holding a three-pronged fork which he uses to prod people into his torture chamber. To others he is just our make-up, within our psychic just an allegory to explain the way we behave to each other. Other groups think of Satan as nothing more than a superstition - just a bare relic from a past age; having no meaning in a technological world that we know today.

Satan has successfully achieved to convince most of mankind not to be concerned about him, thus logically he can move freely because he is **not** recognised within the environment – basically our defences are down and thus vulnerable to his machinations!

The Bible says:

He is a roaring lion, seeking to devour us.

Clearly it suits Satan to be portrayed as a non-existing entity or just a shadowy figure that people do not have to worry about! Thus restating, if he remains like this, then people cannot protect themselves against this entity because they mistakenly believe there is nothing to be fearful of!

1John 5v19 And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness.

The world does not realise that Satan is behind the things that they do!

During the temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness, Jesus did not say:-

1. Must get this idea out of my mind.
2. Just laugh it off.
3. Pretend it didn't happen.

Jesus said: 'Get behind me Satan!'

Satan was originally a perfect entity created by Almighty God who then wished to usurp God's rightful position.

James 1v15 When the lust has conceived sin, the sin grows and develops; and sin, when it is finished, it brings death. Satan believed that he should be in charge - everything should rightly be his! Hence he tried to make himself superior and the best way was to work on God's most superior Earthly creation - man. Satan thus challenged God's way of ruling.

Satan must have known that he had a beginning, but his audacity was to think that he was God. He had to have something, a thinking entity that thought that Satan was god and that entity had to be man on this planet!

Gen. 3v1-5 He said to the woman, Has God said you shall not eat of every tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the garden, but the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat it, nor touch it otherwise you may die. The serpent (actually Satan) said to the woman, You will not die; for God knows that in the day you eat it, then your eyes will be opened and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

Satan amongst other things is suggesting that God knows he is holding back something from you, hence God is wrong and corrupt because he is holding something back.

The original text suggests that Satan is offering Eve the position of a goddess!

We see that Satan was not motivated by love, but a desire to raise his own position (mankind looking up to Satan as their god) through his own pride.

We read in the book of Job.

Satan suggests to God that the real reason Job serves God is because he gets something out of it, in this case it is wealth, take it away and he will reject you.

When this fails and Job does not reject God, Satan then suggests it is because he is not hurt, that is why he worships God.

Satan is always trying to suggest that the only reason why a man or woman worships God is because they are coerced into doing it!

In reality this is far from the case this is why Satan is allowed his reign at the moment - to prove that this is not true!

HOWEVER:-

What did Satan do?

He did the very opposite. Not only is he a liar as the Bible says but he also is a hypocrite!

He actually bribed Eve into believing and hence worshipping his position over that of Almighty God!

I, Satan offer you something now to enhance your position and standing. God's ways are that we are to prove ourselves worthy and hence responsible enough to take on the privileges that we are given.

1Pet. 5v8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil is like a roaring lion, that walks about, seeking any person he may devour.

To be sober, means, "keep your senses", and vigilant, means being watchful. To put these in the Bible must mean that it is to our advantage if we stick to this advice! We must not breach our integrity; we must resist Satan's challenges.

What does Satan throw at us?

The Bible uses the word snare.

What is a snare?

A snare is an animal trap. It normally is a loop of wire that is not hung about randomly in the open, but is used with care and put in the path of animal runs.

Hence these snares of Satan are going to be placed where we are normally every day.

They will be small and hidden unless we know what to look for!

They will not be obvious (eg like perhaps take a stand of neutrality in national issues or killing people), but much smaller everyday issues.

2Tim 3v1-5 Know also this; that the last days will become perilous. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, without self control, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: From such people turn away!

We are living in the last days!

How do we know that?

Take the last example 'Lovers of Pleasure'.

What is the greatest growth industry?

It is 'The Pleasure Industry'; while many other industries die this one flourishes in all countries that are taking on Capitalism as their goal (even if short of money they will still throw money into growing numbers of lotteries in that vain hope to satisfy a future self-indulgence). When people are short of money they spend what they do have on leisure, for their daily needs they borrow!

Any coup that gains power in a country, will automatically take over the radio and television stations - because they want to have power over peoples' minds and thoughts. Clearly this is precisely what Satan will and has done!

