

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA

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Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will begin with Paul's concern for his brethren in Corinth. He wrote: **"I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ"** (2 Cor. 11:3).

We dare not underestimate our opponent. Eve was a perfect woman, with a perfect mind, in a perfect environment, and yet she was totally deceived. Remember! We need to respect Satan's "cunning" for we are never more vulnerable than when we think we cannot fall. Remember! **"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall"** (Prov. 16:18).

Just before Cain killed his brother Abel, God warned him that sin was crouching at his door with the "desire" to have him (Gen. 4:7). The Hebrew word translated as "desire" is "teshugah". It is only used three times in the Bible. Keil and Delitzsch say it is "a desire bordering on disease" and comes from a root meaning "to run, to have a violent craving". The point is, Satan has a violent craving to deceive and destroy you! Please do not underestimate Satan! I fear that Satan is more interested in you, than you are interested in him!

As an example of the "serpent's cunning" please remember how Balak, the king of Moab, cursed Israel. (See Numbers chapters 22- 25) First, Balak hired a prophet named Balaam to curse Israel. When God refused to curse Israel, Balaam cleverly taught Balak how to get the Israelites to curse themselves. Revelation 2:14 states clearly that Balaam taught Balak how to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication. The Greek word translated as "entice" is "skandalon" from which we get our English word "scandal". It refers to the trigger on a trap. This is where you place the cheese in order to kill the mouse. According to Nu. 31:15 this trap involved the Moabite women!

A wise trapper studies the victim he intends to trap. Three lures are standard (1) food (2) sex (3) curiosity. The food lure is most affective in the winter when food is scarce. The sex lure is most affective during the rutting season or monthly cycles. A trapper friend used curiosity to catch a bob cat. He merely dangling a mirror over the trap he had carefully concealed. As you can guess - "curiosity killed the cat". Balaam apparently taught Balak to use all three lures to trap the Hebrews. He knew they had been eating manna for years and were tired of it (Nu. 11:4-6). He also knew that they had been forbidden to have sex until they got married. Food and sex are powerful temptations when you are starving for both. It would also be easy to make the Hebrews curious with different food, different clothing, and different music, etc. Permit me to "guess" how Balak set his trap for Israel.

- First, he patiently waited for the right kind of weather when the wind was just right. Predators instinctively know how to use the wind to their advantage. So when the conditions were perfect these pagans barbecued the meat they sacrificed to their idols and let that delicious smell drift over to the camp of their victims.
- It is also probable that some special music was used to stimulate the curiosity of the Hebrew men and lure them to their doom.
- Then, as Balaam taught them, the Moabite women showed up reeking with perfume in their most seductive apparel.
- Pagan worship characteristically features drinking, drugs, and sexual orgies. This was a wild new experience for the men of Israel!

- The trap worked, and on a single day 24,000 Israelites died (Nu. 25:9).
- How diabolical! When God refused to curse Israel, Balaam taught Balak how to get them to curse themselves!
- Satan is also interested in tempting you so that you will destroy yourself!

My good friend, Dr. Charles Crane, told an interesting story that happened while he was ministering in Utah many years ago. A young man, 23 years old, drank alcohol for the first time. He got drunk, wrecked his car, and wandered into a stranger's house in the middle of the night to use the phone. He was promptly arrested, and the next day stared at Bro. Crane through blood shot eyes and prison bars. Instead of reading him the riot act, Bro. Charles merely grinned and said: "You know that God told you not to get drunk and now you have found out one of the many reasons why". Touche! Please remember! God is good and anything that is good for you, God wants you to do it! Anything God tells you not to do is not good for you!

Our family became friends with Dr. Wayne Bigelow when we lived in California over 60 years ago. We still stay in touch! Some 50 years ago Dr. Bigelow spoke at the Ozark Christian College on the subject: "The Road of No Regrets". I still remember his message. As a young intern he was eager to use his years of training to help people get well. Sadly, in spite of all his training and expensive equipment, his first three patients all died. One was an alcoholic who died of sclerosis of the liver. Another was a chain smoker who died of lung cancer. The third died of an incurable STD. Please note that their medical problems were self inflicted! Like the men of Israel, God didn't curse them, they cursed themselves! Obviously, they all regretted the life style they had chosen, but it was too late. That's why the good doctor appealed to the students to choose the road of no regrets!

- Eve knew what God wanted her to do, but she decided to become her own god and do what she wanted to anyhow. It was a decision she came to regret!
- The Israelites knew that God forbade them to commit fornication, but they chose to do it anyhow. It was a decision they came to regret!
- Dr. Bigelow's patients also chose to reject the rules of God and do what they wanted to do. They also came to regret their foolish decisions!
- Please choose the road with no regrets!

Nobody ever regrets giving themselves to Jesus! Nobody ever regrets doing what Jesus commands them to do! Please choose Jesus and the road with no regrets, for **"I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ"**.

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce