

DEVICES OF SATAN—The Temptation of Pride 1 Chron. 21

The Terrible Cost of Sin and the Awesome Grace of God

Introduction:

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1. The Bible reveals there is an Invisible War... and reveals the tactics of the enemy
2. In the Old Testament we see 4 examples & 4 devices he uses¹

PERSON	EVE	JOB	DAVID	JOSHUA
Satan's Device >	Deception	Destruction	Temptation	Accusation
Satan's Target >	the Mind	the Body	The Heart/Will	Conscience
Satan's Tactic >	Lies	Suffering	Selfish Pride	Accusation
Satan's Intent >	to be Ignorant of God's Will	to be Impatient with God's Will	to be Independent of God's Will	Indictment by God's Will
Your Defense >	FAITH in God's Word	FAITH in God's Goodness	FAITH in God's Plan / Protection	FAITH in God's Grace

I. THE DEVICE—Temptation to Trust Self rather than God

A. THE TARGET: Heart/Will—Desire of Heart / Decision of Will (21:1–8)

1. The Point of Attack May Be Different for Different Devices of the Devil...

- a) Satan deceives the MIND like he did with Eve...
- b) Satan attacks the BODY with suffering as he did with Job
- c) But he seeks to control your WILL through temptation, as he does with David
- d) You are BODY, MIND and SPIRIT—All in Subordination to your WILL

2. THE WILL: is Where Your Spiritual Willpower resides...

- a) Some People Have a Strong Spiritual Will-Power—that can withstand Temptation
- b) But Others Do Not Have a Strong Spiritual Will-Power
- c) Just About Any Excuse is OK for them to Be Selfish and Do What They Want
Regardless of What God Says

3. THE WILL: is also where the Desires of your Heart reside...

- a) This is the Battleground of the Mind
- b) This is the Field of Battle between what You WANT — and what is RIGHT
- c) Between YOUR WILL — and GOD'S WILL

B. THE TACTIC: Selfish Pride

1. When you boil it all down—SELFISHNESS is the Root of all sin...

But SELFISHNESS mixed with ARROGANCE is even more potent!

- a) So we aren't talking about pride as in satisfaction over a job well done...
or in our children accomplishments...

¹ Chart: Warren W. Wiersbe, The Strategy of Satan, p.85, 1979; adapted

2. DEFINITION: Arrogance, Conceit, Self-Glorification, Vanity

- a) David was not an Arrogant Person, but Satan uses the most opportune timing!
- b) God Had Given David One Military Victory After Another...
- c) The Ammonites, the Philistines, the Syrians... David couldn't Loose!

(1 Chron 20:2) ² Then David took their king's crown from his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and *there were* precious stones in it. And it was set on David's head. Also he brought out the spoil of the city in great abundance.

- d) The Solid Gold Crown of an Enemy King, weighing 75 lbs. Placed on David's Head!
- e) And it Was When David is Basking in the Glow of Victory—Comes His Defeat

“The shamelessness of great pride: it lifts the crown from the cushion and places it upon its brow with its own hands.” (Dag Hammarskjold)

3. Pride is a Killer—whether your a King, or a Slave, Rich or Poor...

Pride goes before the fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

C. THE INTENT: Independent of God's Will

1. **Pride Lifts Us Up to Act Independently of God's Will...**

**Even Worse We Try to USE God to Accomplish Our Own Selfish Purposes!
We Tell God What He Must Do For Us!**

2. Why Would the Taking of a Census of Israel Be a Sin?

a) **FIRST—>WRONG WAY:** Israel had a number of census counts...

- (1) Moses counted the people but God gave an instruction: (Exodus 30:11-12)
- (2) *“that there may be no plague among them when you number them.” (30:12b)*

b) **SECOND—>WRONG MOTIVE:**

This was not just a census of the people but for military age men...

- (1) He gave the order to Joab, his military commander (v.3)
- (2) Results show military strength (v.5-6) over 1.1 Million men who could fight

c) **THIRD—>WRONG ATTITUDE: This is an ownership issue**

- (1) When Moses gave a census they were to pay a redemption price because God had bought them out of Slavery!
- (2) Therefore, These Are GOD'S People, NOT David's People
- (3) David Didn't Own these People—He Has No Right to Send them to War for His Own Self-Glory

d) **FOURTH—>WRONG PURPOSE: Military Expansion**

- (1) We Don't Know all the reasons because the text does not say...
- (2) But It is possible, David desires to expand the borders and territory of Israel.
- (3) Beyond the Very Borders and Boundaries God Himself Set!

God Set the Boundaries of ISRAEL, of MARRIAGE, the CHURCH, of AUTHORITY!

It is Not Our Place to Change the Boundaries God Set! —But Pride will!

3. **Satan Incited David to Count the Military Might of Israel**

- a) and it took almost 10 months to complete the census (2 Samuel 24:8)
- b) 10 Months that David should have called it off, but he didn't
- c) David foolishly plowed ahead rather than admit he was wrong, until it was too late

D. THE CONSEQUENCES: A Plague (21:7–15)

1. God was angered by this sin...and He punished both David and Israel

- a) NIV: “This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished Israel.”

