

THE DEVIL'S DEVICES

“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11).

The word translated as “devices” in our text is “noema”. It comes from “nonma” which means “thought”. In other words we should not be ignorant of the devil’s thoughts.

The word is found 6 times in the N.T. Scriptures:

- * 2 Corinthians 2:11: "of us: for we are not ignorant of his **devices**."
- * 2 Corinthians 3:14 "But their **minds** were blinded: for until this day remaineth"
- * 2 Corinthians 4:4: "world hath blinded the **minds** of them which believe not, lest the light"
- * 2 Corinthians 10:5 "and bringing into captivity every **thought** to the obedience of Christ;"
- * 2 Corinthians 11:3: "subtlety, so your **minds** should be corrupted from the simplicity"
- * Philippians 4:7: "your hearts and **minds** through Christ Jesus."

Note that of the 6 uses of the word, only our text refers to the devil’s thoughts. If we do not understand how Satan thinks, he can have an advantage over us. While the devil is not omniscient, he is still smarter than we are. If we do not understand how he thinks he can easily control us.

To illustrate this point let us consider the rivalry between Raynald III, the Duke of Guelders (now Belgium) and his younger brother Edward. With the death of their father in 1343 their mother held the regency until 1344. Then Raynald came to power. After a violent quarrel, however, Edward led a successful revolt against his older brother. According to Thomas Costain’s history, Raynald was imprisoned in a room in Nieuwerkerk castle with no bars on the windows or locks on the door. He was too fat to escape. His Latin nickname “Crassus” means “fat”. When someone accused Edward of cruelty he responded: “My brother is not a prisoner, he can leave at any time he so wills”. As we have explained, however, Raynald was too fat to escape. Since Edward understood his older brother’s weakness for food it was easy to control him. Every day Edward sent a variety of delicious foods making Raynald even fatter, thus insuring that he would not escape.

Raynald remained in that room for ten years until Edward was killed in the Battle of Baesweiler on Aug. 24, 1371. When they cut away the walls to release him, Raynald’s health by that time was so bad that he died a few months later on Dec. 4, 1371.

Before we laugh at Raynald, however, let us think of the people we know who have lost their jobs, their families, and their health because of some addiction. Statisticians tell us that almost 70% of American adults are obese as well as 13 million children. An additional 40 million Americans are addicted to cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs. Millions more are addicted to pornography, gambling, and a wide variety of other destructive habits. Unfortunately, America is not unique in this regard!

Elvis Presley was one of the richest and most famous men in the world but died as a drug addict at the age of 42. His live-in doctor, George Nichopoulos, wrote 10,000 prescriptions for him in the last seven months of his life. How sad!

We can easily see that the entrapment of Raynald III was not an accident, but what about Elvis? What about you and me? Are we ignorant of the devil’s devices? Is the devil laughing at how easy it is to control us? Do we not understand that with self control we can escape the prison created by our own lust. When Jesus spoke at His home town synagogue He quoted from Isaiah: **“He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners” (Lk. 4:18)**. That is precisely what Jesus wants to do for you! He understands your addiction and sympathizes with your heartaches and problems. You did not get into this trap by accident and you will not escape without help. Do not be ignorant of the devil’s devices!

PLEASE GIVE JESUS A CHANCE TO HELP YOU!!!