Satan will want control over these instruments. It will not be blatant, but hidden. We will identify how this is done!

We are attacked morally.

It is the mind and the way we behave which is under direct attack, to throw us away from worshiping Almighty God in our thoughts and actions.

This may be through immorality, violence or just the break-up of the family by people wanting their freedom, all these actions are by people wanting to **selfishly** do what they want!

Now apply this freedom of action to what we see on the media today. All that is written above, we have come to accept this as the standard behaviour of mankind. We see this in films and soap operas.

In fact it appears that more filth and violence is required to sell a product (film).

It seems that people want to be crude and rude!

If we said that we liked to watch Val Donigan singing decent songs in a rocking chair, then you would be considered weird!

Why?

Just because you liked something with morals, good lyrics and music?

Why is a shirt and tie considered as something of derision?

Why should people think that is wrong but someone who wears a 'T'-shirt having printed on it, a skull having a knife in it and blood running out of it as an acceptable, if not progressive way of life?

A shoddy way of life is now considered right and acceptable, while a decent way of life is considered strange and wrong!

Soap operas suggest that it is right to be immoral, and the audience just copies the documented falling standards.

It is said that money has pulled down all sports that have huge cash prizes given to the 'winners' (players). It is recognised that the standards of the players has fallen, and so to the audience particularly some of those who attend football matches.

Satan uses these as numerous snares in which to capture people. People find this way of life pleasurable.

Hence what people considered immoral 40 years ago is now considered acceptable now.

This proposition is argued against by people suggesting that it went on under cover then - but is now open. This is a gross distortion of the truth; only a few people did it then but now it is acceptable for every person to do it now. This again shows how the standards have slipped downwards over the years.

Those people who watch such type of entertainment. How committed are you to them? Do you feel that you must not miss a minute; do you stay up to the early hours of the morning to view the whole game?

This will interfere with your normal life, and consequently it is becoming your god!

You are worshiping it by putting it higher up in your priorities than you should do. Basically anything that takes excess time out of your life or more time than you spend acknowledging Yahweh's Desire in your thoughts and actions is wrong!

Many apostates to the Christian Religion in the past just drifted away from The Truth but now they positively seem to attack it – but with an 'enlightened understanding' (which is clearly worldly sourced by Satan).

This operates at two levels:

1. Many iniquitous Christian Leaders will state:-

The Bible was only relevant in the times it was written – and not today!

The Bible cannot be trusted in 'some places'.

The Bible only means what they understand it to mean to fulfil their self-indulgencies.

etc – many more examples could be given where they distort The Truth.

2. Sow in confusion between different Christian groupings (most of whom are worldly).

Twist God's Word to construe something against a grouping that may be working hard to fulfil Yahweh's

Desire – which is precisely what the religious leaders said against Jesus, He was an evil Doer, drunkard, etc!

They will take a religious grouping and suggest that if that grouping does one thing in one country and does not do it in another then they are false. Clearly this is a distortion, because you must understand what The Bible says is different to what secular authorities may state as being correct. Clearly one does not deliberately go out against the earthly authorities, in fact The Bible clearly says in many places that you should not rebel against worldly authorities, but also we must not go against God's Word.

God's Word always comes first!

Things must not be distorted. Normally these people will throw secular differences at the groupings, remember, the myriads of secular rules are not in The Bible, so whether one set of rules or another should be followed is immaterial! We must learn to differentiate between a minor matter and a major matter – just as Jesus accused the Pharisees for showing great importance to “the dill but ignoring things that affect Life and Death” (*being the requirement to imitate Jesus' lifestyle*).

We all must consider things and be prepared to adjust our thinking so that it is in line with correct understanding - tested against The Bible. By learning Biblical principals enables us to know how we should behave on these earthly matters. Jesus tells us this: 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.'

Some religions make dictums suggesting that the religion rests on this 'correct' infallible fact (of their doctrine).

Only one Entity can do things like that and that One would be The Almighty God.

Clearly humans that take these positions within these religions become hooked and cannot get off.

Suggesting that the doctrine is infallible gets you both ways!

You cannot relax it if it is wrong; and you are in a restraining jacket if it is wrong!

Prov. 29v25 The fear of man brings a snare, but those who put his trust in The Almighty God shall be safe.

Looking at the word “**Protect**” which is in the title - What does this mean?

“Protect” means:- To cover, to shield or safely guarded from harm.

Eph. 6v11,14-18 Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Stand therefore, having your loins girded with truth, and having the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the equipment of the gospel of peace; Above all, take the shield of faith, with which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and carefully watching with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

Clearly Paul was thinking about the Roman soldiers when he was writing this passage. The Roman army was a most incredible fighting machine at that time in history. Not just the huge siege machines (catapult, etc) but due to the discipline of well trained and well equipped men.

The leather and metal studded belt.

This was worn about the middle. It was wide so that it would provide back support for any special effort required. It had studs on to provide additional defence against glancing blows.

The truth is like this belt. Particularly so when apostates attack with distorted 'truths'. You have to know what is right and what is wrong!

The breast-plate.

This was normally made of chain mail linked with leather and plates over the top to protect the body.

Prov. 4v23 Above all diligently look after your heart (*represents "zeal, passion, drive, motivation" – but that can be in the wrong direction – thus we must guard it else we will be 'shooting off' in the wrong direction*), for from it are the sources of life.

Clearly we must safe guard our heart, because we must protect our life form things like heavy drinking, excessive eating or other immoral lures that may go to the heart. We must aim for Jesus' New Kingdom in all our actions.

The sandals.

These were made from the best quality leather with long straps that could be wrapped around our legs to keep the sandals in place. Clearly our ministry should be like that. We must be able to keep going without having to stop, because of sores on our feet. We should neither be in the position were we are likely to be tripped up in what we preach! When the going gets tough we have to learn to be tactful but not stop.

The large shield of faith.

The large shield was not like the small round barbarians shields. You could stand behind these Roman shields and they would protect you from many flights of arrows as they came towards you. They would not touch you! One of the methods of attack used by the Romans was called the tortoise. It meant covering sides and top with shields as this solid team of solders moved forward.

Clearly we can have a shield of 'faith' that is any size! (See Glossary under "Faith").

It will not be the size that the quartermaster issues but the **very size that YOU make it**. We form and make the size of our shield of faith/fidelity/assurance. Study God's way by reading The Bible, learn to know his way, only we know how strong that faith is and Satan will occasionally attack it so that he may find out how strong it really is.

The text mentions the burning missiles. These are special wads dipped in napher and set alight. These are particularly disabling. Not only do they hurt if they hit you, but napher will produce continuing burning as it slowly works it way under the skin. This will be similar to the verbal abuse or the bitter sarcastic words, particularly if it is from a person who you thought was your friend! These remarks are like fire that burns within our skin, they keep hurting us as we think about it. So it is very important to use our big shields to protect ourselves from this type of attack. Protect ourselves, don't actually let them hit us; let us deflect these missiles before they get to us by using our large shield of faith!

The helmet.

The helmet goes over our head to protect our mind. It is to protect our mind from worry. We should not have to worry, because we will be saved from our foes and saved at the end of this age. Worry can attack the very reasoning of our mind, this we must guard against.

The sword.

The sword is the Spirit of God's word. The sword of the Romans was very different to that of the Barbarians. The barbarian sword was very long and unwieldy. It was called a broad sword, often requiring two hands to use it. It certainly could do much damage, if it could get in; but if it missed then the opponent with a smaller and nimble sword would be able to be more effective. This is the case with the Roman sword. It was much shorter. It had a good point on the end and very sharp on both edges, so that it could pierce easily and then cut sideways in the wound very effectively. We must use the Word of God like this. Don't use it like the broad sword, with one large swing, which if you miss you would then be in trouble. Know the Word of God like the short, sharp sword so that you may cut and thrust quickly in battles!

Often it is required to root out entrenched positions, this cannot be done from afar. Often this means getting in close with a small but very effective sword, used in hand to hand combat with the other armoury on your person.

Keep the skills up with practice!

Prayerful to Almighty God.

This is another avenue for protection from Satan. God will always protect a prize-fighter willing to fight according to God's will. If there are more battles required in the future, he will ensure that he has many good fighters leading his army!

The fruits of the Spirit help us to combat the snares of Satan. Hence we will not be trapped! Satan's aim is to break our resolve in testifying and serving Almighty God here on earth. Satan will not succeed, because we must, and will keep our spiritual armour in top condition by working hard. We know that if we practice this then God will assist us in using this spiritual armour to protect ourselves from Satan's snares.