It Appears that: “because David was about to boast proudly and to glory in the number of the people, God determined to punish him by reducing their number by famine, war or pestilence. At the same time the people themselves had sinned grievously against God and their king, through two rebellions headed by Absalom and Sheba.” (Keil)

2. The Wages of Sin is Death... and Satan takes advantage of this...

- a) As a result of sin, God punished both the sinful king and the sinful people.
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II. THE DEFENSE: Faith to Trust God

A. FAITH IN GOD’S PROTECTION, PROMISES, POWER and PLAN

1. When Our Faith is Not in God—it’s in something or someone else...

- a) David was putting his faith in the Strength of His Military—Big Mistake.
b) God Had Already Given David a Series Military Victories
c) God Had Already Promised to Protect Israel
d) That the Descendent of Abraham would be as many as the stars of the Heavens!

2. David Needed Faith in God’s Protection, Power, Promises and Plan

And this is the Lesson for us... (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

- a) We Make Same Mistake when we put our Faith in Anything Other Than God
b) Their KNOWLEDGE, APPEARANCE, \$ POSITION, PROMINENCE, POWER
c) How Sad We Will Rely on Anything Other Than God!

“Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” (Prov 26:12)

3. Listen to the Word of the Lord! (Isaiah 55:8–9)

a) Some Actually Think— Their Thoughts ARE God’s Thoughts!

- (1) Just Because it popped into your head doesn’t mean its from God!
(2) Satan ‘INCITED’ (ESV) ‘MOVED’ (NKJ) David to Number the People!
(3) God’s Thoughts Are NOT Your Thoughts, Your Thoughts Are NOT His!

b) And Some People Thing Their Ways are Higher Than God’s Ways!

- (1) The Theme of Every False Teacher! —My Ways Are Better than God’s Ways!

B. FAITH TO ADMIT THE TERRIBLE COST OF SIN

1. The Wages of Sin is Death and we see this in this terrible plague (v.14-15)

- a) *Seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead.*

2. In the Midst of this terrible Plague, David Looks Up and sees an Angel

Suspended Above Jerusalem with a Sword Drawn over the City

- a) The Elders of the City Saw the Angel as Well
b) What a Frightening Sight to See—I Don’t Think Anyone Would Forget Seeing That

3. Do We Have the Faith and Wisdom to Admit the Terrible Cost of Sin?

- a) Worse than you can imagine—because Hell is worse than you can imagine
b) The Lost Have a Sword of Judgement over their Head—Not Peace in their heart!

C. FAITH TO TRUST THE AWESOME GRACE OF GOD

- 1. But even with there terrible cost of sin—there is a Remedy—> (21:16–27)**
 - a) Repentance and Sacrifice for sin
 - b) The Plague Killed So Many Because of Sin—But Sacrifice Stopped it
- 2. FASCINATING: The Very Threshing Floor David purchased to Sacrifice on, is the exact location God told Solomon to Build the Temple (2 Chron 3:1-2)**
 - a) The Temple Stood at the Actual Place Where David’s Sin Had Brought Jerusalem to the Brink of Destruction, and Where God Alone Delivered His People.
- 3. This Location Marks the terrible cost of sin—AND incredible Grace of God!**
 - a) This is the Exact location David sacrificed to save the people...
 - b) This is the very location God instructed the Temple to be Built
 - c) But David was not allowed to build it, due to the blood he shed w/ his hands
 - d) God instructed that Solomon would build the Temple
- 4. The Temple is Where Sinners Can Go To Receive Forgiveness!**
 - a) David Sinned when he took Bathsheba... their first child died as a result...
 - b) But their second child born to David and Bathsheba—Solomon, was chosen by God to build the Temple Where ANYONE could have access to God’s forgiveness
- 5. Again, showing God Can Turn a Curse into a Blessing! (Galatians 3:13)**
 - a) Jesus the Lamb of God, Offered Himself as a Perfect Sacrifice here on Mt Moriah
 - b) Jesus Sacrifice on the Cross Tore the Veil of Temple Open—
 - c) and Opened A Way for us to God’s Heavenly Temple, where He Has Made Atonement for our sins

D. IN THE END: A PERSON’S LIFE IS JUDGED NOT BY THIER MISTAKES... —BUT BY HOW THEY RESPOND TO THEM

- 1. David’s Sins are recorded for us, not just to reveal the mistake he made,**
- 2. but to reveal his true character—in How He Responded to God...**
 - a) He suffered the consequences of his sins,
 - b) but he confessed them to God and properly sought God’s forgiveness.
- 3. GOD CAN TURN A CURSE INTO A BLESSING!**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. We Have All Sinned and Fallen Short of the Glory of God...**

The Question is not IF we have sinned, but how we respond?
- 2. Will We Have Faith in God’s Protection, His Power, Promises and Plan?**
- 3. Or Will We Trust in Our Own Plan to Save Ourselves?**

*For the wages of sin is death,
but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 6:23)*