

BEWARE OF THE ENEMY'S SNARES

A. The Enemy Has Carefully Constructed SNARES For God's People:

1. Greek word "snare" = "trap; trick; strategy"
2. We are told to not be ignorant of satan's devices; 2 Corinthians 2:11
3. Jesus reveals the enemy's snares, and will deliver us from falling into his traps when we seek Him in prayer with a sincere, repentant heart; Ps. 91:3. However, He does not promise to spare us from trials, suffering, hardship, tribulation, afflictions or persecution. "Our soul is **escaped** as a bird out of the **snare** of the fowlers, the **snare** is broken, and we are **escaped**"; Psalm 124:7
"They also that seek after my life lay **snares** for me"; Psalm 38:12
"The wicked have laid a **snare** for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts"; Psalm 119:110

B. There Are Many Examples Of SNARES Recorded In Scripture:

1. Following the lifestyle and PRACTICES OF THE PAGANS brings snares, traps, scourges in the sides, and thorns in the eyes of God's people; Joshua 23:13; Deut. 7:1-5
2. The FEAR OF MAN brings a snare; Proverbs 29:25; Psalm 34:7, 9
3. IDOLATRY (whatever we worship apart from God) is a snare; Judges 2:3; Ps. 106:36
4. The WORDS OF OUR MOUTH can be a snare; Proverbs 6:2; James 1:26
5. BEING UNEQUALLY YOKED together with an unbeliever can be a snare; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 1 Samuel 18:20-21; Genesis 24:2-4
6. INTIMIDATION, WORRY, ANXIETY are snares that can rob us of peace, cause us to panic, immobilize us, and hinder our spiritual progression; Philippians 4:6-7
7. The Day of the Lord comes as a snare upon those who are distracted by SELF INDULGENCE and CARES OF THIS LIFE; Luke 21:34-35; 2 Peter 3:10-14
8. PRIDE and CONCEIT are a snare; Proverbs 16:18; 1 Timothy 3:6-7; 1 John 2:16
9. RICHES and the LOVE OF MONEY (covetousness) are a snare; 1 Timothy 6:9-10
10. The Lord's servant must be kind, patient and able to teach with gentleness, instructing those who have fallen into the snare of ERROR; Isaiah 9:16; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 2 Peter 3:17
 - a. The error of the Ecumenical Movement: the all-inclusive wide road that leads to destruction; it is the uniting and merging of various faiths; Matthew 7:13-14
 - b. The error, the lie of the prosperity movement: the self-indulgent spirit of Laodicea.
 - c. The deception of the "hyper-grace message", which tolerates immorality, lacks the message of repentance and cross-carrying obedience.
 - d. The error of the practice of occultism, and New Age techniques and influences within the Church: Kundalini manifestations, demonic portals, necromancy, guided imagery, etc.
 - e. The error of "Kingdom Now" and "Dominion Theology" which teaches that the church must "take over" Earth's kingdoms (7 mountains) and bring the Kingdom of God to Earth now. Jesus said that the Kingdom doesn't come with observation (in a visible manner); it is within us, and is already prepared. He will establish a literal Kingdom at His physical return; Matthew 25:34; Luke 17:20-21
 - f. The error of "Progressive Christianity", which has departed from the Great Commission and adherence to the scriptures, with its focus instead, upon economic and social justice, environmentalism and political empowerment.
11. There is a snare of SELF-PITY and DEPRESSION; 1 Kings 19:4, 10-18
12. SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS of God's people brings a snare; Rom. 11:7-10; Rev. 3:17

13. The influence of CESSATIONISM is a snare; Hebrews 13:8

a. A cessationist does not believe in the present day ministry of apostles and prophets, and says that the supernatural demonstration of signs, wonders and miracles “ceased” with the early Church. But God’s Word says otherwise; Joel 2:28-29.

b. Those who hold to this view disregard the elementary and foundational things that Jesus taught through the Gospels and Epistles; Hebrews 6:1-2, the result being an obvious lack of power and immaturity within the Body of Christ; Mark 16:17-18.

c. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, every grace and ministry are the means (tools) that Jesus has given to equip His people and fulfill His purpose in them; these have not ceased. They are still present today, and necessary to help bring the Body of Christ to maturity, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Ephesians 4:11-13.

14. GNOSTICISM, the worship of knowledge, intellectualism, is a snare; Col. 2:8

a. Gnosticism breeds overconfidence and conceit; it is an inordinate obsession for knowledge of what a person knows (or what they think they know); 1 Corinthians 8:1-2

b. Gnosticism is a system of belief that combines ideas derived from Greek philosophy, Oriental mysticism and Christianity. Paul warned Timothy about the heresy propagated by early Christian sects, this “knowledge” being the way to salvation; 1 Timothy 6:20-21

c. The enemy tempted Eve with a desire for “knowledge”. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was in the “center” of the garden; eating from this “tree” is due to a “self-centered” desire to be wise, to be like God; Genesis 3:2-6; Luke 6:43-44.

d. The Tree of Life is a picture of Jesus Christ; John 15:1-7. The spiritual man must eat to survive; he must feed upon the divine life of Christ; John 4:34. God’s word reminds us: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge...” Proverbs 1:7

15. Some “kings and princes” are caught in a snare of SELF EXALTATION:

a. Two of David’s sons rebelled against the will of the king: Absalom; 2 Samuel 15:1, and Adonijah; 1 Kings 1:5. They had “50 men run before them” as a mark of their greatness. They had an “entitlement mentality” due to the pride of their “heritage”.

b. The word Pentecost means “50”; Lev. 23:15-16. The repeated use of the #50 in 2 Kings 1:9-14, points to this principle: some use the divine anointing of Pentecost to exalt and draw attention to themselves; this is an abuse of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

c. Ahaziah is another example; he was a king in Israel, a type of one who rules over the Pentecostal organizations. He sent “messengers” (captains of 50 with 50) to seize, destroy and punish the true prophetic ministry of Elijah. These messengers are met by Elijah, who calls down fire from heaven and consumes them all; 2 Kings 1:9-15.

d. There are those who use the Pentecostal “power of the anointing” in an attempt to subdue prophetic ministry that brings the true word of the Lord. Those who inquire of Baalzebub, who reject and oppose true prophetic ministry will perish; 2 Kings 1:2-4.

16. The snare of LEGALISM; Galatians 3:1-5

a. Legalism suppresses others with demands, a strict adherence to law and rules. In theology, it is the doctrine of salvation by good works; Romans 3:27-28; Ephesians 2:8-9

b. Judaizers tried to force believers from non-Jewish backgrounds to adopt Jewish customs and laws as a condition of salvation; Acts 15:1. Under the New Covenant, God’s law is written upon the heart; Jeremiah 31:33; 2 Corinthians 3:2-3.

c. Legalism says that salvation/sanctification is realized by good works, rather than by grace and faith alone. It is marked by religious, misdirected “zeal” apart from knowledge.

d. Legalism “drives” the people to performance; the Holy Spirit “leads” people.

17. The snare of ELITISM; 1 Peter 5:2-3

a. This concept is revealed by the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (which Jesus hates); it is the spirit of aristocracy that rules over the people instead of serving them; Rev. 2:15

b. This influence produces “kings on thrones” of independent, fenced-off kingdoms.

c. It takes too much authority over others; it “lords” over the people; Luke 22:25-26. As a result, some have become spiritual “celebrities” to whom the people “bow”.

d. This influence has built a wall between what it calls the “laity” and the professional “clergy”. It has ties to Balaam, and the love of money; Jude 11.

18. The snare of RELIGIOUS BABYLON / THE HARLOT; Genesis 10:8-10; 11:2-5; Revelation 17-18.

a. Babylon comes from the word “babel”, which means confusion. Lucifer (who had a desire to be enthroned) rules over Babylon; he is the inventor of all religion and its practices. Isaiah 14:12-14: “For thou hast said in thine heart:

1. “I will ascend into heaven” – a desire to climb higher; to ascend through works

2. “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” – a desire to compete with others; spiritual competition

3. “I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north” – a desire to be seen of men; a desired position for recognition and attention

4. “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds” – a desire for a high place; self exaltation

5. “I will be like the Most High” – a desire for worship; be recognized as God; idolatry

b. The Spiritual Harlot is a counterfeit and it offers a false sense of security for those within its system. It offers an assurance of salvation, comfort, status, identity and position, instead of intimacy with Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word; John 17:3

c. Religious Babylon is characterized by a desire for pre-eminence. The Babylonian “minister” sees himself as a professional, set above the “laity”. In his personal ambition, he takes titles for himself, and builds himself a city, a tower and a name; Matt. 23:8-10. This influence was seen in Diotrephes, who loved to have pre-eminence; 3 John 1:9-10.

