

## **You Better Watch Out, You Better Not . . .**

by Dee Bowman

The Devil is no fool. How often we underestimate his cunning and crafty nature. The Scriptures warn of his "wiles" (Ephesians 6:11) and tell us of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). "Wiles" have to do with the Devil's abilities-abilities to concoct methods, plans, strategies for deceiving us. He's good at it. Real good. "Devices" are the tools he uses to make his plans work, to cause us to move toward evil. He's good at that, too. Real good.

Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." This passage should lend a sense of urgency to our situation. It should tell us that we're at war and there's not time for civilian activities, only for constant vigilance and complete concentration as to the whereabouts and stratagem of the enemy.

**Be sober.** That means be serious about his possible invasion. He is.

**Be vigilant.** That means watch out. He lurks in the shadows, moves in the dark, skirts the periphery all the time, looking all the while for a chance to strike. Look out.

**Your adversary.** He is the enemy. We best not associate with him. When we fraternize with the enemy we are apt to become like him. Best be careful about that. It's hard to recognize him when you look so much like him yourself. Be careful.

**Walketh about.** He is not passive. He doesn't work a forty-hour week, nor does he take any time off: He's always on the job, working to do us harm. Where is he? Right now.

**As a roaring lion.** A lion stalks his prey for days until such a time as he finds it in a vulnerable position: Then he lets out a gargantuan roar, thus freezing the prey in its tracks. It's easy from there on: "There's a place where you can no longer turn back, folks. Be careful how close you allow him to get.

Are there some things we can do to combat the devil?

You better know it. God has provided an apt description of the enemy. He knows his plans, has intercepted his codes, and deduced his projects. He'll help us if we'll just pay close attention to what He says.

We are not ignorant of his devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). God knows. We don't---not yet anyhow. We must learn. We need to read the Bible, study the word, search the scriptures. They will inform us of his wiles, how he works. We can know, but only if we want to. Do you want to? It sure helps to know.

God will provide a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13). But God's faithfulness to provide does not equal our having the information automatically. We must look for the way of escape. It's in His word. Remember Jesus. "It is written" was his answer to the Devil's temptations. It's ours as well.

Resist him and he will flee (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9). Resistance is hard. It takes resolve. It takes steeling your nerve. It takes hurting sometimes. But resistance is the key to conquering the Devil. He can't win if you resist.

Give no place to him (Ephesians 4:27). You can't keep the Devil from wandering through your mind now and then but you don't have to give him a place to stay. Kick him out. Make him go someplace else. Tell him he's not welcome. If you give him a room, before long he'll own the house.

Don't let him win the war, even if he wins a battle now and then (2 Peter 2:26). Because he's likely to win some doesn't mean you have to just give up. Repent and start again. Repent and get up. Repent and pray God for help. Repent and regroup. "And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (2 Peter 2:26). That ought to restore your broken spirit. You can still get out of there. You can still run. Just do it.

I hate the Devil. I mean I hate him! Don't you? And I don't know for the life of me how you could possibly have any trouble with him when he's over at my house nearly all the time.