

The Wiles of the Devil  
(Ephesians 6:10-13)

Introduction:

1. In vs.10 an appeal is made for the Lord's people to be strong.
2. According to vs.12, we must be strong because we are engaged in a spiritual conflict.
3. We learn from vs.11 that this conflict involves standing against *"the 'wiles' [schemes] of the devil."*
4. We can learn about the wiles of the devil by considering how Satan confronted various Bible characters.
5. In our lesson we are examining the wiles that Satan used against Eve, David, Paul, and Jesus.
  - a. Eve and David gave in to Satan's wiles and suffered the consequences.
  - b. Paul and Jesus show us that Satan and his wiles can be resisted.

Discussion:

- I. SATAN CONFRONTED EVE IN GENESIS 3:1-6
  - A. Satan used 2 of his wiles against Eve.
    1. (vs.1) He questioned God's command (see 2:16-17).
    2. (vs.4) He perverted God's command.
  - B. From vs.6 we learn that Satan's appeals fall under 3 categories (1 John 2:16):
    1. *"the lust of the flesh"* -- Eve *"saw that the tree was good for food."*
    2. *"the lust of the eyes"* -- Eve saw that the tree *"was pleasant to the eyes."*
    3. *"the pride of life"* -- Eve saw it as *"a tree to be desired to make one wise."*
  - C. We also see the temptation process in action (James 1:13-15).
  - D. It is sad that Eve disobeyed God's will, but from her mistakes we are able to learn about several of Satan's wiles.
- II. SATAN CONFRONTED DAVID IN 1 CHRONICLES 21:1
  - A. Satan used 1 of his wiles against David on this occasion -- he led David to trust in the size of his army rather than in God's power.
  - B. Even Joab knew that David was wrong (vs.3).
  - C. By giving in to Satan's wile, David caused many people to suffer (vs.7, 14).
  - D. Thankfully, David repented and asked God to forgive him (vs.8, 26).
- III. SATAN CONFRONTED PAUL IN 2 CORINTHIANS 12:7
  - A. Satan used 1 of his wiles against Paul -- Paul was given *"a thorn in the flesh"* that was *"the messenger of Satan."*
    1. According to vs.1-6, some very special information was revealed to him.
    2. This *"thorn in the flesh"* prevented him from being *"exalted above measure."*
    3. Satan's purpose was to *"buffet"* Paul.
  - B. (vs.8) Paul thought he would be better off without this *"thorn in the flesh."*
  - C. (vs.9a) The Lord did not remove it from him.
  - D. Paul learned a valuable lesson about the sufficiency of God's grace (vs.9b-10).
- IV. SATAN CONFRONTED JESUS IN MATTHEW 4:1-11
  - A. Satan used 3 of his wiles against the Lord.
    1. He tried to get Jesus to prove He was God's Son by turning stones into bread (vs.1-4).
    2. He tried to get Jesus to *"tempt"* God (vs.5-7).
    3. He tried to get Jesus to *"worship"* him (vs.8-11).
  - B. Jesus helps us understand what is written in Psalm 119:11 and James 4:7b.

Conclusion:

1. A sober warning is given in 1 Peter 5:8-9.
2. Thankfully, *"we are not ignorant of his devices"* (2 Corinthians 2:11).
3. By studying Satan's confrontations with people we can learn about his wiles and his devices.
4. Being familiar with Satan's wiles and devices will help us greatly in resisting him.