d. The Harlot of Babylon points to the institutionalized, organized, religious church systems. It demands “loyalty” from its followers, and is driven by the Jezebel spirit, which utilizes witchcraft, control, domination, manipulation, and flattery; Rev. 2:20

e. Witchcraft flourishes within religious Babylon. This spirit appeals to peoples’ emotions, seduces them and utilizes guilt to provoke them into signing “pledge cards” or make oaths that God has not asked them to make. They pressure people to give allegiance to their laws and doctrines, by imposing restrictions upon them, or binding them to men and their organizations, instead of releasing them to obey the leading of the Holy Spirit.

f. Religious Babylon produces lying signs and wonders that work in conjunction with seducing spirits. People become addicted to spiritual “experiences”, strange fire, hype and sensationalism. The spirits must be tested; all must be measured by the Word of God. We must earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints; Jude 3.

g. Religious Babylon imposes its own traditions, rituals, by-laws and outward observances. (Under the New Covenant, we do not “keep the Sabbath” by attending church meetings on a certain day; we keep God’s “law” by walking in love, when we enter into a living relationship with Jesus Christ, Who is our Sabbath Rest); Rom. 13:8-10

h. Jesus said “Come out of her (Babylon), My people”; Revelation 18:4; Hebrews 13:13

- 19.** The snare of COMPROMISE as seen in the life of Jonathan; 2 Samuel 1:25-26
- a. He was torn between 2 kingdoms: the fleshly ruled (Saul) and the spirit ruled (David)
 - b. Jonathan was Saul's son; he had known privilege and status. The Lord rejected Saul due to disobedience. Samuel (prophetic ministry) and David (God's new order), had separated from Saul (the old order) but Jonathan would not.
 - c. Jonathan made a covenant with David, whom he loved; 1 Samuel 18:14. He recognized the anointing of God upon David, but could never leave "Saul's house" to be a part of the move of God through David and his mighty men; 1 Samuel 22:1-2.
 - d. Jonathan was controlled by generational family strongholds and was intimidated by Saul. He went to war on Saul's behalf, and died for that which was already "dead".
- 20.** The snare of the NATURAL, CARNAL MIND; Romans 8:7
- a. The Greek word for carnal is "sarkikos" meaning "flesh": sensual; controlled by bodily appetites; governed by human nature. This term also refers to Christians who think and walk according to the natural, soulish realm; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 1 Peter 2:11
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:45-49 tells us that there are two kinds of "men" (2 kinds of minds):
 - 1. Adam is the first man; he is from earth and became a "living soul". The "son of the flesh" is dominated by the natural mind, will and emotions. He is "under the law", subject to death and defeated by sin. The only life he can produce is a fallen race of men, in his image, who do his works according to the way of natural thinking; Proverbs 14:12
 - 2. Jesus Christ is the last Adam (man); 1 Corinthians 15:45. He is from Heaven and is a quickening (life giving) spirit. Every true "son of God" is dominated by spiritual faith, led by the Holy Spirit and is submitted to the will of the Father. Jesus fulfilled "the law", overcame every temptation, and put death under His feet. He gives eternal life to a fallen race of men, who bear His image and do His works by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Examples in Scripture reveal the contrast between two kinds of "men"; one who is carnal (walks after the flesh), and one who is spiritual (walks after the spirit):
 - 1. Cain and Abel
 - 2. Nimrod and Abraham
 - 3. Ishmael and Isaac
 - 4. Esau and Jacob
 - 5. Saul and David
 - 6. Saul of Tarsus and Paul
 - d. Both kinds of men are "corporate", having the ability to multiply themselves and bring forth sons in their own image and likeness.
 - e. The heart must turn to the Lord and the veil of fleshly understanding must be removed for a man to see Christ. As we behold Him with an open (unveiled) face, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory; 2 Corinthians 3:16, 18
 - f. The mind must be renewed: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove (demonstrate) that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23
 - g. "Dualism" and double-mindedness places an emphasis on the devil as much as it does upon God and His Word; James 1:8. As the believer's mind is renewed, his thinking and emphasis changes from "the law of sin and death" to the "law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus"; Romans 8:2. His focus changes to the "new creation man"; 2 Corinthians 5:17

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