

**LETTERS FROM GRANDPA**  
**# 32**

Dearest Grandchild,

Today I want to draw your attention to a verse of Scripture that was written some 2,000 years ago, but is very relevant to you today.

Here is is: **“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.” (Rev 2:14-15)**

The strategy of Satan hasn't changed. He still uses the same strategy that Balak used to entice Israel to sin. This is serious for on that occasion 24,000 Israelites died (Nu. 25:9). It is also the same strategy that he will use on you!

Here is a brief summary of what happened.

- God brought Israel out of Egypt with a high hand (Ex. 14:8). The inhabitants of Jericho were still talking about the parting of the Red Sea forty years later (Josh. 2:10).
- The King of Moab was afraid of the Israelites and hired a prophet named Balaam to curse them (Nu. 22:4, 5).
- Balaam, like most of us, was conflicted. He was a greedy man who loved the wages of wickedness (2 Pet. 2:15). At the same time he also wanted to please God (Nu. 22:18).
- The name of Balaam is often remembered by the fact that God opened the mouth of his donkey so that it talked to him with a human voice (Nu. 22:28 - 33).
- Balaam tried three different times to get God to curse Israel, but each time God blessed them (Numbers chapters 23, and 24).
- Balaam gave up on trying to get God to curse Israel and went home (Nu. 24:25)

After Balaam went home the Bible tells us that the Israelites began immediately to indulge in immorality with the Moabite women. Their immorality caused God to send a plague upon the Israelites and 24,000 of them died (Nu. 25:1 - 9).

Now let us consider again the Scripture from Revelation 2:14 - 15. **WHEN BALAAM COULD NOT GET GOD TO CURSE ISRAEL, HE TAUGHT BALAK TO SET A TRAP FOR THE ISRAELITES SO THAT THEY WOULD CURSE THEMSELVES.**

The Bible word translated as “entice” is “skandalon” from which we get our English word “scandal”. It refers to the part of a trap to which the bait is attached. In a mouse trap, for example, you put the cheese on the “skandalon” which acts like a trigger to kill the mouse.

We have been friends with the Cardwell family in Carthage for many years. There was a

time, many years ago, when Brad Cardwell did some trapping. He told me that there are basically three different lures used by trappers. (1) The “sex” lure, (2) The “food” lure, (3) And the “curiosity” lure.

I asked if foxes were as smart as we think them to be. “No!” He replied: “They are stupid and easy to trap”. He then described how to set a “trap” for a fox. You begin with foxes that are already captured and use fluids from them to trap other foxes. When a female fox is in heat you take fluids from her and put it on a bush. This, of course, attracts the male fox. Then, not far away, you take urine from a male fox and put it on another bush. About 18 inches from the second bush is where you put the trap.

Brad said that you can sit on a hill with binoculars and watch the unsuspecting fox take the bait. First, he is lured to the trap by the scent of the female. Then, he smells the second bush and assumes that a rival is also seeking for her affection. His instincts draw him to the second bush where he intends to mark the bush with his own urine. Before doing so, however, he scratches the ground to demonstrate his power. That instinctive scratching of the ground is what triggers the trap and spells his doom. It is sobering to realize that Satan sets a trap for us and then waits to laugh at our stupidity.

Brad continued that the food lure doesn’t work well in the summer when there is plenty to eat. In the winter, however, after several weeks of ice and snow, many animals are so hungry for something to eat that they become careless.

Perhaps you have heard the old saying, “curiosity killed the cat”. Brad said this is true. He said that he has trapped bob cats by dangling a mirror from a tree limb. The unsuspecting cat sees the mirror twisting in the wind and reflecting the light of the sun. He has never seen anything like this before. He patiently checks the wind and begins stalking this unusual prey. It really doesn’t matter how long it takes before he pounces, for the trap is waiting patiently for him beneath the mirror where he will land.

Now, let’s return to the story of the Israelites. It seems that Balaam taught Balak to use all three of these lures to trap the Israelites. Perhaps, the food lure came first. The Israelites had been eating manna every day for many years. How easy it would have been for the Moabites to wait for just the right wind conditions and start cooking some bacon or barbecue so that the aroma of that delicious food would drift down on the camp of the Israelites. Then, perhaps, they could start playing a new type of music and show the Israelites a different style of dancing. Remember, many years before the Hebrews were dancing before a golden calf before they committed fornication (Ex. 32:19). The same thing, of course, happens today. Finally, the Moabite women with seductive clothing and fragrant perfumes triggered the trap that killed 24,000 Hebrew men.

#### APPLICATION TO YOU AND ME

Paul wrote to the Corinthians that he did not want them to be unaware of Satan’s schemes

(2 Cor. 2:11). You may not be aware of all of Satan's schemes, but now you are aware of at least some. Paul also wrote to the Corinthians that the things that happened to Israel as "examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did (1 Cor. 10:6). Please pay attention and learn from the mistakes of others.

Many years ago I performed a wedding for a young couple in Carthage. Some time later the wife came to my office and confessed to committing adultery. She said this was the only time she had ever done so. From that single indiscretion, however, she received a sexually transmitted disease that she will carry with her the rest of her life. She was trapped and Satan laughed about it.

Periodically I write to a young man in prison. He had become addicted to pornography and tried to make a date with an "under aged girl" in Miami, Oklahoma. It turned out to be a sting operation and he is presently serving a 16 year sentence. One reason, I am told, for the severity of his sentence is that the crime involved crossing a state line. He was trapped and Satan laughed about it.

Trappers say that sometimes an animal escapes from their trap by chewing its leg off. While that drastic decision is better than death, isn't it better to stay out of the trap in the first place..

If you do what Jesus tells you to do - you will be happy and never have to chew your leg off.  
**SO CLING TO CHRIST AND STAY OUT OF SATAN'S TRAPS!**

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce