

Who is the Adversary?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. Joshua 9:1-27

1. Certain kinds of ants have a passion for the sweet, glandular substance given off by the caterpillar of a large blue butterfly. They can become so addicted to it that they even seek out the caterpillar and carry him to their nest with delight. But they unwittingly bring home an enemy in disguise, for the caterpillar gorges himself exclusively on ant larva. Usually such a threat to the colony would be repelled with great vigor, but the adults enjoy the tasty secretions of the guest so much that they are oblivious of the fact that their young are devoured in the process.
2. The people of Israel just defeated the city of Ai and were preparing to march deeper into Canaan as they claim the Promised Land which the Lord had given to them. Fresh from a victory, they had a couple of great successes militarily. However, before they would see another victory, Israel learned a lesson about being too friendly with the enemy.

B. The cities appear to represent the types of opponents we face:

1. Jericho - A type of the world
 - a. We have the promise of victory over the world - 1John 5:4
2. Ai - A type of the flesh
 - a. We have the promise of victory over the flesh - Rom. 7:24-25
3. Gibeon - A type of the Adversary
 - a. This is a battle that we will fight until the Judgment; we can only resist him until God gives him what he has earned.
 - b. James 4:7; Rev. 20:1-10

I. THE ENEMY CAN BE DECEPTIVE

A. Joshua 9:1-13

1. Joshua 9:1-2 - When all the kings of Canaan heard what had happened to Ai and to Jericho, they joined forces to seek to defeat Israel.
 - a. The Adversary's crowd will join forces to fight God's people.
 - b. The Pharisees and the Herodians hated one another, but they came together in the common effort of putting Jesus to death; Herod Antipas and Pontius Pilate did the same.
 - c. The same kind of alliances are being formed today.

B. Joshua 9:3-4 - The Adversary uses deceptive wiles.

1. Eph. 6:11; Luke 22:31; 1Tim. 3:7

C. Joshua 9:4-5 - The Adversary uses deceptive wares.

1. When the Devil comes to you in temptation, he will not do so in a red suit with a pointy tail and horns, carrying a pitchfork and smelling like sulphur - 2Cor. 11:14

D. Joshua 9:6-13 - The Adversary uses deceptive words.

1. They lied directly - Vs. 6, 9, 11-12
2. They claimed to be something they were not - Vs. 8-9

3. They deceived by omission - V. 10
4. Note his deception of Eve - Gen. 3:1-6
 - a. He told her that she could question God's Word - Gen. 3:1
 - b. He told her that God did not really mean what He said - Gen. 3:3
 - c. He told her that God was deceiving her - Gen. 3:5
 - d. He gave her many excuses to justify what he wanted her to do.
5. Have you ever wondered:
 - a. Just what did the Adversary tell Cain to get him to kill Abel?
 - b. Just what did the Adversary tell David to get him to cheat with Bathsheba?
 - c. Just what did the Adversary tell Judas to betray Jesus?
 - d. What has the Adversary told you in the past, and what is he telling you now?
 - e. 2Cor. 2:11; 1Peter 5:8

II. THE ENEMY CAN BE DESTRUCTIVE

- A. Joshua 9:14 -21
- B. Joshua 9:14 - Their ability to see clearly was disrupted.
 1. Joshua initially was a little skeptical of these ambassadors, but he did not follow through.
 2. 1Peter 5:8 says be "sober and vigilant"
 3. John 8:44; Eph. 4:27
- C. Joshua 9:14 - Their ability to seek counsel was disrupted; they did not take the matter to the Lord in prayer.
 1. Do not be hasty in decision making. Give God time to answer your prayers - Ex. 14:13; Psalm 27:14
- D. Joshua 9:15-21 - Their ability to stay clean was disrupted; they decided to make a covenant with the Gibeonites - Deut. 7:2; 2Cor. 6:17

III. THE ENEMY CAN BE DEFEATED

- A. Joshua 8:22-27
- B. Joshua 9:22-23 - The enemy must be confronted.
 1. When Joshua found out what these people had done, he went to them and confronted them about their sins.
- C. Joshua 9:27 - The enemy must be controlled; they can't kill them, because they have given them their word (v. 19), but they can control them!
 1. We cannot un-commit our sins, but we can be restored - 1John 1:9
 2. We must face the fact that our sins carry consequences that must play out completely (Gal. 6:9), yet we can return to the Lord and we can serve Him faithfully.
- D. Joshua 9:27 - The enemy must be commissioned; Israel took them and put them to work carrying water and chopping wood for the Tabernacle.
 1. Joshua took his mistake and used it for God's glory - 2Sam. 21:2-6
 2. Sin will always be sin, and we cannot make it go away by making arrangements with it. But our failures do not have to defeat us for our whole life. God's grace is bigger than our mistakes.